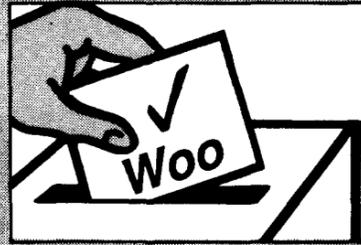




**RