

Report
from CUBA

ELST. & Blue Collar

Freedom Socialist

25¢

Volume 4, Number 3 Fall 1978



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Women's Emancipation*

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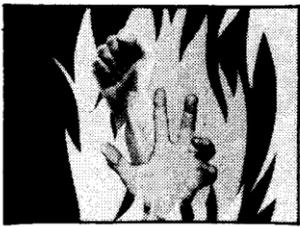
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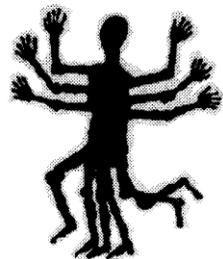
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Gay History 14

Part I of a two-part series chronicles gays in antiquity, the source of the taboo against homosexuality, and the centuries-long resistance of matrilinear societies against the marauding Christians.



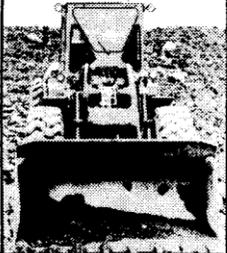
Bakke 10



Is this case of reverse justice acceptable because of the ambivalent, ersatz wording of the decision? Hardly. Instead, this masterpiece of judicial duplicity sets the stage for a new level of struggle for minority freedom.

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Dispirited by the treachery of the Mexican Communist Party, the displaced colonos of Tijuana's riverbed are hard-pressed in their effort to sustain a movement against the government. Jesús Mena reports.



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Native American messenger Janet McCloud concludes her manifesto on the three crises facing American Indians by posing the burning question: adaptation to capitalism or rebirth of the communal, traditional culture?

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freedom socialist

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Somebody Out There Likes Us

The labor article in the last issue was very timely and helpful to me in articulating and clarifying my position towards unions.

It made a distinction between the role of the bureaucrats and the potential role of the unions as a mechanism for workers to fight for better wages and conditions. It clarified the fact that workers' hostility and apathy towards unions is a well-grounded fact and not a reason for discouragement. It will help me avoid the trap of being a booster for the union bureaucracy while trying to be a booster for the workers and our union.

Many lower level union officials start out full of enthusiasm and with some principles; but with no radical theory or leadership they lose heart and either leave or stay around for what's in it for them. Some do what they can within the limits of their own understanding. . .

A.W.
Portland, Oregon

I consider the *Freedom Socialist* the best of the socialist feminist organs. I was particularly interested in the recent piece on Cuba.

I, too, put out a journal of feminist analysis. The name has been changed from *Hawaii Feminist News-Journal* to *Ferity*. It is not as socialist-oriented as I would like because of the extremely low state of interest in the left in Hawaii, though I do try to include some Marxist analysis of issues whenever I can. Therefore, the *Freedom Socialist* is a useful part of our reference library.
Dorothy K. Stein, Editor
Honolulu, Hawaii

Open Letter to Ernest Mandel

On May 4, 1978, you spoke in New York City and discounted the existence of workers states in Africa, particularly Angola, because of their reluctance to nationalize the Gulf Oil fields. As you said about Algeria and Egypt, nationalizations do not make a workers state; you also said, "Let us wait until the main ties between these countries and the world capitalist market are cut."

This is a strange demand. The USSR sells natural gas to the West and does business with Fiat, and we consider the USSR a workers state.

You also complained about the primitive accumulation of capital in Africa and the emergence of a class of millionaires. But if millionaires negate the existence of a workers state, then we have to strike Poland off our list. Poland not only has millionaires, but also a class of independent agricultural producers who own the product of their labor and sell it not to the state, like the collectives in the USSR, but to a middleman. Workers states do exist where the process of primitive accumulation may or may not be effectively controlled.

Hence, what is the criterion of a workers state?

There is only one answer: in a workers state, the working class is the ruling class.

I am not out to prove that Angola is a workers state; but Angola could be a workers state and still not do

what you demand of it. Angola may not wish to nationalize Gulf Oil or halt primitive accumulation of capital or withhold their raw material from the world market.

To call the Angolan leadership petty bourgeois nationalists—a connotation which fits the bureaucrats of most workers states—and criticize their actions or omissions to act does not make us any wiser. Instead, let it be stated succinctly which class is in power in Angola. Has the counterrevolution been victorious, as in Algeria? Has the counterrevolution succeeded or even been assisted by the leaderships of two workers states?

Karl Marx said that the Paris Commune is the dictatorship of the proletariat, and then proceeded to point out its shortcomings. I'd like to see Marx's method of investigation employed and the yammering of some bush league Marxists inside and outside the Fourth International disregarded. Clarity is needed; the analysis should not be handicapped by yielding to the backwardness of some cothinkers.

Your friend and comrade,
Fred Brode
Houston, Texas

Estudios Chicanos

The Centro de Estudios Chicanos Research Center was founded in 1970 because of the need to compile a more accurate account of the educational, social, cultural, and political struggles of the Chicano.

Our purpose is to allow students, staff and faculty of this campus and colleges throughout San Diego County, and the community, to experience new views through our library materials.

We are trying to obtain more books, periodicals, and other materials of value to students. As funds are limited, we are requesting a complimentary subscription to your paper.

Juan D. Tapia, Coordinator
Centro de Estudios Chicanos
Research Center
San Diego, California

Editor's Response

Sí, amigos! We like to donate subs to needy movement groups.

Call of the Wild

I am not a Trotskyist, but I like your paper and see it as preferable (an understatement) to the *Militant*. I am a member of the Socialist Labor Party and Common Ground, a socialist collective with chapters in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. I'm enclosing a copy of *Tea Leaves*, a G.I. paper. I will be getting out of the army soon; it is difficult to raise revolutionary consciousness in the volunteer army. I will be doing some SLP work in the Northwest soon, and look forward to meeting you. I am interested in learning more about Trotskyism in general and American Trotskyist politics in particular.
K.D.I.
Anchorage, Alaska

Blame It on the Printer

I was very upset with your cover picture and caption, "In these hands is placed a power that can free a shackled world." The hands looked male. Are *men* the leaders to freedom, men "the workers?" Am I as a woman not included?

It is equally disturbing that the hands were all attached to machines—NONE involved in primary labor such as digging for earth, planting a seed, caring for young people, managing a household, building a dwelling, etc. To say nothing of the conspicuous absence of workers' hands shown in other aspects of their lives—an embrace with a friend, lifting food to the mouth, hands playing music. . .

Our rhetoric must also include the images of an *integrated life*. And we must begin to live it now, to project its integration as part and parcel of the meaning of revolution.

I was very happy to see that on the urging of Janet McCloud, a Native American woman, a feminist socialist group, Radical Women, is beginning to study the environment. THIS IS VERY RADICAL. . . A revolution will never work if we do not have a deep understanding of how the monied, materialist, power-hungry minority has developed a technology which threatens all life on this planet. We must question the modes and effects of technological production, and study and *study* to come to awareness of the deep and radical changes necessary in our "modern" industrial mode, and integrate this issue into our rhetoric and projects. Here lies our greatest challenge!

I agree with Cindy Walker that we need to bridge the gap between environmentalists and workers. . . Environmentalists need to talk about the economic system and assure people that they are aware of the need for income, that they wish to see jobs created in public service areas, not just jobs liquidated without alternative work available. . .

. . . we must all see ourselves as bringers of new visions. . . we have much to learn from the Native American people who view life on many levels, and integrate these pluralistic awarenesses. . .

Rachel Avalon
Santa Rosa, California

Editor's Response

Three of the five photos in the cover graphic were of women's hands—the bus driver, cashier, and nurse. We regret that they came out androgynous, that press problems resulted in a substantial loss of detail.

The emphasis on industrial and service occupations was tied to the theme of the organized labor movement, and wasn't due to any lack of respect for creativity outside the workplace.

We have much to learn from Native Americans—the first environmentalists and an inspirational ally to socialists who seek to integrate nature and humanity.

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs for publication. All material will be carefully considered by the Editorial Board.

Se comunica a los señores lectores que nos pueden enviar para publicación cartas con sus opiniones, nuevos relatos, comentarios, caricaturas, gráficos, fotografías, y toda clase de información sobre sucesos nacionales o extranjeros. Todo el material que nos sea enviado será cuidadosamente considerado por el Consejo de nuestra Editorial.

by Su Bondurant

The handful of fascist hoodlums that outraged the Jews of Skokie, Illinois by a threat to march through town switched their tactic in late June and rallied briefly outside Chicago's Federal Building.

2,000 police and federal agents restrained an infuriated counterdemonstration of 5,000 anti-Nazis—Jews, Blacks, Hispanics, feminists, and radicals.

In July, the neo-Nazi gang held a large rally in racially tense Marquette Park while Chicago police kept antifascists two blocks away.

Almost every leftwing tendency in Chicago demonstrated against the fascists. But what prevailed was an antifascist bazaar, not a united front. Each radical group staked out its own piece of sidewalk, with its own picket line and slogans. Some vehemently opposed "free speech for Nazis" while others concentrated on denouncing fascist ideology. Not one group called for a unified antifascist movement.

Myopia plus Amnesia

Efforts at unity were muzzled by sectarianism and wishful thinking as usual.

The liberals are either occupied with defending Nazi free speech or with counseling the apprehensive to ignore the "handful" of fascists. This is reminiscent of the ostrich role of European liberals in the '20s and '30s who allowed Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco to seize power. (Liberals always fear the left more than the right, and collaborate with the reactionaries against the radicals.)

The radicals themselves are retarded today by their own antidemocratic habits and are thumbing their noses at the bitter lesson of history: that a disunited left invites the fascist takeover.

In the '30s the German Social Democrats and Communists had ample time to unite and defeat Hitler. But Stalin declared that the primary enemy was Social Democracy rather than fascism. Hitler, he said, wasn't important; the

Communist chance for power would soon appear. Stalin's incorrect analysis enabled fascism to succeed.

The CP refused to join with the Social Democrats in a united electoral front against Hitler. The Nazis, a minority party, were legally elected. They imprisoned the radicals, smashed the labor movement, incinerated Jews, gays and Gypsies, ravaged Europe, and invaded the unsuspecting Soviet Union.

Capitalism's Last Stronghold

Fascism, a mass movement spawned by capitalism in crisis, feeds well in cities like Chicago, where the American Nazi Party, the Klan and other virulent far-right groups elicit broad support among the dispossessed, desperate and demoralized lower middle class and declassed slumdweller.

Distinct ethnic neighborhoods, perpetuated by a corrupt political machine, breed chauvinism and racism, which fascists exploit to divide the workers. Historically, fascist attacks on the most oppressed pave the way for capital to crush unions and impose virtual slave labor; in this manner, profits are stabilized.

It Needn't Happen Here

In St. Louis recently, a white, workingclass community turned out spontaneously to abort a Nazi march and repelled a carload of Nazis attempting a parade.

And in Seattle, on July 9, the Jewish Liberation Alliance spearheaded an antifascist coalition with feminists, gays, people of color, trade unionists, and radicals, and mounted an impressive rally around the slogan of "Never to Forget." Speakers linked fascism to decaying capitalism and called for militant defense of the civil rights of minorities, women, gays, workers, and radicals—the classic targets of the Nazi scam.

Racism, sexism and heterosexism are the keys to Nazi resurgence. It will take furious struggle on every level by a consolidated battalion of antifascists to send the Nazis slithering back under their slimy rocks. ■

SWASTIKA TIME

The united front against re-emergent Nazism flounders as fascist hoods inflame Chicago



First National CRSP Conference

**Friday thru Monday
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The Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party is the nucleus of the envisioned, coming regroupment of U.S. radicals. Firmly linked to the heritage of revolutionary internationalism, and committed to the revitalization of American Trotskyism, CRSP is a year-old alliance of veteran and youthful revolutionaries, the majority of whom are women, gays, and people of color. CRSP is predominantly working class.

Dynamic new sectors of the proletariat have unleashed a flood of revolutionary energy onto the political scene, making a vanguard contribution to the class struggle in this country. CRSP accordingly welcomes to its conference: radicals, militants and sympathetic socialist tendencies; anticapitalist workers and students; racial/ethnic minorities, gays, and women—all those uniquely oppressed by capitalism.

Serious, mature and fraternal discussion, eminently reflective of the spirit of true proletarian democracy, will characterize the conference. All who value comradely respect for opposing viewpoints are urged to attend.

Pre-registration is required.

Registration Form

I am interested in attending the CRSP Conference. Please rush me more information.

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State _____ Zip _____ Phone(s) _____

Organization(s) _____ Independent

Send to: CRSP Conference Arrangements Committee, Freeway Hall, 3815 Fifth Avenue N.E., Seattle, Washington 98105. (206) 632-7468 or 632-1815.

ZAIRE

**Repulsing guerrilla efforts
to free a starving people,
Western powers prop up the
corrupt Mobutu and drain
the country's vast mineral reserves**



Detail from Soviet poster, 1967

by Sandy Nelson

The Belgian Congo has a new name, Zaire, but the same old imperialists are scurrying around trying to prop up dictator Mobutu's tottering regime.

When the well organized, highly disciplined guerrilla forces of the Congo National Liberation Front (FNLC) struck mineral-rich Shaba (Katanga) province last May, international headlines suppressed news of revolution and screamed "Whites massacred!" And French and Belgian overseers concocted a phony "rescue mission" to quell the revolt.

Soon after, foreign investors announced the "Mobutu Plan," which would further garrotte Zaire's virtually bankrupt economic system.

Captive Economy

The Mobutu plan, carefully masked as "international cooperation," is an imperialist effort to attract more foreign investment and tighten control of Zaire's finances. Drafted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Common Market, and multinational corporations, the plan turns the Bank of Zaire and the total economy over to the IMF.

The chief beneficiaries are the foreign corporations who own Zaire's copper, cobalt, uranium and diamond mines. The U.S. receives 90% of its cobalt from Zaire, and hundreds of millions of dollars owed to U.S. banks would be lost should Shaba win independence.

Invasion by Foreign Troops

To insure their grip on Zaire, the imperialists recruited troops from Morocco, Senegal, etc., to replenish Mobutu's disintegrating army. And thousands of Belgian and French soldiers are in training for the role of imperialist cops in Zaire.

These were the forces whose widely touted

"rescue" operation crushed the May insurrection. But once the racist hullabaloo receded, the "rescue" was revealed as poorly camouflaged aggression against the Zairian masses.

Airlifted Belgian refugees denied that FNLC guerrillas massacred whites; observers placed the blame on the French soldiers who actually triggered the crossfire which killed both Blacks and whites. Atrocities were perpetrated by Mobutu's poorly-paid mercenaries, who robbed, ransomed and slaughtered with impunity.

President Carter exploited the situation by defaming Cuba, but could unearth no evidence that Castro's soldiers participated in the uprising. The only international intervention was the sham rescue staged by the "peace-keeping" imperialist troops.

Unfolding Revolution

Surrounded by wealth they do not share, and caught in the vise of starvation and runaway inflation, the Zairian masses are prepared to move dramatically against Mobutu and his colonialist cronies.

The people hate Mobutu, chief executioner of Patrice Lumumba, the martyred leader of Congolese independence. And the Lunda Tribe, their territory split by the borders of Zaire, Angola and Zambia, furnishes the FNLC with strong support. The FNLC is planning a new offensive aimed at wresting government control from the imperialist plunderers and their native henchmen.

Though FNLC poses no political alternative to capitalism, it offers to a desperately exploited colonial people a reform program that has proven dynamic at this stage of the struggle.

But only an anticapitalist revolution will decisively throw out the colonialists and give the country to the workers and peasants now forced to turn all the national wealth of Zaire into foreign millions, while the people sicken and starve. ■

Women

1. **Diosa y Hembra: The History and Heritage of Chicanas in the U.S.**
by Martha Cotera 4.85
2. **Women and the Family**
by Leon Trotsky \$ 1.95
3. **Which Road Toward Women's Liberation: A Radical Vanguard or a Single Issue Coalition?** by Clara Fraser35
4. **The Emancipation of Women**
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8. **The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State** by F. Engels 2.95
9. **Radical Women Manifesto: Theory, Program and Structure**50
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Gay

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People of Color

14. **The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest**
by Francis Jennings 4.95
15. **Black Voices From Prison**
by Etheridge Knight 2.45

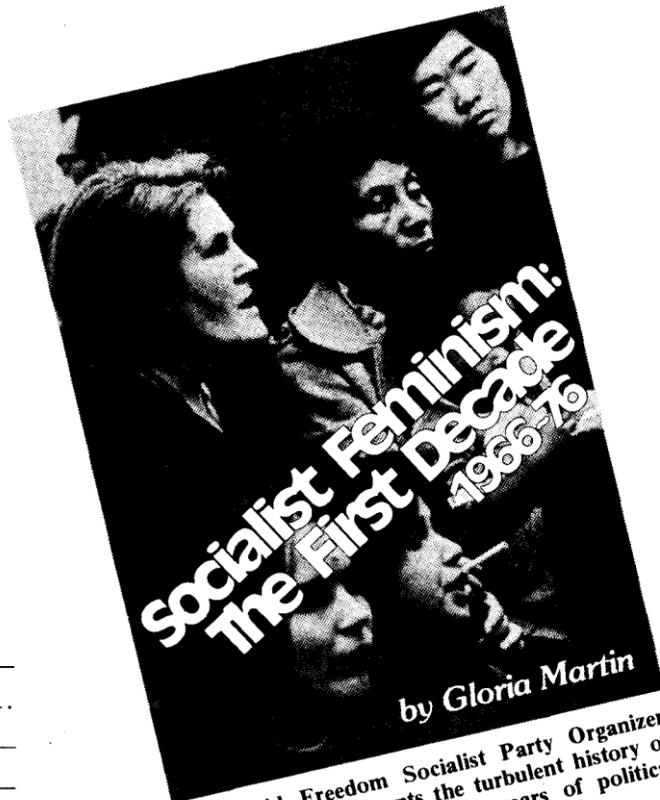
Labor

16. **American Labor Struggles**
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Poetry

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Stalinist Treachery Shatters Colono Unity

by Jesús Mena

The children are wild with joy as one of them slides home for the winning run in the traditional single-base street ball game. But their laughter contrasts sharply with the silence of the barren colonia San Martín which formerly housed thousands of Tijuana's poorest workers.

In March, the Mexican government terrorized 25,000 people into abandoning their homes in Tijuana's riverbed by claiming that the phenomenal rains would break the dam. But once the people were relocated in a tent city, Campamento de Otoy, the army bulldozed the riverbed—because the government desperately needed it for a shopping center to service a new industrial zone.

The government, plagued by economic crisis, hopes that Tijuana's cheap labor and 50% unemployment will lure U.S. and Japanese industry.

Colono Outrage

The Portillo regime thought the colonos, lacking political and trade union experience, would not resist being savagely uprooted.

But the government underestimated colono consciousness.

The colonos retaliated, organizing a committee of struggle which stopped the bulldozers. With the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), Mexican section of the Fourth International, actively participating in the leadership of this movement, the Comité de Colonos de la Zona del Río mobilized the masses to aggressively pressure the government for compensation.

And it is noteworthy that women played a key role in the leadership of the new movement.

The colonos understood fully that only mass actions would force the government to meet their demands, yet they also explored every possible legal recourse, including the futile sending of two delegations to meet with President Portillo.

On June 25, the Comité passed a resolution giving the governor 15 days to justly compensate the dispossessed. Should he fail, the Comité vowed that the 1500 families living in the tent city would return to the riverbed.

Up to this point, the Mexican Communist Party, though critical of the street demonstrators for "flirting with repression," participated in the struggle. But land seizures were more than their weak reformist hearts could handle.

Fearful of losing their newly-acquired legal status as a political party, the CP criminally engineered a split in the colono movement and formed a countercommittee.

The counterrevolutionary Stalinists informed the press that they were the true colono representatives and that the original committee was "manipulated by Trotskyite foreign elements." And when a woman leader of the colono movement denounced the CP publicly for this vicious red-baiting, the Stalinists took her to court for defamation of character. They then unleashed a campaign of intimidation, warning colonos that the land seizure tactic would lead them into a massacre.

The CP countercommittee did not succeed, but the uproar stopped the colonos' momentum. The split and the mudslinging defused and demoralized the masses. With doubt and confusion reigning in Tent City, the mass return to the lands was indefinitely postponed.

Two Steps Forward, One Step Backward

The land-seizure movement was derailed, but its very creation was a giant step forward.

More than 1200 families still have a home because of the militant struggle against the state. The working class has begun to understand its own strength and has gained valuable self-confidence. The dynamic intervention of the PRT has exposed thousands to a class analysis of Mexican society. And, through the support of the Mexican Solidarity Committee organized in Los Angeles (with CRSP in the forefront), the colonos experienced the excitement of international solidarity.

Scores of colonos today, despite the despicable machinations of the Stalinists, have learned to appreciate the need for and benefits of an international movement of worker solidarity.

The saga of Tijuana, Baja California, is one of heroism and tragedy, demonstrating in miniature the worldwide struggle between the virus of Stalinist reformism and the forces of authentic revolution. ■



The Mexican government bulldozed the colonia San Martín, displacing thousands of Tijuana's poorest workers.

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RW directory

by Edith and Milton Zaslow

Edith and Milton Zaslow, veteran Trotskyists, recently visited Cuba. This is the second and concluding section of their report. The first installment (published in our Summer issue, Volume 4, Number 2) included an examination of economic inequality, the status of women and gays, education and housing in the new Cuba.

Legal System

The Cuban legal system has made important advances over elitist bourgeois court procedures.

Local courts are popular tribunals; a panel of neighbors of the accused combines the functions of interrogator, judge and jury. Only minor offenses are tried in these courts, and sentences, correspondingly limited, are often some form of corrective, useful labor rather than jail.

All courts are open to the public, and we attended a provincial court trial in Havana. The accused was charged with embezzling funds from a state enterprise—a serious crime in Cuba. A panel of five judges presided; two were professionals and three elected laypersons. Two of the judges, including the president and the prosecuting attorney, were women.

The proceedings, based on the advocacy system, were informal compared to bourgeois courts. The attorney for the accused presented a vigorous defense and the judges were attentive and unbiased.

The defendant faced up to twenty years in prison if convicted and could have been sentenced to death. But

The regime rests primarily on the firm support of the masses, not on the army or secret police

capital punishment has only been meted out to armed counterrevolutionaries (no such cases in recent years).

We were told that most prisoners do not remain in jail long, and can transfer to a work project and be released when they are deemed to be rehabilitated.

When we asked people about political "crimes" involving revolutionary dissenters, they were genuinely perplexed. No one had ever heard of such a thing. Yet Posadistas (a group of so-called Trotskyists) were imprisoned many years ago.

A dismaying note on Cuban crime and punishment was Castro's pronouncement to the second session of the National People's Power Assembly, held during our visit:

Yes, measures have been taken—and we're going to wage an all-out battle against crime! The Council of State is already studying a decree-law and stiffening certain types of punishment to help our Ministry of the Interior agencies in their battle against crime.

This tough, law-and-order line sounded all too familiar. We had hoped that a "socialist" government would have more humanistic methods for dealing with antisocial behavior.

Foreign Policy

Cuba's foreign policy is shaped by (1) the socialist character of the revolution, (2) the desperate need for trade and aid, and (3) the pragmatic, opportunist tendencies of the leadership.

The anticapitalist nature of the revolution led Cuba to a rupture with the U.S. And the revolutionary internationalist orientation of the first decade brought the country into conflict with the Kremlin and the reformist Communist Parties of Latin America. The Castro regime avoided dependence on either U.S. imperialism or the Soviet bureaucracy, opting instead for spreading the revolution in Latin America.

In 1967, Fidel declared open political war against the Latin American CPs, and in 1968 purged Anabel

Escalante and the hard-core Stalinist bureaucrats from the Cuban CP.

Unfortunately, the attempt to duplicate throughout Latin America Cuba's guerrilla road to power resulted in devastating defeats culminating in the martyrdom of Che Guevara.

Che's Bolivian adventure collapsed, Moscow tightened the economic screws, and Cuba faced isolation and strangulation. The regime concluded that its only hope lay in a turn to the Soviet Union, even though the price was uncritical support of Kremlin policies.

Castro's endorsement of the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia signaled the turn. Cuba soon became integrated into COMCON (a Soviet-led economic association of Stalinist countries) and into Moscow's international operations. The reconstructed Cuban

Cuba wears an ideological straitjacket and the workers are politically powerless

CP aligned with the conservative Latin American CPs to support bourgeois reformist governments.

Cuban doors were opened wide to Russian influence. Cubans are bombarded today with Russian posters, books, movies, and television programs.

In the early revolutionary years, bookstores carried the works of Trotsky and other independent writers. Today, a depressing uniformity prevails everywhere. Most books, pamphlets and texts on sociological matters are translations from the Russian. The Soviet regime, its ideology, and its foreign policy are promoted as the model for Cuba. No criticism of Soviet policies is seen or heard, and it appears that none would be tolerated.

The reason for this blatant Russophilism is easy to locate. By 1974, 60% of Cuba's trade was with COMCON countries, 46% with the Soviet Union itself. The USSR supplies Cuba with wheat, oil, transportation equipment, semi-finished goods, consumer durables and much more, under extraordinary trade terms.

In 1972 Cuba and the USSR concluded a major trade agreement. The key provisions were:

1) Payment of Cuban debts deferred until 1986, with a 25-year payoff at no interest.

2) A new large-scale trade agreement transacted on the same terms.

3) A credit of 300 million rubles granted to Cuba for purchase of Russian capital goods and technology, with a 25-year payoff at very low interest.

To further sweeten the deal, the Soviets concluded a longterm arrangement to buy Cuba's entire sugar crop at double the world market price (11¢ per pound vs. 5¢). The price was also pegged to Cuba's import prices on a sliding scale; by 1976, Russia was paying Cuba 30¢ per pound while the world price was 13¢-14¢. A similar deal covered Cuba's nickel production.

Cuba was thereby protected from wildly fluctuating world market prices and provided with the stability so indispensable to planning.

These terms were established "entirely at the initiative of the Soviet Union," said Castro. "Such generous relations have no precedent in the history of mankind." This is no doubt true. A reliable, friendly government in Cuba is very important to the Kremlin in its global conflict with U.S. imperialism. And since Cuba is too distant to be kept in line by military might, like Eastern Europe, once Cuba fell into line, the "generous relations" followed.

Still, Cuba's foreign policy, like everything else about it, is contradictory. We have noted some of the negative aspects. On the other hand, a spirit of internationalism pervades the population, a sentiment consciously generated by the regime. Gigantic signs and posters are displayed everywhere.

Elementary school children who were learning to assemble rifles declared in their rehearsed greetings to us that they were ready to go anywhere in the world to help their oppressed brothers and sisters fight for liberation. More than 100,000 Cubans volunteered to fight in Angola. And we spoke to young returnees

Report from



Graphic based on Cuban poster

from Africa, who were motivated by genuine communist and internationalist sentiments.

Cuba's intervention in Africa was obviously undertaken independently of Moscow and with the enthusiastic support of the Cuban people. One hears no reports of a similar international consciousness in the Soviet Union!

Political Structure

After 17 years of arbitrary rule, the Castro leadership institutionalized the new order and consolidated its regime. Cuba is now governed at all levels by elected representatives and officials.

At the base of Cuban society are CDRs (Committees for the Defense of the Revolution), even

The fatal flaw is the institutionalized political monolithism

though they lack legal status in the state structure. These grass roots, neighborhood assemblies were established in 1960 to ferret out saboteurs and counterrevolutionaries. Their functions have since



been expanded to include mobilization of the masses for campaigns and emergencies (cane cutting, mass inoculations, paper recycling, political education, street cleaning, etc.), election of judges for the popular tribunals, and discussion of major legislation.

CDRs are the basic units of the political structure, even though they include only supporters of the revolution; technically, the local constituency includes every Cuban citizen in the area. Each local electoral constituency nominates a candidate to the **municipal assembly**; six or seven of these units combine to elect one delegate, which assures a choice of candidates. The constitution explicitly provides for multiple candidates at all levels.

The municipal assemblies are organs of power in their jurisdictions, and also nominate and elect delegates to both the **provisional** and **national assemblies**.

The National Assembly elects the Council of Ministers and Council of State. According to the constitution, the assemblies exercise strict control over the executive committees and administrators through working commissions which oversee and direct the work of these officials.

Two main principles are emphasized: accountability and recall. Instead of the electorate casting votes and then abdicating all power to professional

politicians, the constituents at each level meet frequently. Elected delegates and officials must report to these meetings and receive directives. Constituents have the right to recall these office holders at any time, a right that we were told is exercised.

Popular discussion precedes decisions of the National Assembly on major legislation (Family Code, Constitution, etc.). These discussions take place in thousands of meetings throughout the country in the CDRs, unions, women's organizations, work places, and schools. (As we previously reported, animated debates raged over the New Family Code.) Amendments are proposed and votes taken; all amendments submitted to the National Assembly are considered and many adopted in the final drafting.

The economy is directed by a central planning board elected by the National Assembly. The newly established provincial and municipal assemblies assume responsibility for production and services within their jurisdiction, and implement the central plan.

Factory managers are appointed by government agencies, but are obliged to consult with advisory committees composed of representatives of the workers, the party and the government. We were informed that workers exercise considerable control through these committees and workers assemblies, and have even forced the removal of managers.

Political System

How does Cuba's political system measure up to the norms of a workers state as theorized by Marxists? How does it compare with the Paris Commune or the pre-Stalin USSR?

Many features of the Cuban state correspond to these norms: popular committees at the base, a

Cuba should be unconditionally defended against any attempt to turn back the clock of history

pyramided system, accountability and control of all elected officials, the option of instant recall, multiple candidates, and mass discussions on national policy.

And yet the workers do not rule Cuba.

One obvious defect is the absence of factory councils; the basic units are solely geographical. Much more serious is the lack of a provision limiting the salaries of officials to that of skilled workers. But the fatal flaw is the **institutionalized political monolithism**.

The Communist Party is the only legal party, and no tendencies are permitted within it. By constitutional provision, all electoral and nominating commissions must be headed by a CP representative. The entire electoral process is thus reduced to a façade with no real democratic content; without the opportunity to choose among alternate **policies**, the masses are unable to make meaningful decisions.

When we asked whether competing candidates sought votes on the basis of respective ideas or policies, the response was, "Candidates are chosen according to their records and abilities. The party decides questions of policy." But no tendencies are permitted within the party, thus the ranks are presented with a single line from above and deprived of the right to decide.

Consequently, the top party leadership makes all the important decisions, and the monolithic single party, single tendency system results in an all-powerful ruler. Castro is President of the Council of Ministers and Council of State, First Secretary of the Party, and Commander in Chief of the armed forces, with veto power in all matters.

Nature of the Cuban State

We are convinced that the sociological or class character of the state is that of a transitional society based on a socialized economy, a **bureaucratized workers state**.

Anyone observing life in Cuba today with an open mind must realize that a profound social revolution has occurred which transformed Cuba into a society

that benefits the mass of producers. Production is regulated by conscious planning, not the blind laws of the market. The aim of production is to expand use values, not exchange value. No contradiction between

A spirit of internationalism, consciously generated by the regime, pervades the population

social production and private appropriation exists, no cyclical crises, no built-in reserve army of labor, no overproduction, no extremes of wealth and poverty.

Cuba is a collective society, clearly revolutionary and progressive as compared to capitalism. It should be defended unconditionally against any attempt to turn back the clock of history.

But the bureaucratic, repressive nature of the Castro regime is undeniable. Cuba wears an ideological straitjacket, and the workers are politically powerless. All experience teaches that the interests of the masses and their socialist future can only be advanced through the exercise of power by the workers themselves, and even the most benevolent "Jefe" is no substitute.

What is the extent of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Cuban workers state? Has it reached the point of no return short of the revolutionary overthrow of the regime—short of a political revolution, as in the case of the USSR?

We do not think so.

The only response to a perspective of **any** kind of revolution in Cuba today would come from the counterrevolutionaries. There appears to be no social base among the workers, peasants, or general supporters of the revolution for such a policy, and this is not due primarily to any political backwardness on their part. The fact is the bureaucracy has not yet crystallized into an aristocratic caste with interests that fundamentally conflict with the working class, as in the USSR. The bureaucracy has not yet converted the state into an instrument for the perpetuation of its own power and privileges. The regime's power does not rest primarily on the army and secret police, but on the firm support of the masses.

Thus, the possibility of the assumption of power by the workers, through struggle but within the framework of the existing state apparatus, cannot be ruled out.

The progressive forms of the political structure of Cuba (non-existent in other noncapitalist states) are highly significant. Under conditions of mass upsurge, it is possible that life could be breathed into the structural forms. Competing candidates could become instruments for conflicting ideas and tendencies, and

A friendly government in Cuba is vital to the Kremlin

the popular committees could be converted into organs of struggle and potential organs of genuine popular power.

We conclude that socialists must combine unconditional support of Cuba against the counter-revolution with vigorous criticism of the bureaucratic regime and its adaptation to Stalinist politics.

Socialists must also expose and condemn the brutal oppression of homosexuals, and criticize the official glorification of the nuclear family and lack of affirmative action for women.

• • •

We left Cuba deeply impressed by the overwhelming superiority of its collectivized, planned economy and the dramatic transformation in the lives of the masses. There are serious defects in Cuban life; still, we are reminded of the famous comment of Lincoln Steffens after he returned from the young Soviet Union: "***I have seen the future, and it works.***"



Detail from German poster by Karl Maria Stadler, 1914

by Murry Weiss

The gist of the theory of Permanent Revolution is that the unfinished, bourgeois democratic tasks of humanity can only be carried through by the proletariat, socialist revolution. First advanced by Marx, this theory has been tested and verified since 1848.

Trotsky fought to extend world revolution under this banner. He undertook to advance the continuity of Marxism and Leninism, to apply theory in an ever new and changing way to each fresh turn in the mutations and vicissitudes of the struggle for democracy.

And is there a more profound or wider-ranging democratic struggle than that of women? An inextricable bond links Permanent Revolution and women's liberation.

Just as Permanent Revolution was repressed and slandered, bursting into clear view only at the highest point of revolution, so the women's movement is suddenly recognized today. It has always existed but all too often slipped below the surface of even the highest Marxist consciousness.

Women everywhere are embroiled in uninterrupted, permanent struggle for equality. More than half the human race is striving to throw off the shackles of universal humiliation, super-exploitation, and exclusion from leadership.

Women continuously arise to attack the huge crime of male supremacy. And this battle of the sexes is the battle of the centuries.

Uneven and Combined Development

Woman led the earliest revolution: the leap in productivity caused by agriculture, domestication of animals, and discovery of tools and arts, all encompassed in a social system of communism, freedom and equality.

But woman's leadership was overthrown by the encroachments of wealth and private property, and woman's oppression has since been intertwined with class society—ancient slavery, Asian despotism, feudalism, and capitalism.

Since World War II, however, the composition of the world proletariat has changed. The staggering fact that women now compose 45-50% of the working class in all imperialist countries has still to be grasped as a major feature of

Permanent Revolution and Women's Emancipation

the laws of uneven and combined development as spelled out in the theory of Permanent Revolution.

The explosive formula for the women's movement is lodged in all the democratic struggles against the vast, unresolved oppressions perpetuated through the ages like an historic bookkeeping of old unpaid bills.

And all the oppressed turn eventually towards proletarian leadership and socialist revolution. The problem of problems is the crisis of leadership of the leading class, the working class. Women, in the epoch of imperialist decline, not only seek democratic rights but are a radical catalyst within all other oppressed groups and form indissoluble links among them. Women are the unacknowledged leadership of the revolutionary proletariat.

Today, the solution to the leadership crisis is inseparable from women's liberation, and the great changes among revolutionary women are changing women's status in revolutionary parties—as always.

Russian Revolutionaries

Mensheviks, Social Democrats and Stalinists oppose to Permanent Revolution the schema that unchanging, ineluctable stages must be passed through before socialism can emerge. First the bourgeois revolution, they said, in advanced capitalist countries; backward, agrarian Czarist Russia would come last.

But life defied this lifeless recipe. The permanent revolution emerged in February, 1917 in Petrograd. And who led this revolution?

Read the chapter, "Five Days," in Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution*:

The 23rd of February was International Woman's Day. Not a single organization called for strikes on that day. What is more, even a Bolshevik organization, and a most militant one—the Vyborg borough-committee, all workers—was opposing strikes. The temper of the masses...was very tense; any strike would threaten to turn into an open fight. But since the committee thought the time unripe for militant action—the party not strong enough and the workers having too few contacts with the soldiers—they decided not to call for strikes but to prepare for revolutionary action at some indefinite time in the future.

History's revolutionary party, the Bolsheviks, lagged behind events, providing no leadership. (Lenin and Trotsky were in exile.)

On the following morning, however, in spite of all directives, the women textile workers in several factories went on strike, and sent delegates to the metal workers with an appeal for support... "With reluctance," writes Kayurov, "the Bolsheviks agreed to this, and they were followed by the workers..."

The women textile workers were the *conscious factor of the highest order* needed to spark the revolt. Undeterred by any hesitancy, they won over the rest of the workers and women from all strata. They gauged the moment and acted; they exercised revolutionary statesmanship.

...A great role is played by women workers in the relation between workers and soldiers. They go up to the cordons more

boldly than men, take hold of the rifles, beseech, almost command: "Put down your bayonets—join us!" The soldiers are excited, ashamed, exchange glances, waver; someone makes up his mind first and the bayonets rise guiltily above the shoulders of the advancing crowd. The barrier is opened, a joyous and grateful "Hurrah!" shakes the air. The soldiers are surrounded. Everywhere arguments, reproaches, appeals—the revolution makes a forward step.

The role of the women workers of Petrograd is universal—but usually ignored. The refraction of fact through entrenched modes of male superiority is a pestilential scourge of all revolutionary parties and workers organizations.

Lenin returned to find the Bolsheviks supporting the bourgeois Provisional Government. He unleashed an astounding fusillade against party leaders, and urged the proletariat to seize power in its own name, through the Soviets.

Alexandra Kollantai writes:

When in April Lenin delivered his famous programmatic speech within the frame of the Soviets, I was the only one of his party comrades who took the floor to support his thesis. What hatred this particular act kindled against me.

The women textile workers and the worker-Bolsheviks also supported him against the party. Without them, the October revolution would not have happened.

Twilight of the Gods

The women textile workers of 1917 live in the Vyborgs of today.

At the other pole stands the labor bureaucracy—the main bulwark of U.S. imperialism. According to Lenin, in his preface to *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*,

...it is quite possible to bribe the labour leaders and the upper stratum of the labour aristocracy...This stratum of bourgeoisified workers, of the 'labour aristocracy,' who are quite philistine in their mode of life, in the size of their earnings and in their outlook, serve as...the principal social...prop of the bourgeoisie... the real agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement, the labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, real channels of reformism and chauvinism...they inevitably...stand side by side with the bourgeoisie...against the 'Communards.'

These white, male workers and officials are parasites on the lower-paid workers. But the dynamic of women will shatter them, neutralizing some and winning over the many who are fast losing their privileges.

Women spur the proletariat. They exhibit unmatched audacity, more audacity and still more audacity. They will unleash an incalculable revolutionary power, which, raised to the highest power of the working class, will pulverize the union bureaucrats and the imperialist butchers.

Revolutionaries of both sexes with the sense and sensibility to link up with the most bitterly oppressed will be forged into a mighty, Marxist, socialist-feminist party. Such is the promise and burning reality of the pivotal role in permanent revolution of women who dare. ■

by Fred Hyde

It was an electric moment. The chairwoman of *Mujer*, a Chicana feminist organization, was speaking to 2,500 ERA demonstrators at a July 8 rally in Seattle—and she was outraged.

"We women of color," said Janie Perez, "feel betrayed."

She turned and stared directly at Rita Shaw, longtime Socialist Workers Party and NOW activist, and a march organizer. Perez' voice rang out over the mike:

"When the sisters of the ERA Coalition refused to join the anti-Bakke rally this morning, they betrayed us. Minority women still see the women's movement as a 'white women's movement' because groups like this won't support us on minority issues. This has to be said."

Perez had good reason for anger. Several hours earlier, ERA supporters were lounging on the Federal Courthouse lawn waiting for their march to begin. Meanwhile, the anti-Bakke Committee was picketing on the Courthouse steps. Rosa Morales and other *Mujer* members asked Shaw to encourage her colleagues to join the Bakke rally—and Shaw flatly refused, telling Morales to "go and organize them yourself."

The Chicanas did just that. Joined by the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women contingent, plus many independents, they called on the ERA women to join the Bakke picketline.

Jackie Actuga, Filipina spokeswoman for the Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision, was leading a chant—"ERA SI, BAKKE NO!" As she deplored the effect of the Bakke decision on both women and minorities, ERAers drifted over to listen.

Actuga then urged everyone to attend the afternoon ERA march and the anti-Nazi rally the next day. Many did.

The Chicanas' united front policy struck a responsive chord among throngs of women sick of the divisive, one-issue-only, never-the-twain-shall-meet tactics of SWP and their respectable friends. And SWP's attempted sabotage of *Mujer*'s efforts to build Chicano support for feminism will never be forgotten.

Blissfully Ignorant

A few weeks before the ERA and Bakke demonstrations, SWP had drawn widespread contempt for another display of single-issue grandstanding.

At the Northwest Women's Action Conference, the SWP opposed an ERA resolution that included support for protective legislation.

SWP also tried to block an employment resolution endorsing a statewide gay rights bill.

SWP opposed special goals for minority women in affirmative action plans.

And Rita Shaw refused to condemn anti-Semitism, claiming she didn't know what it was.

Finally, SWP denounced the concept of a united front against fascism and reaction.

Introduced by the Hispanic Women's caucus, the resolution called for a "democratic united front to be established...including feminists, minorities, radicals, gays and working people, for...defending ourselves against rightwing attacks."

Said SWPer Kate Daier: "We must speak to our own needs; a united front would take away from the women's movement. The government, not the right wing, is the enemy. If we fight the right wing, we will lose sight of the women's movement."

"What is needed," snapped Shaw, "is not a united front but some action, a march!" Running her customary red-baiting game, she confided that "united front is just a party line," glaring at the FSP and Radical Women culprits.

Consistently defeated in debate and voted down on every disputed question, the SWP failed abysmally at this conference. The independents wanted a multi-issue program of united action and SWP, as usual, was outflanked on the left by the center!

Adolph Who?

The United Front *was* the party line of the Third International under Lenin, the Fourth International, with which SWP is aligned, and the SWP itself before its degeneration into inanity.

Not even the virulence of the American Nazi Party moves the SWP. In Chicago, SWP boycotted a June

anti-Nazi demonstration of 3,000 people, calling it "ultra-left."

What a sad contrast to the early SWP! In 1939, the SWP rallied 50,000 anti-Nazi New Yorkers to protest in Madison Square Garden. In 1945, SWP organizers Myra and Murry Weiss rallied 17,000 in Los Angeles against fascist leader Gerald L. K. Smith. But in 1978, SWP is too busy joining Peoples Front coalitions with liberals to worry about fascists.

What is SWP's party line in these days of growing reaction? Simply that every movement must exist alone, mobilizing "mass action" for particular reforms. And to hell with united self-defense of all the oppressed against the iron heel of the ruling class and its lackey proponents of bigotry.

No matter that the masses are not following liberals and unilateral movements; that every popular movement suffers a leadership crisis; that the times scream out for a radical program inside the civil rights movements. SWP's mind is made up and won't be confused by facts.

The Why and Wherefore

The SWP renunciation of the united front results from various causes:

1. Opportunist adaptation to the moderate wing of

the women's rights, gay and racial minority forces.

2. Corresponding adaptation to the labor bureaucracy.

3. Serious underestimation of the political grasp of the most exploited, who are the main bulwark against reaction today and spur labor to fulfill its role.

4. Corollary overestimation of the traditional, privileged trade unionists as the sector which must initiate and staff the united front.

The collective strength of those who care—women and men of color, gays, advanced workers, radicals, feminists, Jews—can be mustered to defeat the burgeoning forces of fascism, rightwing-conservative fright, and liberal confusion. But the SWP hesitates, waiting for certain unions to move—waiting for the white, male, skilled-labor *aristocrats*, precisely those who are not in political motion and will be the hardest to move.

Nor does the SWP work within the unions to alert them to the fascist menace; it fears antagonizing the labor officialdom.

SWP efforts to separate related political issues and block collective action are proving bankrupt. Their single-issue recipes have produced a stew so peppery and rancid that soon not even the SWP ranks will be able to digest it. ■

Single Issue-ism and the SWP— A Terminal Disorder

**The SWP condemns the United Front,
betrays minority women and gays,
and finds itself outflanked on
the left by mass activists**



ERA supporters (in box above and enlarged below) wait impatiently for the end of an anti-Bakke rally (above). When minority women invited ERA women to join the Bakke rally, SWPer Rita Shaw (left) snarled, "Go organize them yourself!"



A Case of Reverse Justice

by Ivan King and Madlyne Scott

The Supreme Court's Bakke opinion is already old news. Once the Court delivered its dilemma in the guise of a decision, the loyalists of liberalism made their peace with the verdict, and activist adventurers, after dutifully reading their quota of "in-depth analyses," drifted on to more popular arenas of protest.

It remains for revolutionary socialists and all-weather civil rights warriors to remember what a landmark decree was erected on June 28. The real message of that blurred judicial monument must be deeply etched, and the weeds of time trimmed away so its inscription will be clear to all who care: the American road has shifted definitively to the right, back to the beginning of the struggle for affirmative action.

The Supreme Court has supplanted the legal foundation of affirmative action with the hypocrisy and futility of approving undefined goals with no legal *means* of attaining them. Without specified admissions and hiring goals for minorities and women, equal opportunity monitors have no tools to measure progress. Institutional "good faith" efforts will become even more nebulous, and enforcement a cruel hoax.

The Court said, "racial considerations, yes; quotas, no," rejecting the straightforward Davis Medical School plan and applauding Harvard's subtle and convoluted scheme. But affirmative action without specified goals is like a watchdog without teeth, and implementation now depends upon the subjective inclinations of management.

The full reactionary implications of the Court's jerry-built judgment are hardly perceptible as yet; the gigantic apparatus of affirmative action, like a huge, speeding truck whose fuel line has been cut, will be carried by inertia well down the highway before its deceleration becomes obvious.

In Seattle the lily-white police and fire department guilds have already gone to court to try to reverse municipal equal opportunity goals and timetables. Some contractors, previously compliant with the city, are waffling in their commitment to hire women and minorities, and equivocating contractors have grown hostile.

Affirmative action remains, but vast amounts of energy will now be expended just to hold the line. The tragic heritage of racism and sexism lives on.

The Bakke Committee

The anti-Bakke crusade of 1977-78 furnished some relished nostalgia for movement veterans, and ecstatic hope for newer militants.

Not since the heyday of the antiwar struggle have there been endorsements by such a wide range of progressive groups — or a better illustration of the United Front.

The Bakke Committee leadership featured unprecedented ethnic diversity, a vibrant commitment to feminism, and a genuine grasp of the key, interconnected, social issues. Politically sophisticated anti-Bakke events were highlighted by imaginative music, poetry and dance. But all these right ingredients couldn't counteract the sluggish, increasingly conservative political climate. Many groups provided only token involvement of members and traditional peripheries, and the most sustained support came from Third World and socialist groups. The impressive sponsorship list never translated into truly massive action.

Pocketbook Politics

Part of the problem is that the Left, rather than expanding its positive demands, has been forced into the position of protecting past gains: ERA, abortion, union security, nuclear reforms, gay rights, Indian treaties, school integration, etc. And Bakke places radicals further on the defensive.

Another handicap is the establishment-twisted legacy of the "Youth Revolution"—neutrality and impatience with mass action as disruptive to individual development and "self-actualization."

Still another problem is the post-Watergate presumption that Nixon's banishment bought redemption from all our national sins.

But the most encompassing feature of the reactionary climate is *economic*. Panic, confusion, ignorance, and short-sighted selfishness are the root of opposition and resentment among the millions who should be the natural allies of affirmative action.

High prices stalk persistent unemployment. The monarch Capital, showing none of the vital signs of classic capitalism, is ready for the morgue. But the public awaits its resurrection, convinced by the media that only anarchy or totalitarian Communism are the alternatives. Americans fearfully cling to the familiar myths and resist what looks like further intrusion into their shaky finances. They tolerate exploitation to avoid the discomfort of a shift in ideas.

But affirmative action advances the welfare and consciousness of the working class, *despite* the uncertainty and anger it generates. White males particularly are afraid of sacrificing their economic advantage over minorities and women, though even privileged workers receive only a pittance compared to the just rewards awaiting a unified proletariat.

Running Faster to Nowhere

Affirmative action was almost an after-thought of the civil rights movements. Many progressives are ambivalent toward it. Special hiring and admissions, they fear, imply inferiority, lowered "qualifications," or special privileges.

But truly equal access to training and jobs requires *compensatory opportunity to offset centuries of headstart and special privilege afforded whites and males*.

Affirmative action is neither a reward to minorities and women nor punishment for white males. It is a mechanism for allowing the abilities of the lower strata of the proletariat to be recognized, developed, and utilized at prevailing, not depressed, wage rates.

But the millions who endorsed the Black civil rights revolution of the '60s now resist the logic and fairness of affirmative action—for the movement is at their own doorstep and the economic times are a-changing. Fearing technological displacement and further inflationary pain in their wallets, they jealously guard their dwindling portion of crumbs.

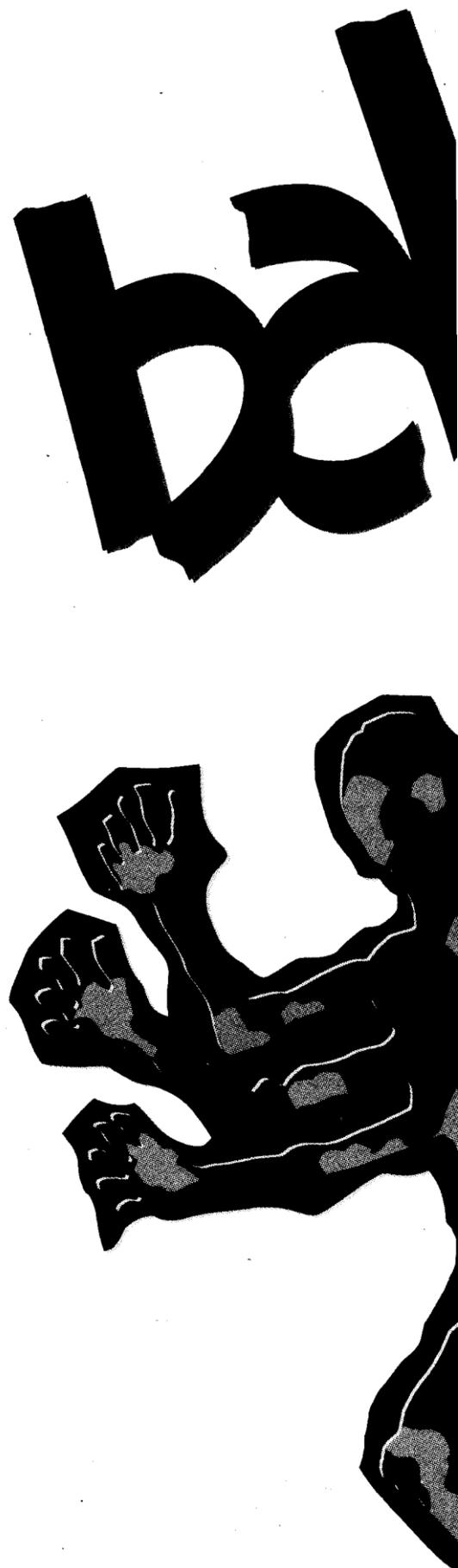
Women and minorities are losing economic status at a more alarming rate than white men, yet the bosses easily manipulate white males to stand pat and offer no help. The ruling class generates and feeds white male fright and provokes race and sex prejudice, never defining the historical justification for affirmative action.

White Males: Assembling a Consciousness

White men workers, the secondary beneficiaries of racism and sexism, have an inkling that endless bargaining over a swiftly shrinking pie is no answer. A unified and compassionate working class could take over the kitchen and bake a bigger, juicier pie. But unity is a mirage while bigotry exists among workers of different races, sexes, and skill levels. Affirmative action creates integration on the job and in training, hence opens communication and fosters solidarity.

Sociologists know that equality of opportunity cannot exist without equality of condition. Cruel and destructive competition prevails when there is no parity of income, status, and power among workers, and when few people are permitted to live creative, self-motivated lives. Though minorities and women now throng the lower decks of this leaking American

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La opinión de la Corte Suprema en el caso Bakke ya es una noticia vieja. Una vez que la Corte entregó su dilema con la apariencia de ser una decisión, los leales al liberalismo hicieron la paz con el veredicto, y los aventureros activistas, después de leer obedientemente su cuota de "análisis profundo," derivaron hacia más populares campos de protesta.

Queda para los socialistas revolucionarios y los luchadores por los derechos civiles en todas las circunstancias, recordar que un decreto memorable se erigió el 28 de junio. El real mensaje de ese borroso monumento jurídico debe ser profundamente cincelado, y las enredaderas que lo oscurecen, podadas, para todos los que se preocupan por el camino norteamericano definitivamente desviado hacia la derecha—y que nosotros hemos vuelto al comienzo de la lucha por la acción afirmativa.

La Corte Suprema ha suplantado la fundación legal de la acción afirmativa con la hipocresía y la futilidad de perseguir objetivos indefinidos—sin ningún método legal para obtenerlos. Sin fines específicos para la admisión y la otorgación de empleo para las minorías y las mujeres, los monitores de la igualdad de oportunidades no tienen instrumentos con qué medir el progreso. Los esfuerzos de la institucional "buena voluntad" llegarán a ser aún más nebulosos, y su ejecución una cruel burla.

Las máximas implicaciones reaccionarias del juicio mal construido por la Corte apenas aún son perceptibles; el gigantesco aparato de la acción afirmativa como un inmenso camión a toda velocidad cuyo tubo de combustible ha sido cortado, será llevado por su propia inercia bastante lejos en el camino antes de que su cambio de velocidad sea notado.

Pero en Seattle, los gremios de pura raza blanca de los departamentos de la policía y bomberos ya han ido a la corte, para tratar de poner en marcha atrás los objetivos y los itinerarios municipales de la igualdad de oportunidades. Algunos contratistas anteriormente condescendientes con la ciudad están vacilando en su compromiso de emplear mujeres y minorías, mientras los ya vacilantes desde el principio se han vuelto francamente hostiles.

La acción afirmativa queda, pero una vasta suma de energía será gastada para mantener lo ganado. La trágica herencia del racismo y del sexismo aún continúa.

El Comité Bakke

La cruzada anti-Bakke de 1977-78 les proporcionó algún goce nostálgico a los veteranos del movimiento y una esperanza extática a los nuevos militantes.

Ni desde el apogeo de la lucha contra la guerra han habido apoyos de tan amplia variedad de grupos progresivos, ni ha habido mejor muestra de un frente unido.

El liderato del comité Bakke destaca una diversidad étnica sin precedente, un vibrante compromiso con el feminismo, y una genuina comprensión de los problemas claves, conectados entre sí. Los acontecimientos anti-Bakke, políticamente sofisticados, han hecho resaltar la música, la poesía y la danza. Pero aún así, todos estos adecuados ingredientes no pudieron contrarrestar el pesado clima político cada vez más conservador. Muchos grupos sólo proporcionaron una muestra del compromiso de sus miembros y de sus periferias tradicionales, mientras la ayuda más nutrida vino de grupos socialistas y del tercer mundo. La lista impresionante del patrocinio nunca se tradujo en una acción verdaderamente masiva.

La Política de Billetera

Parte del problema es que la izquierda, en vez de expandir sus demandas positivas, ha sido forzada hacia una posición de protección de los adelantos del pasado: ERA, aborto, seguri-

dad sindical, reformas nucleares, derechos de los homosexuales, tratados indios, integración de las escuelas, etc. Y Bakke pone a los izquierdistas militantes aún más en la defensiva.

Otro obstáculo es el legado de la "revolución de la juventud," pervertido por las instituciones ya establecidas—neutralidad hacia e impaciencia con la acción masiva como elemento desorganizador del desarrollo del individuo y de su "auto-realización." Y otro problema es la presunción post-Watergate: se cree que el destierro de Nixon compró la redención de todos nuestros pecados nacionales.

Pero, el rasgo más abarcador del clima revolucionario es lo **económico**. El pánico, la confusión, la ignorancia, y el egoísmo junto con la falta de perspicacia constituyen la raíz de la oposición y el resentimiento entre millones de quienes deberían ser los aliados naturales de la acción afirmativa.

Homenaje al Cadáver Capitalista

Altos precios acechan a la persistente cesantía. El monarca Capital, no mostrando ninguna de las señales vitales del capitalismo clásico, está listo para ir a la morgue; mientras, el público espera su resurrección, convencido por las instituciones de la sociedad que la anarquía o el comunismo totalitarista son las únicas alternativas. Los norteamericanos se adhieren con temor a los mitos familiares y resisten cualquiera cosa que les parezca una intrusión adicional dentro de su frágil seguridad económica. Toleran la explotación con tal de evitar el malestar que les produce un cambio de ideas.

La acción afirmativa promueve al bienestar y a la conciencia de la clase trabajadora, a despecho de la incertidumbre y la cólera que engendra. Los hombres blancos, particularmente, tienen miedo de sacrificar la superioridad económica de que gozan sobre las minorías y las mujeres. Incluso los trabajadores privilegiados reciben sólo una pitanzita comparada con las recompensas justas que esperan al proletariado unificado.

Estableciendo Contacto con el Hombre Trabajador Blanco

Se ha logrado un apoyo considerable para la acción afirmativa desde algunos sectores de trabajadores blancos, y **se puede** extender este apoyo haciendo causa común con ellos en sus huelgas, en sus demandas para contratos buenos y para seguridad sindical, pleno empleo, protección al consumidor, y seguridad en el trabajo. Se puede lograr también apoyo revelando, concluyentemente, la esterilidad circular de las panaceas económicas del gobierno.

El Título VII, por ejemplo, el nuevo "componente del sector privado" del Acto de Instrucción y Educación Comprensiva, ilustra de una manera impresionante la duplicidad de la economía reformista. Elogiado como una solución para la desocupación, tanto general como minoritaria, en realidad, es un golpe de fortuna de millones de dólares para los grandes comerciantes. Los fondos, ostentosamente distribuidos para reducir el número de los "estructuralmente" desocupados (formalmente llamados "hardcore" [los inmutables]), no crearán nuevos empleos. El Título VII meramente subsidia los costos de instrucción y salarios para las compañías que llenan sus vacantes con miembros pertenecientes a grupos de alto nivel de desocupación. Estos negocios emplean mano de obra barata, minando el sindicalismo, y escapando de su obligación de pagar la instrucción del trabajador. Como la mayoría de los incentivos del gobierno para estimular la economía, estos fondos no crean empleos. Las compañías usan los beneficios indirectos sólo para expandir su automatización y aumentar la tendencia hacia la industria de capital intensivo, a expensas de la seguridad de empleo.

sigue en la página 18

Un Caso de Justicia al Revés

Bakke



Theoretical Cornerstones of

(excerpts from the
great male marxists)

Charles Fourier Social advances and changes of periods are brought about by virtue of the progress of women towards liberty, and the decadences of the social order are brought about by virtue of the decrease of liberty of women. . . there is no cause which so rapidly produces social progress or decline as a change in the condition of women. I have already said that the adoption of closed harems would of itself soon transform us into barbarians, and the opening of the harems would of itself cause a people to pass from barbarism to civilisation. To sum up, *the extension of privileges to women is the general principle of all social progress.*

Design for Utopia, 1808

Karl Marx Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.

On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. In its completely developed form this family exists only among the bourgeoisie. But this state of things finds its complement in the practical absence of the family among the proletarians, and in public prostitution.

The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.

Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents? To this crime we plead guilty. . .

The bourgeois claptrap about the family and education, about the hallowed correlation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the action of modern industry, all family ties among the proletarians are torn asunder, and their children transformed into simple articles of commerce and instruments of labor. . .

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

The Communist Manifesto, 1848

However terrible and disgusting the dissolution, under the capitalist system, of the old family ties may appear, nevertheless, modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part of the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economical foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes.

Capital, Vol. I, 1867

The modern family contains in germ not only slavery but also serfdom, since from the beginning it is related to agricultural services. It contains in miniature all the contradictions that later extend throughout society and its state.

Quoted in Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, 1891

Lewis Henry Morgan The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction. *Democracy in government, brotherhood in society, equality in rights and privileges, and universal education, foreshadow the next higher plane of society to which experience, intelligence and knowledge are steadily tending. It will be a revival, in a higher form, of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes.*

Ancient Society, 1877

Frederick Engels *The overthrow of mother-right was the world historical defeat of the female sex.* The man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude, she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children. This degraded position of the woman has gradually been palliated and glossed over, and sometimes clothed in a milder form; in no sense has it been abolished.

...

Famulus means domestic slave, and **familia** is the total number of slaves belonging to one man. . . The term was invented by the Romans to denote a new social organism whose head ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves, and was invested under Roman paternal power with rights of life and death over them all.

...

Monogamous marriage comes on the scene as the subjugation of the one sex by the other; it announces a struggle between the sexes unknown throughout the whole previous prehistoric period. In an old unpublished manuscript, written by Marx and myself in 1846*, I find the words: 'The first division of labor is that between man and woman for the propagation of children.' And today I can add: *The first class opposition that appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression coincides with that of the female sex by the male.*

...

The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife, and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as its molecules.

. . . the husband is obliged to earn a living and support his family, and that in itself gives him a position of supremacy, without any need for special titles and privileges. *Within the family he is the bourgeois and the wife represents the proletariat.*

. . . the peculiar character of the supremacy of the husband over the wife in the modern family, the necessity of creating real social equality between them, and the way to do it, will only be seen in the clear light of day when both possess legally complete equality of rights. *Then it will be plain that the first condition for the liberation of the wife is to bring the whole female sex back into public industry, and that this in turn demands the abolition of the monogamous family as the economic unit of society.*

...

. . . when a new generation has grown up. . . a generation of women who have never known what it is to give themselves to their lover from fear of the economic consequences. . . When these people are in the world, they will care precious little what anybody today thinks they ought to do; they will make their own practice and their corresponding public opinion about the practice of each individual—and that will be the end of it.

The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, 1891

**The German Ideology*

Daniel DeL

woman. The shot that r touches a nerve that ache ist world. There is no wo one way or other is a suff While upon the woman capitalist society rests he sisters in all the upper ra burden, or, to be plainer to the point, they are awa tion of the 'Rights of Wo the heaviest sufferers un by adds swing to the blo efforts to overthrow the adversary by raising sym inciting sedition among Preface to Bebel's

August Beb

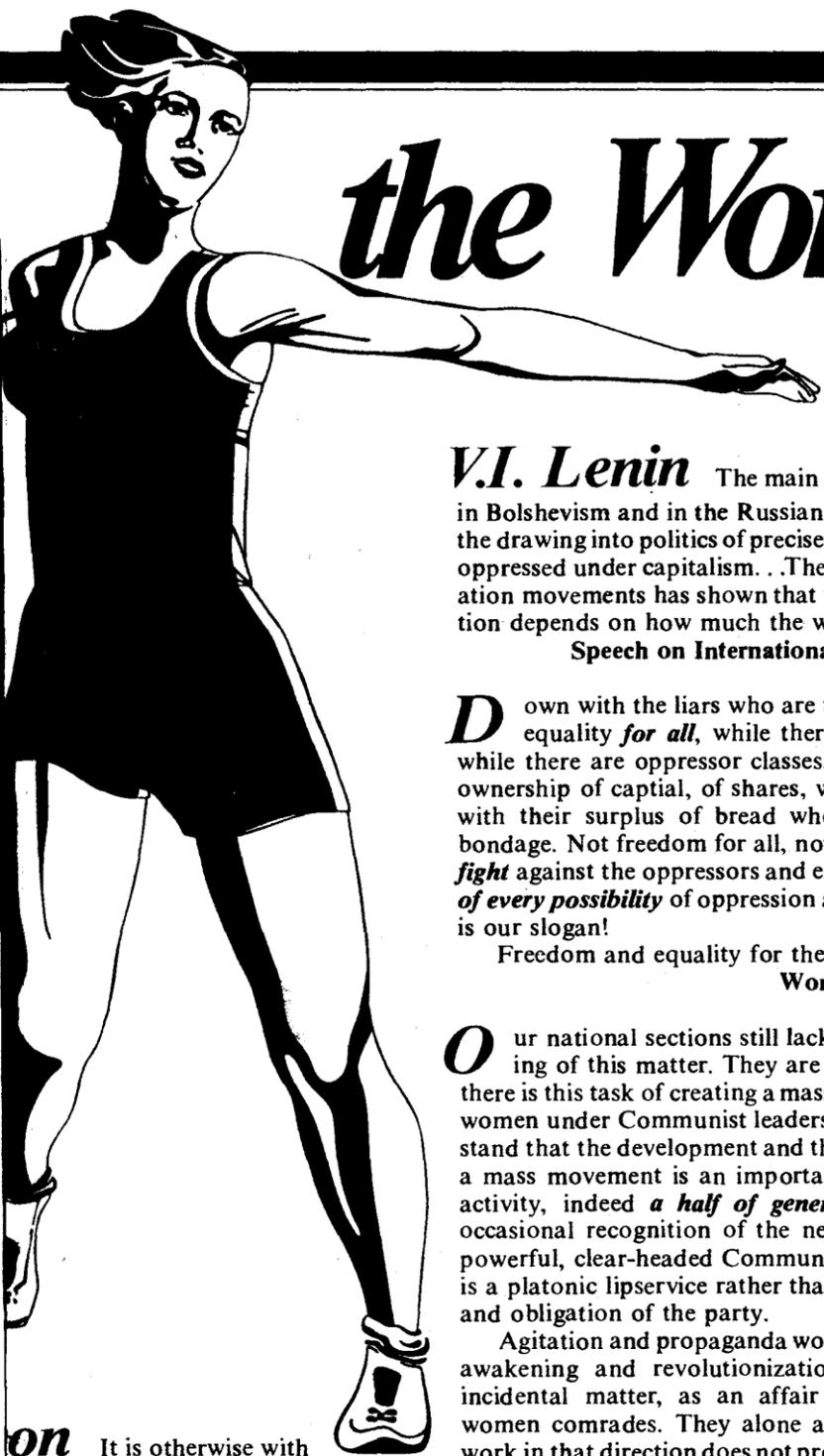
mon woman may be show she leads him in one thin *being to come into bond male slave existed.*

All social dependence the economic dependen oppressor. In this conditi early day down to our o ment of human society p

The reign of the mo equality for all; the rise reign of private property, enslavement of woman.

. . . With the rule of m the community; they w and all leading influenc from her, but claims ex lates that, she is guilty of can afflict the new citizen house stranger's children among all ancient nation is punished with death o

the Woman Question



V.I. Lenin The main and fundamental thing in Bolshevism and in the Russian October Revolution is the drawing into politics of precisely those who were most oppressed under capitalism. . . The experience of all liberation movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on how much the woman takes part in it.
Speech on International Women's Day, 1918

Down with the liars who are talking of freedom and equality *for all*, while there is an oppressed sex, while there are oppressor classes, while there is private ownership of capital, of shares, while there are well-fed with their surplus of bread who keep the hungry in bondage. Not freedom for all, not equality for all, but a *fight* against the oppressors and exploiters, the *abolition of every possibility* of oppression and exploitation—that is our slogan!

Freedom and equality for the oppressed sex!
Women and Society, 1919

Our national sections still lack a correct understanding of this matter. They are standing idly by while there is this task of creating a mass movement of working women under Communist leadership. They don't understand that the development and the management of such a mass movement is an important part of entire party activity, indeed *a half of general party work*. Their occasional recognition of the necessity and value of a powerful, clear-headed Communist women's movement is a platonic lipservice rather than the constant concern and obligation of the party.

Agitation and propaganda work among women, their awakening and revolutionization, is regarded as an incidental matter, as an affair which only concerns women comrades. They alone are reproached because work in that direction does not proceed more quickly and more vigorously. That is wrong, quite wrong! Real separatism. . . In the final analysis it is nothing but an under-estimation of women and their accomplishments. Yes, indeed! Unfortunately it is still true to say of many of our comrades, 'scratch a Communist and find a Philistine.' Of course, you must scratch the sensitive spot, their mentality as regards woman. Could there be a more damning proof of this than callous acquiescence of men who see how women grow worn out in the petty, monotonous household work.

•••

It is perfectly right for us to put forward demands for the benefit of women. . . Our demands are no more than practical conclusions, drawn by us from the crying needs and disgraceful humiliations that. . . woman must bear under the bourgeois system. We demonstrate thereby that we are aware of these needs and of the oppression of women, that we are conscious of the privileged position of the men, and that we hate—yes, hate—and want to remove whatever oppresses and harasses the working woman, the wife of the worker, the peasant woman, the wife of the little man, and even. . . the woman of the propertied classes.

•••

You must lay stress on the unbreakable connection between woman's human and social position and the private ownership of the means of production. This will draw a strong, ineradicable line against the bourgeois movement for the 'emancipation of women.' This will also give us a basis for examining the woman question as part of the social, working-class question, and to bind it firmly with the proletarian class struggle and the revolution. The communist women's movement itself must be a mass movement, a part of the general mass movements; and not only of the proletarians, but of all the exploited and oppressed, of all victims of capitalism or of the dominant class.

. . . We must have our own groups to work among them (women), special methods of agitation, and special forms of organisation. This is not bourgeois feminism; it is practical revolutionary expediency.

From Clara Zetkin, *Lenin on the Woman Question*, 1920

Leon Trotsky . . . during a more or less protracted epoch prior to the revolution, within the male section of the working class, especially among its more privileged layers, there accumulates excessive caution, excessive conservatism, too much opportunism and over-much adaptivity. And the reaction to their own backwardness and degradation which is evinced by women, . . . can play a colossal role in the revolutionary movement as a whole.

In the progress of the world labor movement, women proletarians play a colossal role. I say this not because I am addressing a women's conference but because sheer numbers indicate what an important part the woman worker plays in the mechanism of the capitalist world—in France, in Germany, in America, in every capitalist country. Statistics inform me that in Japan there are many more women than men workers; and consequently, if the data at my disposal is credible, in the labor movement of Japan they, the proletarian women, are destined to play the decisive role and to occupy the decisive place. And generally speaking, in the world labor movement the woman worker stands closest precisely to . . . the section of labor which is the most backward, the most oppressed, the lowliest of the lowly. And just because of this, in the years of the colossal world revolution this section of the proletariat can and must become *the most active, the most revolutionary and the most initiative section of the working class*.

The First Five Years of the Communist International, Vol. I, 1921

The strength and meaning of Bolshevism consists in the fact that it appeals to the oppressed masses and not to the upper strata of the working class. . . They feel in their innermost hearts that it is a teaching for the oppressed and exploited, for hundreds of millions to whom it is the only possible salvation. That is why Leninism meets with a passionate response among working women, who are the most oppressed section of society.

Prospects and Tasks in the Far East, 1924

. . . The depth of the question of the mother is expressed in the fact that she is, in essence, a point where all the decisive strands of economic and cultural work intersect. . .

Just as it was impossible to approach the construction of the soviet state without freeing the peasantry from the tangles of serfdom, so it is impossible to move to socialism without freeing the peasant woman and the woman worker from the bondage of family and household. And if we used to determine the maturity of a revolutionary worker not only by his attitude to the capitalist but also by his attitude to the peasant. . . now we can and must measure the socialist maturity of the worker and the progressive peasant by their attitude to woman and child, by their understanding of the necessity of freeing from bondage the mother in penal servitude, of giving her the possibility of straightening her back and involving herself as she should in social and cultural life.

Women and the Family, 1925

Opportunist organizations by their very nature concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both the youth and the woman worker. The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as wage-earner and as a housewife. The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class, consequently among the women workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice.

Down with the bureaucracy and careerism! Open the road to the Youth! Turn to the woman worker!

The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International, 1938

on It is otherwise with up the wrongs done to her om end to end in the capital- whatever her station, but in , a victim in modern society. ne working class the cross of st in all ways, not one of her but bears some share of the the smudge,—what is more fit. Accordingly, the invoca- not only rouses the spirit of capitalist society, and there- of the male militants in their ting order, it also lames the nizers in his own camp, and own retinue.

man Under Socialism, 1904

However much in com- have with the workingman, *woman was the first human she was a slave before the*

oppression has its roots in of the oppressed upon the oman finds herself, from an The history of the develop- that fact everywhere.

right implied communism; the father-right implied the with it, the oppression and

women lost their position in cluded from the councils in exacts conjugal fidelity on for himself. If she vio- most serious deception that thereby introduces into his eirs of his property. Hence breach of conjugal fidelity very.

man Under Socialism, 1904

by Sam Deaderick

Suddenly, in the past two years, the gay liberation movement has catapulted into an unprecedented visibility. Anybody who reads the newspapers or newsmagazines, watches TV, or listens to the radio, cannot fail to realize that a showdown fight for gay survival is raging.

As soon as Anita Bryant began her melodramatic mission to save all that Christendom holds pure in America from the spectre of rampaging degeneracy, the media leaped to popularize her Cotton Mather-like denunciations of gays. The responses of gay activists were quoted, and television screens were filled with the sensationalized images of hundreds of thousands of gays marching in the streets in angry protest against Bryant and her ilk.

For the vast majority of heterosexuals, and for many gays as well, the furor over homosexual civil rights is their only acquaintance with the gay liberation movement. But the war for gay dignity isn't new.

For long centuries human beings who engaged in homosexual behavior have been violently persecuted—burned at the stake, lobotomized, castrated, subjected to shock treatment, raped, dosed with psychoactive drugs, banished and ostracized from the countries they helped to build.

But persecution sparks revolt, and gay resistance began early in history. The gay activists of today are the daughters and sons of those heroic figures who hurled defiance against heterosexism and the subjugation of women ever since the overthrow of the ancient, communistic, matriarchal gens.

I. GAYS IN ANTIQUITY

Homosexual behavior was an accepted part of every ancient culture.

Art and literature from every area of the world bear testament to the celebration of homoeroticism. In Egypt, Persia, the Orient, Asia, Africa, Western Europe, the Mediterranean, and pre-Columbian America, homosexual behavior was common, and there is no evidence that any ancient society ever punished anyone for same-sex love.

Individuals in antiquity were not classified according to their sexual behavior. Homosexual practice was widespread, but nobody was set apart *as a homosexual*. Such behavior was viewed as entirely natural, and sexual relations between individuals of the same sex were institutionalized as part of the ritual of many different religions.

Gay resistance was an inseparable component of the fight against Catholicism

The ancient matriarchal cultures allowed free expression of sexuality.

Not until the rise of patriarchy and the institution of the monogamous nuclear family were strict standards of heterosexual "morality" invented and enforced.

From its inception, monogamy in practice meant monogamy for women only; women had become the property of men. (Sexual fidelity has never been as strictly enforced for men as for women.) The institution of monogamous marriage marks the world historic loss of women's equality and self-determination, and *the taboo against free sexual expression in general and homosexuality in particular is rooted in the institution of monogamy.*

The Judeo-Christian Taboo

Ancient Judaism was the expression of both monotheism and male supremacy. It produced the first taboo against homosexuality—punishment by death. Hebrew law (Leviticus 20) states:

If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

The Jews enforced strict prohibitions against male and female homosexuality, cross-dressing, and sexual freedom of any kind. They associated free sexuality with the Great Mother cults of the ancient matrilinear (descent in the female line) world, and used sexual prohibitions as a weapon against the lingering, em-



Marcel Hatch/Freedom Socialist

**Gay Resistance:
The Hidden History**

bedded influence of matriarchal customs among the people.

The Christians borrowed the Judaic taboo against sexual freedom and homoerotic behavior, and proceeded to extend the taboo against virtually all sexual enjoyment to a scope undreamed of by even the Hebrew patriarchs.

St. Paul's desperate erotophobia and shrill denunciation of sexual pleasure were the patterns for weaving the straitjacket of Christian morality, and Biblical passages are still used by the right wing to justify their bigotry:

God gave them up unto vile affections; for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature. And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of the error which was meet.

Romans 1:26, 27

Paul hardly limited his condemnations to homosexuality. He despised heterosexuality as well, even though formal marriage was necessary.

But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn.

I Corinthians 7: 9

Armed with these holy edicts, the early Christians set out to save the world from the sin of freedom, and to force upon their victims the most horribly repressive standards of sexual conduct ever conceived by the human mind.

The Medieval Holocaust

Christianity spread through Europe in the Middle Ages as a result of a hideously violent assault against women's self-determination and free sexual expression.

The condemnation of all sexual relations occurring outside the "sacrament" of heterosexual marriage was a sword of fire brandished to defeat the ancient European matriarchal religions and insure the triumph of patriarchal rule.

In some parts of medieval Germany, up to 90% of the female population was unmarried. And in the South of France, Cathar religious prescription dictated that all the clergy, male and female, live together in same-sex pairs. But these traditional European life-styles were destroyed by the Christian zealots.

Monogamous marriage was forced upon the tribes of Western Europe by threatening them with an accusation of heresy (punishable, of course, by death).

Millions of people were massacred as heretics after horribly sadistic tortures to extract political information and the names of other dissidents.

Thousands were accused of witchcraft—i.e., practicing the old religions—and were burned. The term "faggot" comes from the bundles of kindling, or faggots, used to stoke the flames.

In the name of the Christian god, Europe ran red with blood and black with burnt flesh.

The campaign against homosexuality was inextricable from the campaign against heresy. Those who refused to accept and live by the unnatural moral dictates of Catholicism were branded as heretics—and homosexuality was presumed to be part of every

Free expression of sexuality flourished in the matriarchal cultures

heretic's life. Accusations of "the crime so vile that Christians may not name it" were routinely added to the list of a heretic's sins.

Many opponents of Christianity did practice same-sex love, since it was a normal everyday activity with no taboo against it. But Catholic taboo against virtually all sexual expression alienated sexuality from the rest of life, and resulted in a homosexual/heterosexual segregation that ultimately forced homosexual lovers underground. [The distinct subculture of today's gay community is a product of the medieval, underground, gay ghetto.]

The ascendance of Christian doctrine throughout

Europe was not easy; a battle raged for centuries as the heretics waged heroic resistance.

Massive defiance was common and put down only by massacres, which were supported by the frightened nobility. The 16th century witchcraft persecutions were the culmination of this war and marked the final triumph of Christianity on the European continent.

The beginning of gay resistance was the struggle against the Catholic Church. It is impossible to separate out specific gay resistance from the general resistance to the Church, since all anti-Catholic opposition is subsumed in history as the "heretical" opposition. But the heretics were waging war for the

The Middle Ages were marked by heroic resistance, often led by women, to the Church

salvation of their *entire* culture, which included free love, and gay liberation was an inseparable component of the general fight against Catholicism.

And fight they did. The medieval masses

contended for their freedom with the ingenuity and courage of freedom fighters everywhere. The deaths of the heretics were defiant, and paid for by no small number of Catholic lives. Secret societies flourished in opposition to the orthodoxy; sects hostile to the Roman Church thrived all over Europe.

The battle raged for centuries, sometimes overt and sometimes underground. Medieval history is filled with examples of heroic resistance to the Church, often led by the women who were the special victims of that warped, twisted morality which was to cramp Western history right up to the present day.

But through a political-military victory, the Roman Church consolidated the hold of patriarchal institutions on the masses of Europe. The vise-like moral strictures of Roman Catholic doctrine were injected into the secular law throughout the continent.

The conclusion of "Gay Resistance: The Hidden History" will appear in the Winter 1978 *Freedom Socialist*. The article examines homosexuality in classic Greece and Rome and among pre-Columbian Native Americans, and describes the gay rights movement from 19th century Germany until today.

A Lesbian Worker Looks at Civil Rights and Class

by Emily Weiner

Lesbians and gay men are predominantly workers, and predominantly people who own little or no property, yet most of the time the lesbian and gay movements ignore these basic situations of our lives.

The fact that we must work for a living, rather than live off investments, affects our whole political outlook, including the issues of what gay rights legislation means to us, and who we consider our political allies to be.

Intro. 384 — A Mixed Blessing

In New York City, the lesbian and gay movements have been fighting for seven years for a bill (now called Intro. 384) which would "bar discrimination in jobs and housing based on sexual orientation." But the wording of Intro. 384 hides the fundamental distinctions of class.

Like other civil rights legislation, this bill would regulate the *basis on which* owners of businesses can hire and fire, and the *basis on which* landlords can select tenants, and property owners can select customers. What the bill doesn't change is the social situation where only a small minority of people are owners of businesses and extensive property, while the rest of us are at their mercy to hire us, rent to us, and sell to us.

The vulnerability of lesbian and gay male workers is based on two things: we are gay, and therefore discriminated against, and we are workers and therefore the victims of the owners of businesses and the governments they control.

Virtually all lesbians and gay men support the fight for our civil rights legislation because these bills help us survive by putting limits on overt discrimination against us, giving us legal tools for fighting particular cases of discrimination, standing as cultural symbols which help us put pressure on straight people to rethink their assumptions about what is "normal" (to take "dyke" and "faggot" out of their vocabulary and the vocabularies of their children), and spurring us to become active in our resistance to reactionary attacks.

Lesbian and gay male *workers* are potentially the most ardent supporters of gay rights legislation, because we are the gay people who need those jobs the legislation refers to, and who don't have the large amounts of money it takes to shield us from heterosexual harassment.

But when gay leaders fight for this legislation as a single issue, and act as if legal protections for gays would make all our other problems and vulnerabilities go away, they obscure the other basic needs of lesbian and gay male workers and unemployed.

Is this the conscious or unconscious reason that the great majority of lesbians and gay men in North America remain distant from the gay movement?

Opportunist Politicians

Only those lesbians and gay men who are so well off that discrimination against them as gays is their *only* social oppression will have their needs fulfilled by single-issue civil rights organizations. They are the only New Yorkers with good reason to hail Mayor Koch for his Executive Order.

The Executive Order, which bars New York City government from discriminating against lesbians and gay men, is welcome, but it is a long-overdue right—not a gift entitling Koch to speak at, and be praised at, our rallies.

Most gays can't forget that the mayor is the same man presiding over cutbacks in hospitals, fire protection, welfare, schools, and mass transportation. On behalf of the banks, he is waging a militant battle to take back the hard-won gains of our sisters and brothers in the municipal unions.

Mayor Koch, and the other Democratic and Republican politicians who throw us crumbs, are no friends of workingclass gay people—because we can't divide our lives up into little pieces and be happy our jobs are "secure" as gays, and ignore how economically insecure we really are. We don't have that luxury.

Beyond Civil Rights

Like all legislation in bourgeois-democratic societies like the U.S., gay civil rights laws leave untouched the highly undemocratic rights of a small minority of humanity—the capitalist class—to make the critical decisions about our lives—whether we live in North America, or in South Africa.

Until we, the working people of the world, take away from this minority class the control they have over our lives, *we will remain vulnerable* to their whims, their prejudices, and most basically to their need to do whatever is most profitable regardless of its effect on the rest of humanity.

Lesbians and gay men who push other liberation fighters to reject heterosexism are laying the basis for the only alliance which has the power to end gay oppression: a revolutionary movement to end the capitalist system once and for all. ■

Emily Rubin Weiner is a member of the Committee of Lesbian and Gay Male Socialists, and of the New York City branch of the Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party.

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Westward Ho— To the October CRSP Conference

Attention, all radicals concerned with revitalizing the American Left! The Committee for a Revolutionary Socialist Party is holding its first national conference on October 6-9 near Seattle, Washington. And this event can prove to be immensely auspicious.

CRSP was originally inaugurated in July, 1977 as the climax of a gathering of three separate groups who had all left the Socialist Workers Party—at different times and for different, but related, reasons.

The SWP, itself a spinoff from the Communist Party, began as a component part of the worldwide Left Opposition to the growing Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union and the Communist International in the late 1920s. The roots of CRSP are therefore deeply embedded in the most honorable and principled chapters of revolutionary history.

CRSP emerged from the Old Left but it is also a totally new political phenomenon—so new that even its adherents find it difficult to appreciate fully what is happening. Because only the top of the iceberg is apparent.

What is this startling new feature that stamps CRSP with a unique emblem?

CRSP represents *the convergence of the Old Left and the new feminist movement* which is transforming all human relations everywhere in the world. The thoroughly democratic character of CRSP is a product of its feminism—and its deepgoing democracy is *new* to the left.

The entire Old Left was, and is, male dominated. To these men, endorsement of equal pay, abortion rights, etc., was analytically sound and incontrovertible. *But that was all.*

The overwhelming majority of Old Left men used women's rights as a means of recruiting women to provide flesh and muscle for the organizational apparatus—but equality was to be realized only under socialism. For the present, women were expected to keep their secondary place.

Of course, this was never openly stated; it was a secret theory, even an unconscious one, and it emanated from the entrenched chauvinism to which everyone living in capitalist society is acculturated.

When Old Left women dared, on occasion, to rebel—dared to seek a little breathing space from the heavy, extra oppression they were subjected to daily—a hue and cry inevitably arose. "Women are dividing the class," we were told. (Today, some even more ridiculous splinter groups give full voice to this absurdity.)

Old Left women were put down by men with bureaucratic mentalities. No wonder. *Bureaucracy and feminism are antithetical.* To the extent

that women join the struggle for the new socialist society will all special privilege, prejudice, elitism, and exclusivism be undermined.

The division of women and men, the separation of people of color and whites, and the gay-straight antithesis are facts of capitalist life, like the class struggle. And the unification of the oppressed is possible only on the basis of our complete political equality with each other, not the *submission* of one to the other.

When women refuse to accept second-class status and refuse to be "trashed" by men, can men themselves long remain subject to the systemic bureaucratic oppression *they* suffer?!

In CRSP a deliberate climate is fostered to insure that all may speak and feel totally free to dissent. Unlike the Old Left, CRSP does not regard differences as a threat to unity in action but as a necessary prelude to unity, a time for swift and complete correction of errors.

CRSP *welcomes* differences. Debates enrich the discussions. But CRSP, again unlike the Old Left, never forgets, indeed emphasizes, the vast area of its agreement—the revolutionary hope for the future of the world.

—Myra Tanner Weiss

book review book review book

Leon Uris's new bestseller, *Trinity*, can best be described as a politically important potboiler.

Trinity recounts the bitter struggle for Irish independence from 1885 to 1915. It is the first popular novel to dispel the myth that the Catholic/Protestant conflict is a Holy War; Uris categorically locates the source of Ireland's misery in the unholy alliance between English imperialism and Irish capitalism.

For over 700 years after England conquered Ireland, the hapless Irish were tenants on their own stolen land, close to starvation and stripped of all rights and dignity.

England devised a foolproof method of controlling the rebellious natives: colonies of Protestant peasants and workers were established and granted better conditions. To preserve their privileges, they acted as a garrison against Irish uprisings. A tiny minority, they were brainwashed into the fear that the Irish Catholic majority would reclaim their lands and jobs.

Catholic and Protestant peasants were thus prevented from uniting against landlords, and the working class was so torn by religious bigotry that unions and strikes were rarities.

In 1916, the Irish won independence, but the victory was marred when the province of Ulster in Northern Ireland seceded. Ulster, with a slim majority of Protestants, and the bulk of Irish industry, maintained close ties to England.

Uris dramatically evokes the murderous economic exploitation and political oppression of the Irish people, portraying with contagious empathy their centuries-long struggle for national liberation and human freedom. He mercilessly condemns the reactionary role of the Catholic church and exposes the Protestant church as the main bulwark of Irish reaction.

The author shows a deep—and surprising—class-consciousness in his grasp of the lives of the people. His scenes of sweatshop conditions and appalling loss of life because of inadequate safety measures are memorable.

Uris even demonstrates the impossibility of change via legislative reform. He admires (and glamorizes) the heroic Irish radicals who led mass uprisings and created illegal organizations for guerrilla warfare.

Yet the book ends on a note of defeatism and cynicism. Conor Larkin, the existential hero, fights without hope of success for himself or the movement. "...in Ireland there is no future," writes Uris, "only the past happening over and over." Lacking a revolutionary, socialist perspective, or afraid to project one, Uris finds the Irish question insoluble.

Trinity, like all Uris novels, obeys the best-seller formula: one part history, one part violence and suspense, one part romance and one part sex, and all of it poorly written. The hero is total superman: handsome, brawny, brilliant, daring, charismatic, earthy, poetic, athletic, artistic, and passionately committed to justice. He is also a skilled craftsman, a great individualist, and a sensational lover.

But the trauma of Irish working and peasant women is depicted with sympathetic insight.

Trinity should encourage the reading public to delve more deeply into the fascinating history of the Irish revolt, which is replete with inspiring testimony to the indomitable quest for human freedom.

—Helen Gilbert

Helen Gilbert, a lithographer, is paste-up coordinator for the *Freedom Socialist*.

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Double-Feature Double-Cross

F.I.S.T. and Blue Collar

The jazzy titles of two films about trade unionism are currently gracing the marquees. Hollywoodian experts on the proletariat are now instructing movie fans—mostly youth—that if you fight the bosses, you'll get killed, bought off, or in hock to the only force that can beat the system—gangsters!

F.I.S.T. is based on an outrageous lie. Here is this enormous strike, with a field kitchen and hospital, flying picket squads in phone-dispatched trucks, and massive street battles between armed workers and armed employers.

And who provides the brilliant organization, the bold tactics, the muscle? An indigenous worker-leader core? No. Experienced radicals? Not even they. The brains of the outfit belong exclusively to gangsters—since defenseless workers can hardly win a strike by themselves.

It's a sin to lie to workers about this country's magnificent labor history. Gangsters never organized or won the giant strikes that unionized America. The workers themselves in Minneapolis and Detroit and Flint and Akron and Toledo and the Seattle waterfront confronted the entire ruling class and its police force and ushered in the new age of industrial unionism.

In the 1934 Minneapolis Teamster strikes, on which the film is very roughly based, the worker militants were actually led by Trotskyists. (See Cannon, *The History of American Trotskyism*.)

Real-life victory was a result of painstaking organization. The leaders were in constant contact with the ranks. A daily newspaper educated the workers to the culture of class struggle. Support won from regional organized labor, small shopkeepers, and progressive circles increased strike morale.

The leadership refused to be flattered or threatened into concessions; they negotiated with government mediators, bourgeois politicians, and venal bosses and held their ground, never giving anything away—unlike the sellout artists in *F.I.S.T.*

The film's depiction of minorities and women rivals its psychedelic fantasy of labor history. The leading woman is "Johnny's girl" period. Instead of organizing, she marries the union organizer. And the one Black in the film is a man whom Johnny tries to help when the foreman bullies him. The historic militance of Black labor is soundly insulted in *F.I.S.T.*

Blue Collar deals more realistically with race relations among workers. Three male auto workers, two of them Black and one white, are buddies. Their closeness defies the racism surrounding them until the day they rob the union hall and discover evidence of illegal chicanery. Union officials murder the Black who understands capitalism best, the other Black is bought off by union-company collusion, and the deserted white man capitulates to the FBI.

The women here are dull stereotypes or shadowy figures, and a quick ear will catch the antigay jeers.

Blue Collar has a saving grace. It presents the bosses as the basic enemy and the union bureaucracy as the single most-powerful force retarding worker militancy. But the individual worker is viewed as powerless against this double enemy, and no alternative is hinted at despite recurrent moralizing about the company's responsibility for dividing the workers.

Both *F.I.S.T.* and *Blue Collar* dismiss unionism as futile. Nonsense. The power of unified workers consciously acting on class struggle principles can change the world. It can even change the schlock emanating from the culture factories on Sunset Boulevard.

—Adrienne Weller

Adrienne Weller, a secretary and member of the Oregon State Employees Association, actively works for abortion rights, gay liberation, and women's equality.



Clara Fraser

How Long, oh lords, How Long???

My favorite candidate for the downer-of-the-week award is the patronizing radical who tells us that "you people are too impatient—Rome wasn't built in a day."

Well, we people have a lot to be impatient about, and rebuilding imperial Rome isn't exactly what we had in mind.

Patience is undoubtedly a virtue for radicals. Our grasp of the long view, of the contradictions in the historical process, lends us buoyancy in a sea of troubled waters.

But when a socialist coolly informs some of the most wretched of the earth that they must wait *until* the revolution, *throughout* the revolution, and *long after* the revolution before their oppression is significantly relieved—at that point, patience-and-fortitude turns from virtue into vice.

Why do men tell women to wait for civil rights? Why do whites say it to national and racial minorities and majorities? Why do straights say it to gays, oldsters to youth, the non-handicapped to the walking wounded?

We've heard a million times how the remnants of bourgeois culture and discrimination will linger on and on... how the evils rooted in class society will not disappear immediately... how anyone oppressed in any other way than on-the-job and by-the-boss will have to cool their heels and prepare for virtual centuries of degenerated, chauvinistic workers states unready to guarantee full legal, political, economic and lifestyle equality to those most subjugated under capitalism.

How inspiring. How sensitive. What creative use of the vast power of workers democracy for a shining new culture. So we tourist-class folks don't rate first-class accommodations on the ship of socialism!

• • •

Are we supposed to forget the impossible dream?

No way. These prophets of the theory of increasing misery under socialism don't know their dialectics from the hole in the ground they are digging for themselves.

The patience-mongerers have a blueprint for structural change that ignores modern times. Their schema for socialist development, after bourgeois state power and capitalist property relations are abolished, is ass-backward. Their fixed notion about the sequence of revolutionary stages is a theoretical error of the gravest magnitude, betraying a mechanical, Menshevik ignorance of the anatomy of a revolution and the psychology of a revolutionary.

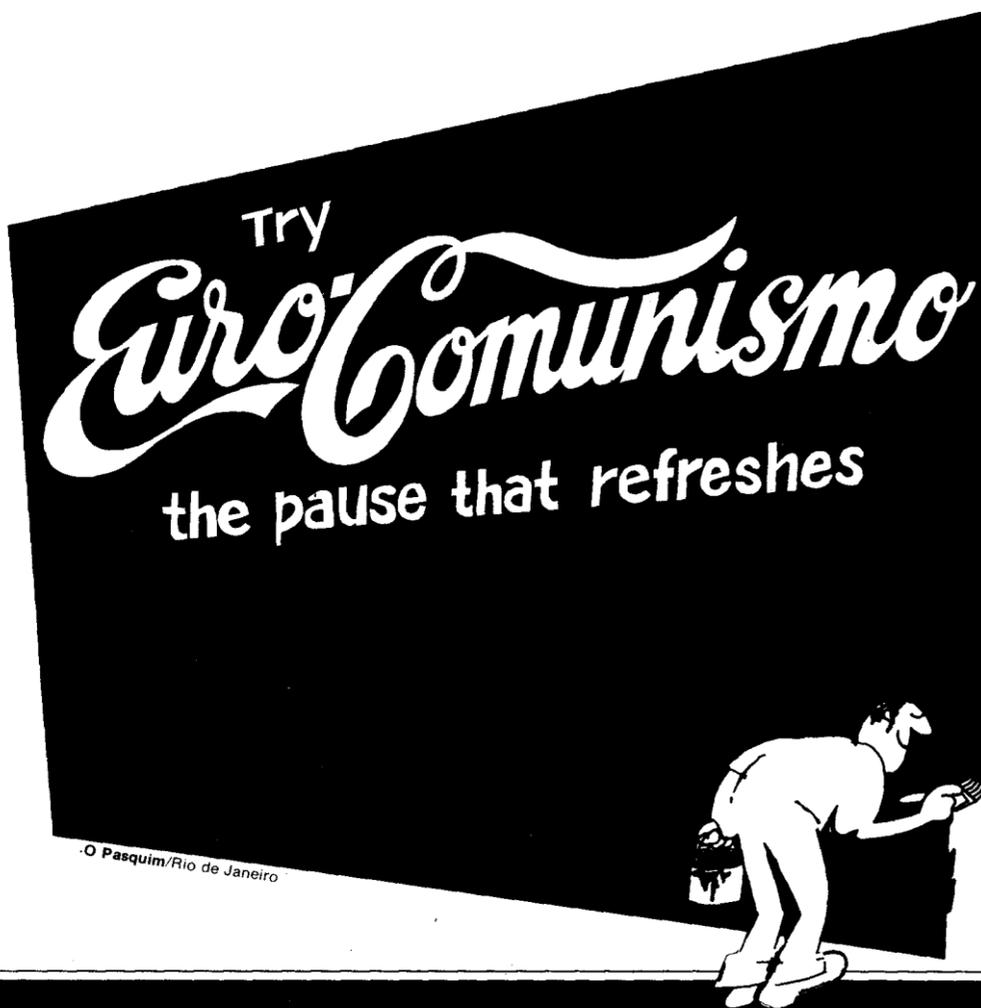
All "you people" born to jeopardy as workers and compounded jeopardy on account of minor characteristics—take heart. **You** are the locomotive of the revolutionary train. You will decide the priorities of reconstructing the economy and the ideological superstructure. You will see to it that no worker-wallflowers are left waiting and miserable at the socialist ball.

You, the multi-vanguard of the proletariat, are the real "new mass vanguard," and you have already taken to the drawing boards to design a socialist future that will insure the fact that you and your kind are never again consigned to the back burners of the political agenda. This prospect is no misty utopia, but the living, growing future under construction today.

• • •

The mañana-mouthers should have a little faith in human nature. Millions of people are learning to shed regressive biases and ideas. Surely, hard-core pessimists can bother to learn something about the techniques of de-programming worker bigots and undertake educational campaigns to advance this process *today*.

The "Marxist realist" who thinks the attainment of elementary civil rights is out-of-sight even under socialism speaks for nobody but the white male minority—and he will soon speak for a minority of *them*. And shortly thereafter he won't be speaking at all, for his voice—the last voice you heard before leaving the leagues of irrelevant radicals—was the refracted voice of the oppressor.



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... bakke

from page 10

flagship, it is still the same ship for everyone. And the exclusionary, elite workers of the class will come to realize that few of them can rise much above the most exploited workers.

Substantial support for affirmative action has been won from white male workers in some sectors and *can* be extended by making common cause with them on strike actions, contract demands, union security, full employment, consumer protection, job safety. Support can also come by conclusively exposing the merry-go-round futility of government's economic panaceas.

Title VII, for example, the new, "private sector component" of the Comprehensive Education and Training Act, impressively illustrates the duplicity of reformist economics. Touted as a solution to both general and minority unemployment, it is actually a million-dollar windfall to big business. The funding, ostensibly allocated to reduce the number of "structurally" (formerly called "hardcore") unemployed, will create no new jobs. It merely subsidizes training and salary costs for companies who fill vacancies with members of high unemployment groups. These businesses will hire cheap labor, undermine unionism, and escape their own obligation to pay for worker training.

As with most other governmental incentives to spur the economy, the funding does not create jobs. Companies only use the indirect profits to expand automation and increase the trend toward capital intensive industry, at the expense of job security.

The worker who understands the fallacy of "unemployment" programs that only benefit the wealthy is on the road toward understanding the double-barreled betrayal of the Bakke decision.

Now It's Our Turn

The Supreme Court unleashed a bag of snakes, not just a can of worms. While the judgment did not turn the struggle around, it certainly turned it aside, and precious momentum was lost when many minority spokespeople said they could "live with" the decision.

But militants can mobilize people power and build awareness by continuing to analyze, explain and agitate for affirmative action. This contemporary transitional demand is a companion to the call for *jobs for all*. Neither demand can be adequately met under capitalism, but the struggle itself can liberate the minds and nerve and sinew of the working class.

Preferential admissions and hiring of previously excluded groups are consistent with traditional socialist ethics, such as sharing available resources. It also means, necessarily, a sharing of shortages and disabilities by the proletariat—until what is rightly theirs is wrested from the capitalist oligarchy.

In another time, in another country, when fascism was on the rise a revolutionary fighter commented, "The poetry is over, the prose has begun." The task of radicals at such a time is not to bask in pessimism but to create the poetry of an ascendant mass movement dedicated to the democratic conviction that all workers are bound to, and supportive of, one another. ■

... bakke

continuado de la página 11

El trabajador quien entiende la falacia de los programas de "cesantía" que sólo benefician al rico, está en camino de entender la traición de doble propósito en la decisión Bakke.

Los Tiempos Están Cambiando

La acción afirmativa fue casi una idea tardía de los movimientos minoritarios y feministas. Muchos progresistas toman una actitud ambivalente ante ella, puesto que el concepto parece contradecir la equidad que ellos están procurando. Empleos y admisiones especiales, afirman, implican inferioridad, rebajadas "calificaciones," o injustos privilegios especiales.

Un verdadero acceso igualitario a la educación y a los empleos, requiere *una oportunidad compensatoria para desplazar siglos de ventaja y de privilegio especial proporcionados a los blancos y a los hombres*.

La acción afirmativa ni es un premio para las minorías o las mujeres, ni es un castigo para los hombres blancos. Es un mecanismo para permitir que las capacidades de los estratos bajos del proletariado sean reconocidas, desarrolladas, y utilizadas según las proporciones de los salarios en boga, y no disminuidos.

Los millones que respaldaron los populares derechos civiles de los negros, en la revolución de los sesenta, ahora resisten la lógica y la justicia de la acción afirmativa—porque el movimiento está frente a su propia puerta y los tiempos económicos están cambiando. Temiendo un desplazamiento tecnológico, y consciente del dolor inflacionario en sus billeteras, ellos guardan celosamente su disminuida porción de migajas.

Las mujeres y las minorías están perdiendo su posición económica de una manera más alarmante que los hombres blancos; no obstante, los patrones manipulan a los hombres blancos fácilmente para que éstos se mantengan firmes y no ofrezcan ayuda. La clase gobernante genera y alimenta el susto del blanco y provoca prejuicios raciales y sexuales, no articulando nunca de esta manera la justificación histórica de la acción afirmativa.

Ensamblando una Conciencia

Los trabajadores blancos, los segundos beneficiarios del racismo y el sexismo, tienen una vaga noción de que el regateo interminable de un pastel velozmente achicado no es ninguna respuesta. Una clase trabajadora unificada y compasiva podría tomar la cocina y cocer un enorme y jugoso pastel. Pero, la unidad será un espejismo mientras exista el fanatismo entre trabajadores de diferentes razas, sexos, y niveles de capacidad. La acción afirmativa crea la integración en el trabajo y la instrucción, abriendo así las líneas de comunicación y fomentando la solidaridad.

Los sociólogos saben que la igualdad de oportunidad no existe sin la igualdad de condición. Donde no hay equidad de ingreso, posición y poder entre los trabajadores, la competencia cruel y destructiva prevalece, pudiendo vivir vidas creativas, sólo unos pocos, motivados por su propio egoísmo. Aunque ahora las minorías y las mujeres se

agolpen en las bodegas de este barco del estandarte norteamericano, que está inundándose, todavía sigue siendo el mismo barco para todos. Y los trabajadores exclusivistas y elitistas de la clase llegarán a darse cuenta de que sólo unos pocos de ellos podrán levantarse por sobre sus compañeros trabajadores más explotados.

En la decisión Bakke, la Corte dijo, "consideraciones raciales, sí; cuotas, no," rechazando el recto proyecto de la Escuela de Medicina Davis (Davis Medical School) y aplaudiendo el sutil e intrincado esquema de Harvard. La acción afirmativa sin objetivos específicos es como un perro guardián desdentado y su efectucción depende ahora de las inclinaciones subjetivas de la administración.

La Corte Suprema soltó un canasto de culebras, que no es justamente un tarrito de gusanos. Aunque el juicio no dió vuelta la lucha hacia el otro lado,

La acción afirmativa será transportada por su propia inercia antes de que su pérdida de velocidad sea obvia

ciertamente que la desvió, mientras que un considerable ímpetu se perdió cuando muchos voceros de las minorías dijeron que ellos podrían "vivir con" la decisión.

Pero, los militantes pueden movilizar el poder del pueblo y formar una conciencia, continuando el análisis, la explicación y la inquietud por la acción afirmativa. Esta demanda contemporánea de transición es una compañera del grito de trabajo para todos. Ninguna de las dos demandas se pueden realizar adecuadamente bajo el capitalismo, pero la lucha en sí puede liberar las mentes, el valor y el vigor de la clase trabajadora.

Las admisiones preferentes y el hecho de dar ocupación a grupos anteriormente excluidos son consistentes con la ética tradicional socialista, como lo es también el compartir recursos disponibles. Esto también significa, necesariamente, compartir la escasez y los impedimentos por todo el proletariado—hasta cuando lo que le corresponde sea arrancado de la oligarquía capitalista.

En otros tiempos, en otro país, cuando el facismo estaba levantándose, un luchador revolucionario comentó: "La poesía ha terminado, la prosa comienza." La faena de los izquierdistas militantes en este tiempo no es asolearse en el pesimismo, sino que crear la poesía en un movimiento masivo ascendente dedicado a la convicción democrática de que todos los trabajadores están ligados, y se apoyan, mutuamente. ■

A los lectores de habla hispana: déjenos saber sus opiniones acerca de la eficacia de nuestras traducciones.

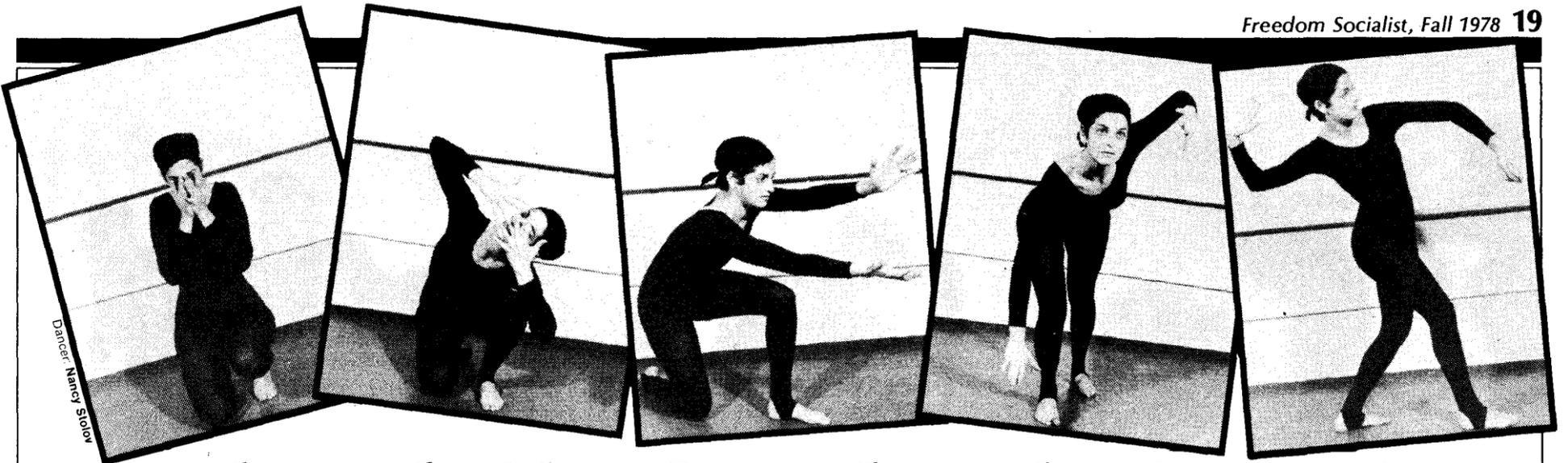


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Always the Ideas Carry Themselves Forward

*my parents floated somewhere on the left.
I visualized the left as a wide mysterious plain drifting
beyond my left cheekbone. I knew I was left-handed
but what else did I inherit?
hints and whispers of 'commie' over the phone.
my grandmother stubbornly mute in some kind of 'hearing'
so when Mr. Bant, my 7th grade teacher decided to spend
a special week on the 'red menace', I was anxious.
Mr. Bant had a birthmark that mapped out a red scar
on his cheek and neck. he twisted his mouth and
talked at us. I sat and sneered to myself in the tone
of my father ("liar, capitalist, son of a gun").
I held still, my bones in tight, elbows close to body.
one day Mr. Bant shouted at me, 'if you don't wipe
that look off your face, you can leave.'
I wish I'd had the courage to walk out, instead
my face flushed with misery, and his scar reddened,
spread to a mist in my eyes.*

*when you put the two together, socialist and feminist, divided only
by a hyphen, people often turn away, for one word or the other.*

*revolution has always meant capes in winter and the chill breath
of wind and shouts in a country far away, and fur hats blown off.
it is hard to imagine it, to really picture it here.*

*considering what it means.
to call myself a socialist, a feminist.*

*a collection of ideas, tiny steel shavings that stream
toward one pole or another. the dream of my grandmother
speaking, her words coming up clearer and stronger
until the walls ripple into flames
and we rush her along on our shoulders.
always the ideas carry themselves forward
in my understanding on the shoulders of images.
images that thud against my forehead at work, on the bus.
when I look at identical rows of flimsy houses,
at headlines slumped over men asleep on market st.
being a marxist means you have to believe
things won't always be the same.
that streets flow into rivers.
that the bank of america is turning to sand.
that women walk out of the shadows
into themselves.*

*'it's like being sick all the time,' I think, coming home from work,
'sick in that low-grade continuous way that makes you forget
what it's like to feel well. we have never known in our lives
what it is to be well. what if I were coming home,' I think,
'from doing work that I loved and that was for us all, what
if I looked at the houses and the air and the streets, knowing
they were in accord, not set against us, what if we knew the powers
of this country moved to provide for us and for all people—
how would that be—how would we feel and think
and what would we create?'*

—Karen Brodine

- Myra Tanner Weiss reports on the **October CRSP Conference**.
- Who are the **Mormons** and why are they spewing poison against women, minorities, gays? Janet Sutherland explains.
- A public debate in the **SWP**? Only on an issue they consider secondary—feminism! Cindy Gipple evaluates the Evelyn Reed/Stephanie Coontz dispute in *The Militant* on the ancient matriarchate.
- Heidi Durham reviews the film **Coming Home**, and finds some strong points.
- First installment in the serialization of **Crisis and Leadership**, a programmatic pillar of the Freedom Socialist Party.
- Part II of Sam Deaderick's **Gay Resistance: The Hidden History**.
- In August, thousands of Native Americans marched on Washington, D.C. to protest Congressional treaty-breaking moves. In September, **violence against Indian fishers** broke out, incited by a concerted rightwing campaign of repression.

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**special
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A Warning Message

To All Indian Nations
and Our Friends
and Supporters

This is the second and last segment of a powerful manifesto that names and describes the crucial facets of the crisis afflicting Indian nations. The author is Janet McCloud, a Tulalip and a national spokeswoman for the cause of Native American sovereignty. Part I appeared in the Summer 1978 *Freedom Socialist*.

In August, the McCloud family carried their message to Washington, D.C., where they joined The Longest Walk, a symbolic re-creation of the brutal forced marches in the Native American past. The Walk focused national attention on the spate of treaty-breaking bills flooding Congress.

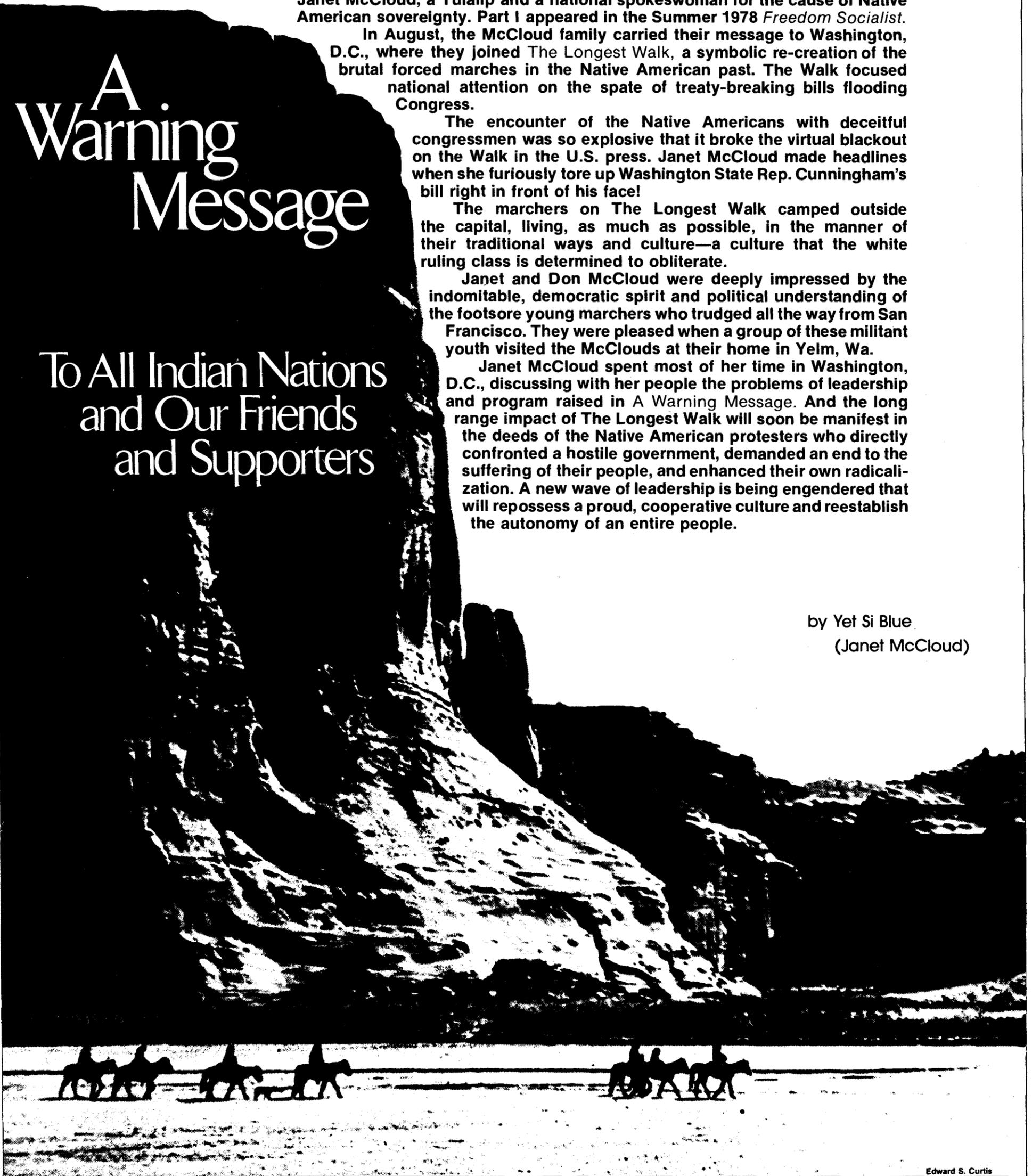
The encounter of the Native Americans with deceitful congressmen was so explosive that it broke the virtual blackout on the Walk in the U.S. press. Janet McCloud made headlines when she furiously tore up Washington State Rep. Cunningham's bill right in front of his face!

The marchers on The Longest Walk camped outside the capital, living, as much as possible, in the manner of their traditional ways and culture—a culture that the white ruling class is determined to obliterate.

Janet and Don McCloud were deeply impressed by the indomitable, democratic spirit and political understanding of the footsore young marchers who trudged all the way from San Francisco. They were pleased when a group of these militant youth visited the McClouds at their home in Yelm, Wa.

Janet McCloud spent most of her time in Washington, D.C., discussing with her people the problems of leadership and program raised in A Warning Message. And the long range impact of The Longest Walk will soon be manifest in the deeds of the Native American protesters who directly confronted a hostile government, demanded an end to the suffering of their people, and enhanced their own radicalization. A new wave of leadership is being engendered that will repossess a proud, cooperative culture and reestablish the autonomy of an entire people.

by Yet Si Blue
(Janet McCloud)



Part III Our Cultural Crisis

Traditional Philosophy

Indian people view themselves as the children of Mother Earth, the entrusted caretakers and guardians of life who temporarily occupy earth bodies. The meaning behind life's mysteries is the natural evolution of human beings.

The Indian people use, not abuse or waste, the natural resources, taking care not to disturb the path of life that future generations will walk.

The political structure of Indian Nations is equalitarian and democratic; all people, young and old, men and women, have an equal voice and share in all decision-making. All have the right of equal participation in community activities in order to assure peaceful co-existence. The authority system descends from elders to youth, and even the cries of babies are immediately responded to.

The economic system of Indian Nations was originally communally based. Indians shunned the concept of land ownership and had no need for money, for all human beings had a secure right to the basic necessities of life; all natural resources were free and available to all.

No one had to earn the right to live, yet all members labored together to build adequate shelter and gather food supplies for the entire community by hunting, fishing, or farming. Work, shelter and food were equitably distributed.

There was no class system of rich and poor. If one family worked industriously to gather a surplus, it was for a ceremonial give-away; the wealth was placed in their "banks"—The People! And the interest was good will!

Technology was consciously limited to the artifacts and tools that were of use and benefit to humanity.

The social life of the Indian was peaceful and happy because there was no oppression of people or exploitation of resources. The laughter of playful children was the sign of a healthy community. People had leisure time for recreation; socializing with friends, children and elders; creative arts; ceremonies; and solitude.

The peacemakers of the Indian communes used several effective methods for correcting deviant behavior—acts that caused disturbance or disunity within the Nation. Malicious gossipers, shirkers, and demagogues were first quietly counselled, then subjected to public ridicule, and then given the silent treatment (they became invisible ones who did not receive a food share and had to fight with the dogs for scraps). They were exiled or condemned to death only in very rare cases, in order to save the community.

The natural, peaceful, and non-exploitative culture of the Indian people guaranteed them a long life free of disease and mental disorders. There was no need for hospitals, insane asylums, prisons, orphanages, poorhouses, or policemen. Indians willingly obeyed the natural laws that governed their bodies and the outer environment, realizing that human beings have only a brief time to live, to discover the secrets and meanings of existence, and to pursue the natural evolutionary path.

First Contacts with European Outcasts

When the Indian people discovered the first frightened and pathetic European outcasts upon their shores, they had trouble communicating with them. But the Indians proved that they meant the immigrants

no harm. Indians compassionately fed, sheltered and befriended the immigrants, sympathizing in horror at their tales of oppressive tyrants who had cast them out of their homeland.

Indians taught the newcomers about democracy and the natural way of life; the colonists were slow learners, but finally got the drift and learned to be free. The Indian people took the colonists under their protective wing, encouraging them and helping them fight for their freedom.

The first treaties, signed under the sacred bonds and oaths of the Indian Nations, offered aid to the oppressed colonists. Treaties of peace and friendship!

So America was born. But America grew rich and forgot its promises of eternal friendship, peaceful coexistence, equality, truth and honor. The population grew rapidly; when word spread that the Indians were peaceful and vast riches were free for the taking, America used the wealth stolen from Indian lands and bought weapons from France to turn against their allies, the Indian Nations.

Treaties, Genocide and Congressional Treachery

With guns and armies, America ruthlessly marched westward, greedily evicting Indians from their homeland and forcing them to sign treaties placing themselves in protective custody in concentration camps.

The once sovereign Indian Nations were now prisoners held in political bondage. *And the forced treaties legalized America's thefts.*

If Indian leaders refused to sign, genocide and germ warfare wiped out entire, peaceful villages.

If humanitarians protested, racist propaganda campaigns were devised, and the press published lies about Indian atrocities against peaceful white settlers; "hostile savages" were accused of committing depredations against private property and sick tales of devil worship and lewd rites were concocted.

These lies were intended to enrage the populace against Indians, so it would demand our complete extermination. A good Indian is a dead Indian.

In the interests of those greedy few who are now the ruling class families of America, a terror was unleashed against Indians. The forked-tongue politicians, gophers of the predators, served their masters well, and the Indian Nations were demoralized and shattered. *Death was a constant companion. Starving babies cried and died; children, women and men sat dumbly, unable to feel anything; thousands were slaughtered. All were victims of America's lust for wealth.*

Indian Nations still have not recovered. Old scars have not healed, yet new wounds are being inflicted. Washington State Congressmen Lloyd Meeds, Jack Cunningham and Warren Magnuson promote racist bills and propaganda to support the state's War against Indian Nations. Meeds will resign from Congress to seek a federal judgeship, but Indian people are still being manipulated, maligned, mistreated, cheated, and insulted.

Judge George Boldt, who upheld our fishing rights, seems to stand alone in protecting the letter of the U.S. Constitution and treaty commitments. He tries to correct the injustices, but how staunch will he be under the relentless pressure?

And how staunchly can we sustain our own courage and convictions against the even worse pressures confronting us?

The Trap of Social Services

International law required the U.S. to have legal proof of ownership of lands purchased from the indigenous inhabitants. So howitzers were pointed at Indian people and the Indian leaders were forced

to sign the treaties.

International law and the U.S. Constitution further required that *just compensation for land* had to be awarded. The U.S. was thus obliged to provide services in payment for the land: economic aid; technical assistance; education and training programs; health care; food rations; homes; tools; blankets; cloth; etc., all of which would be supplied regularly, or annually, *in perpetuity* or for as long as America occupied and used Indian homelands.

Each generation of Americans is liable for these treaty-contracted debts, which can only be legally terminated with the consent of Indian Nations or by America's evacuation from the lands.

But deceptive politicians fool the average American citizen. They do not tell them that the aid given Indian Nations and people is a treaty-contracted debt, *legally owed to Indians*. The aid is not a handout. But the politicians and their predator bosses bombard the people with anti-Indian, racist propaganda. Non-Indians are never told the real purpose of the so-called aid we receive.

The U.S. is obliged to furnish education to us. And Indian people attend schools, training programs, and workshops to gain the knowledge that will be of use and benefit to our people. We do *not* go to school in order to become bureaucratized, dehumanized, mechanized, or assimilated. But that is the aim of the schools.

Indians send their physically and mentally ill to hospitals or physicians to be healed, *not* to be used for experiments, secret sterilizations, hypnosis, or brainwashing. But that is what happens to us.

Still, many Indian people desperately in need of aid grasp at the extended hand which dangles the golden carrot, and they are gradually pulled into the polluted American mainstream. Many are unaware of the dangerous undertow they are being sucked into.

Technology and Behavior Modification

Humanity's production of goods and services should be used for the benefit and uplifting of life, not for enslavement and exploitation. But technology has been taken over by the predator ruling class that produces only for profit. This class must continually exploit, expand, and exhaust, ever seeking cheap labor and raw materials and profitable markets.

The ruling class uses behavior modification techniques and the mass media to subliminally brainwash the innocent public to buy and consume commodities that are cheaply made, expensive, and often dangerous to health. Madison Avenue gimmicks totally change our natural desires and stifle our natural evolutionary process.

The advertising sorcerers hired by the predator profiteers bewitch the public into a frenzy of buying and consuming, on the easy credit plan, tons of non-nutritious junk food and other technological products all guaranteed to miraculously transform life.

The natural desires of the public have been radically changed; they no longer desire freedom, equality, natural evolution, the inherited rights of humanity. Instead, they desire materialistic things and are contaminated by the "greedy bug"; they are the programmed consumers and exploited workers for the predator ruling class.

Our wise elders say that you are what you desire, what you desire is what you think about, your thoughts stimulate your will to act, and a person is the result of their behavior.

The behaviorist psychologists and biologists, who serve the power structure, study and control animals to find more effective ways of programming

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and controlling human behavior. The captured animals are caged, starved, and constantly watched; nothing is hidden from the eyes of their captors, not eating habits, sex or interaction with other animals.

The animal must learn a maze system to receive any food. A cage door opens to a bewildering maze, and the smell of food sets the starving animal to running frantically up and down the maze in search of the food. It finally locates the food, only to find access blocked by a wall. It jumps, claws the wall, and accidentally pushes the red button with its tail while standing on its head. The food magically appears.

After many accidental successes, the animal finally learns to stand on its head and push the red button with its tail, and begins to feel confident of survival. Then the scientists change the system. The harried animal must continually adapt or die, and many die—by starvation or mental or physical breakdowns that lead to suicide.

Most of the world's wealth, resources, technology and production—all the necessities to sustain life—is owned and controlled by a few. The rest of humanity must labor for their daily bread, and, like mice, learn the maze system or die.

The control is absolute. If workers strike for decent wages or less hazardous and demeaning working conditions, the predator ruling class raises the cost of living and moves production to other countries where they super-exploit other peoples.

Machines replace human muscles and minds, and eliminate millions of jobs. The operators of machines become dehumanized, components of the machines, i.e., typists, equipment operators, computer operators, etc.

Humans displaced by machines are stereotyped as lazy, shiftless shirkers by the idle rich. Yet fifty million Americans, their jobs taken over by machines, live in poverty, unable to find employment. These millions are the harried victims of the technological society.

The War Against Our Humanity

Government bureaucracies exploit workers just as intensively as industrial bosses.

Underpaid public workers must take orders from upper-echelon bureaucrats, not from the taxpayers who foot the bills.

HEW, the Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration are giant bureaucracies ripping off the taxpayers. Over three-fourths of all tax dollars are used for administration or to determine client eligibility, leaving very little, sometimes nothing, for grudging distribution to the needy, sick and handicapped.

The majority of tax dollars subsidize the rich, the profiteers, who must continually expand their empires. They are not required to pay any taxes, but they demand and get the lion's share of tax dollars with no strings attached and no bureaucratic red tape.

Together, the profiteer ruling class and its govern-

ment puppets systematically dehumanize the workers. But human beings are not machines; they need air, water, food, shelter, clothing, transportation, recreation, companionship and solitude. They are not like the bionic man, the predator's concept of a superman who needs no air or food, obeys unquestioningly the commands of his master, never tires, works night and day for nothing, and never complains about hazardous working conditions.

Human beings are forced into a dog-eat-dog competitive system by the ruling class. They try to climb the non-existent ladder of success, and it is futile. The stress of this unnatural way of life results in deterioration, in physical and mental breakdowns for which there are no cures. Physicians tranquilize or operate; psychiatrists hypnotize or behavior modify in an attempt to readjust the natural into the unnatural; and church leaders dish out platitudes, give pep talks, ask for donations, and push the flock back into the economic jungle.

The pressures of trying to "make it," of struggling to avoid the octopus clutches of the predator's bill collectors, result in epidemic stress diseases that plague most Americans. The break-up of families is widespread, and children are mistreated and neglected by quarrelling parents. Some people totally withdraw and find safety in mental institutes. Others turn into mini-predators and steal the hard-earned fruits of the working class, unlike Robin Hood who stole from the rich to give to the poor. Some completely freak out and become alcoholics, drug addicts, murderers or rapists. Women and children are the usual victims.

Human beings, like the mouse in the maze, must continually adapt to the changing demands of the predator ruling class or die. Many are dying of heart disease, diabetes, cancers, and suicide. And many more are doomed.

Only the very foolish or insane violate the natural laws that govern all life, for this courts disaster. One does not have to be a prophet or scientist to see the catastrophe wrought by the master class. Time is not an unending linear line into the future, it is circular for all life. The future is a result of the past, which depends upon the present: "As you sow, so shall you reap."

Soon, America's circular paths will come together, and instead of being an evolutionary spiral uplifting humanity, the path of life will lie desolate and destroyed. Like Humpty Dumpty, who took a great fall, all the king's scientists and technologists will not be able to put humanity together again.

Abuse of the Natural World

The wasteful, voracious abuse of the land and its limited resources in the interest of profits is leading all life into an empty void where no life can exist and no escape exits are provided.

All life depends upon the natural world for its existence, especially life in the artificially created worlds—the cities. Headquarters of the predator ruling class and living quarters for the exploited

workers, who consume enormous quantities of the earth's limited resources, cities hasten the pace of the war against the environment!

Giant food chain and farm monopolies—agribusiness—use pesticides and chemical fertilizers that destroy the natural micro-organisms. Agribusiness feeds hormones and other drugs to animals and poultry to promote unnaturally rapid growth. Timber barons and building developers cut down the forests and destroy plant life, which cause soil erosion, depletion of oxygen supplies, and large-scale destruction of bird and animal life.

Industrial and human wastes pollute the water, killing the fish and contaminating drinking water with cancer-producing carcinogens.

And all the energy resources—oil, gas, coal, water—are rapidly depleting.

America, once the land of the free and home of the brave, a beautiful land with natural wealth vast enough to sustain a sane society for millions of years, is now crowded with millions of hypnotized serfs and a handful of rulers who have denuded in a few short years what it took nature millions of years to produce. The only remaining resources in America are on the reserved land base of the Indian Nations.

Annihilation or Change

The predator ruling class believes in elimination without discrimination! They pit the haves against the have-nots and use everybody to squeeze the middle. They set the whites to fight the blacks and set both against the reds. They pit the men against the women, and the children against both. Christians hate the Jews and other religions fight each other. **The purpose of the ruling class is to Divide, Conquer and Rule ALL HUMANITY.**

Consider the following:

In the 1960s, many educated white students got hip (hippies), woke up, began to resist and protest, and sought alternate, non-exploitative, cooperative life-styles. In a flash, white communities and schools were flooded with marijuana, hard narcotics, and mind-blowing hallucinogens. The undeclared illegal war in Vietnam was escalated, and many thousands of bright young Americans were drafted and sent to Nam to kill and be killed, wound and be wounded, destroy and be destroyed!

The Kennedy brothers, Martin Luther King, and Malcolm X were cold-bloodedly assassinated!

Thousands of Indian women were sterilized without their knowledge and consent by U.S. Indian Public Health!

Hundreds of southern Blacks were deliberately infected with venereal diseases in a fifty-year-long experiment of the U.S. Public Health Department!

The Army Corps of Engineers was found to be secretly conducting germ warfare experiments on the American public, spreading highly infectious, deadly virus germs in subways and office buildings!

At an American Legion Convention, hundreds of legionnaires sicken and many die of a mysterious



disease. Another government experiment?

Weather control experiments cause a freak rain storm in South Dakota; thousands are flooded and many die in Rapid City. Many of the victims are Sioux!

Floods, droughts, earthquakes, killer winds, forest fires—are they results of more experiments or a backlash from Mother Nature?

American cities rapidly deteriorate. Millions of poor and unemployed are not eligible to receive welfare aid because of bureaucratic red-tape; the destitute are forced into a life of crime; jails and mental institutions are over-crowded; helpless children are tortured and murdered by psychotic parents.

Thousands of Amazonian Indians are massacred by giant U.S. corporations who are destroying the Amazon jungle at the rate of ten miles per day, criss-crossing the jungle with roads to get at the oil, bauxite, and other resources. Scientists warn that the Amazon jungle provides one-fifth of the world's oxygen supply and its destruction will be disastrous for oxygen-breathing beings!

History teaches that when conditions reached the same critical stage in England, millions of enslaved, displaced, or dispossessed serfs were killed off or shipped out.

When Germany reached economic crisis, the Nazis ruthlessly exterminated millions of Europeans, Jews, Gypsies, political radicals and liberals, trade unionists, the handicapped, non-conformists, and representatives of all religions.

What next? Humanity had better wake up and make a stand for social, economic and cultural change while it still has a chance. The choice is up to the people!

We Do Have A Choice

The sixth article of the Omaha Treaty was secretly incorporated into almost all the treaties west of the Mississippi. This is a self-termination clause. **When Indian Nations or people ABANDON their traditional and distinct ways of life and adopt the ways and behavior of civilized society, the treaties will become null and void!**

Abandonment is not moving out of the tee pees and longhouses and reservations into houses, apartments, and cities. It is not wearing store-bought clothes instead of buckskins, or traveling in cars rather than canoes or horses. It is not buying meat with your paycheck as a union worker rather than hunting buffalo. These are merely outer changes, forced upon Indians. Abandonment means a radical change in the Indian's psychology and behavior.

When Indian Nations change their democratic, equalitarian governments into dictatorial bureaucracies...when Indians exchange their communal economic system for competitive, dog-eat-dog, private enterprise...when Indians adopt a class structure, where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer...when Indian leaders become predator profiteers committing depredations against their own people...when Indian people no longer care enough to share with one another...when Indian people become abusers and ex-

plorers of the Mother Earth and abandon their caretaker and guardian duties...when Indian people become violators of the governing laws of the natural world—*then* Indians have abandoned and deserted their natural culture!

Being Indian is more than skin color or legal, racial definition; it is a total philosophy and way of life!

We have a choice; we are free people with minds of our own, capable of making decisions. If some of our Indian leaders and people want to abandon their traditional, distinct way of life and assimilate into the American mainstream, they are free to do so, and no one has the right to stop them. But we have reached the point of no return; once the choice has been made, it is irrevocable!

Indians who erred or were unknowingly and deceptively dragged into the mainstream without their consent or knowledge have a chance to get out of it, to correct, redeem, and save themselves. ***Time is short; if they don't want to follow America's polluted mainstream to destruction and death, they better get out now, while the getting is good!***

And non-Indian Americans who wish to save themselves better wake up also. The inspiration that gave birth to America came from the Indian Nations who fed, nourished and protected America from its oppressors until it became strong enough to stand on its own. America's first hope and last chance lie with the Indian Nations and the treaties of peace, friendship and protection. These treaties are still America's protection. ***If America destroys these treaties, it will no longer be under the protective wing of the Indian Nations, and there are no weapons powerful enough to protect and save the U.S. from total destruction!***

Soon our trails will divide, for we have come to a fork in the road. A separation of humanity will take place.

One trail will be trod by those who follow the man-made paved road, who blindly march to "progress," competitively striving to climb the ladder of success to their predator-ruler's castle in the sky! They will fall into the emptiness they have created, to death and destruction.

The other path, a smaller one, is for those who have struggled to remain free and sovereign Nations and human beings, the caretakers and guardians of life who are equalitarian, democratic, communal, and non-exploitative. This trail will spiral upwards on the natural evolutionary path of life onto a higher level of existence!

Which path will you be on? The choice is yours!

Responsibility and Freedom

Each individual must take a personal responsibility in the struggle for human freedom. Each person is accountable for struggling for their own humanity. No one else can substitute for you, nobody will hand freedom over to you while you are looking the other way. To win liberation, each and every unfree person must stand up to the oppressors.

And each individual can clear their mind of the

cobwebs put there by this sickening society we live in. Every person can and must clean out the neglected attics of their minds, sweep out the dogma and drivel implanted by our enemies to confuse and paralyze and frighten us. Every single human being can open the closed windows of their mind and let in the fresh air and the light.

When every victim of injustice, and every person who is sensitive and opposed to injustice, regardless of their race or religion or political affiliation, makes the commitment to live with integrity and resist with honor, then together we can create a much better world.

We can build a society that eliminates greed and viciousness and tyranny, but preserves all that was true and good in the Indian past. Once again, we can rise to meet the challenges and we can emerge victorious—we can aim high and attain the realization of our long-lost harmony, our ages-old wisdom that rests on the unbreakable unity of nature, the people, social organization, and all living things. That unity is now rent asunder by the pillagers—but we can mend the sacred hoop that unites all living things and build a better world for children to grow up in. Together we can model a stronger, more vivid, more humane pattern of personal and intercommunal life for everyone.



Personal Footnote

For twenty years, I have spoken for the just cause of our Indian Nations and people. I have seen these danger signs creeping upon us, but I did not want to believe what I was seeing! I hoped that crisis and corruption were just temporary and would nicely fade away! But they have not.

My warning message and my analysis of our present dangers come from what I have seen in my travels upon Mother Earth; what I have learned from my elders; what I have heard from the voices of Indian people, and the world's exploited humanity; what I have read and studied; what I and my family have personally witnessed, suffered and experienced!

I am human, so prone to err. It is not my intent to confuse, frighten or injure any innocent human being just to expose the evil predators who are exploiting humanity and the earth. Therefore, if I have erred, I ask for correction! And if I am right, then I ask you to act, so we can work together for a better world for children to grow up in and for reestablishing the path of beauty, truth, freedom and plenty for all the earth's inhabitants.

Yet Si Blue
(Janet McCloud)

Yelm, Washington
January, 1978



by Connie Crothers

The women's rights movement in Europe exploded onto the political scene in the late sixties. Initiated largely by student movement activists, it mushroomed into a mass movement with the outbreak of prerevolutionary and revolutionary crises. Linked from the start with workers' struggles, it boasts a large workingclass composition and an irrepressible sector of socialist feminists.

Thousands of women in England, Ireland, France, Spain, Italy and Germany have demonstrated for abortion and birth control. They have marched in protest against their double workday and disproportionate unemployment rate. Traditionally militant, they have occupied factories during strikes in industries where women predominate.

They have formed unified caucuses in the unions and confronted the labor bureaucracy and fellow workers with demands for equal wages, paid maternity leave, and alleviation of harmful working conditions.

Their pervasive sense of internationalism has engendered many continental conferences, all marked by a sharp awareness of the common enemy—a male supremacist, exploitative society.

Reverberations on the Left

The coincident rise of European feminism with the outbreak of workers' struggles, and their intrinsic interaction, is striking sparks in radical politics and building up a revolutionary charge that could set Europe aflame.

Within the traditional workers' organizations and parties of the left, women have organized commissions and fractions to confront the dominant males and expose masculine reluctance to recognize the validity and political significance of the women's demands.

Women, moreover, have challenged the party leadership of virtually every Communist Party in Europe, criticizing class collaborationist politics and raising the urgent question of internal party democracy.

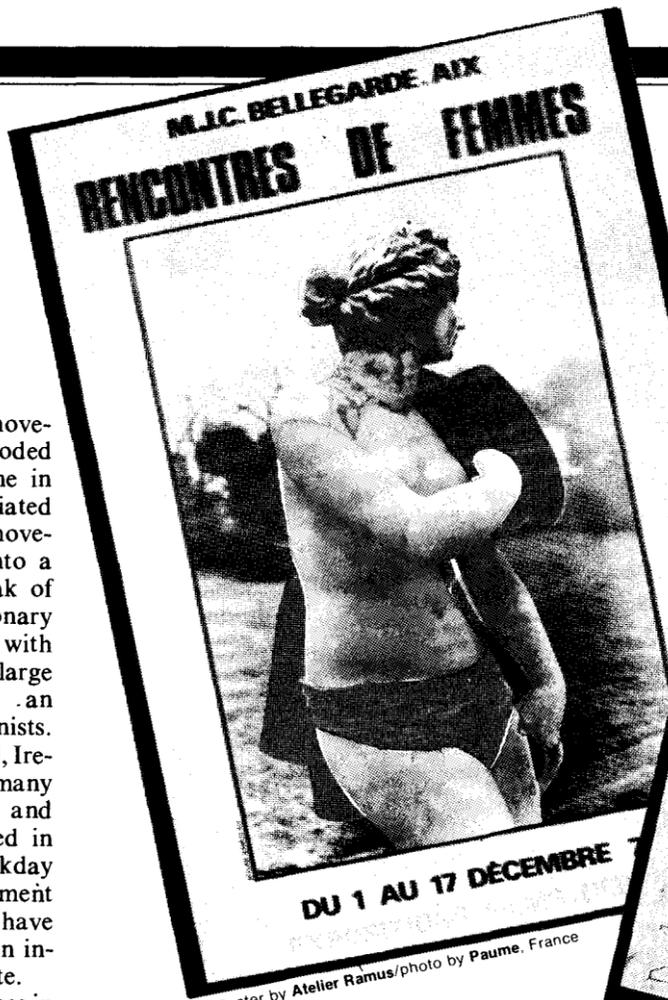
The Spanish CP has proclaimed itself "the party of women's liberation." After it held a party conference on the woman question, an opposition caucus of women CPers pressured the party to hold a general assembly of women comrades. The party's orientation to the autonomous women's movement was examined there, plus the matter of internal democracy.

The highest level of development of the autonomous women's movement has been reached in Great Britain, where feminism has a long history of interlocking with proletarian struggles. Socialist feminism is a mass, well-established current; 1000 women attended a socialist feminist conference in Manchester in January, 1978.

The delegates condemned the tardiness of the left in decisively confronting women's oppression, and male radicals were excoriated for their hypocrisy.

Inside the Fourth International

In the Trotskyist milieu, women are insisting on the right to form caucuses within the party.



Poster by Atelier Ramus/photo by Paume, France



Italian poster by Savelli

Eurofeminism

The mass autonomous women's movement in Europe has inspired female radicals to demand new dimensions of democracy in the Left

The British section of the Fourth International, the International Marxist Group (IMG), has adopted this principle, and another British Trotskyist group, the Socialist Workers Party, has formed a separate sister organization around its magazine, *Women's Voice*.

The resolution on women's liberation was one of two major documents at the IMG conference, and it passed with a 94% majority. The women's caucus issue received 61% of the vote. 43% of the delegates were women, and 32% of the new Central Committee are female. Active participation of women on all levels of party work and leadership is a priority.

The IMG publishes a quarterly feminist journal, *Socialist Woman*.

An organized women's group in the French section of the Fourth International, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), fought for official caucus status previous to and during the January, 1977 Second Congress of the party.

They criticized the "failure...to work out a political line and a theoretical position concerning women and feminism," and were rebuffed by a vote of 223 to 116, with 32 abstaining. But they won a mandate to the Central Committee and the Women's Secretariat to convene a national conference where the entire party could explore the issues in debate.

And the party adopted a policy "to initiate a feminist struggle within the workers' movement and to develop the

autonomous women's movement."

The majority resolution stressed the antibureaucratic character of women's groupings inside the trade union federations, declared as an LCR project the need "to enrich the class struggle with its feminist dimension," and called for a feminist press.

In January, 1978 the LCR began publishing a monthly—*Cahiers du Feminisme*. Conference documents were reprinted in a booklet, *Women's Movement and Class Struggle*.

It is no accident that the agenda of the current pre-Congress discussion in the Fourth International features the question of women's caucuses. Feminism, which attacks the basic institutions of class oppression, is intrinsically antibureaucratic. Thus, the fusion of feminism with the central core of class struggle forms the leading edge of the dynamic process that reconstitutes the integrity of the class.

By organizing independently *outside* the class, as women had to do, they became the most revolutionary current *within* the class.

The Inalienable Right to a Women's Caucus

Any movement calling itself Marxist must demonstrate women's equality in practice. And without caucuses, specially oppressed strata have no organizational lever of self-defense against sexism.

The right to caucuses in the sections of the Fourth International will be

opposed by every rightward tendency, especially the Socialist Workers Party of the U.S., which labels them unnecessary and immature.

SWPer Mary Alice Waters, in *Feminism and the Marxist Movement*, unleashes a blizzard of words to intimidate women Trotskyists from requesting caucuses. Waters speaks with the rasp of the petty bureaucrats she represents.

Women's caucuses are a contradiction to the formalist, violating categorical concepts of the norms of democratic centralism. But these norms must ever be forged anew in the furnace of current reality.

In April, 1917 Lenin exhorted the party in a manner that true communists will heed today: "Don't hang on to the old word which is rotten through and through," he said. "Have the will to build a new party...and all the oppressed will come to you."

The new catalyst for the building of a modern Bolshevik party is the revolutionary dynamic of free and fully developed women's caucuses. And Trotskyists should proffer thanks for the new blast of political energy conferred upon radicalism by the salutary effects of the autonomous women's movement. ■

Connie Crothers, a former member of the Socialist Workers Party and long-time feminist, is a founding member of CRSP and an activist in its New York branch. She is a jazz pianist and teacher of musical improvisation.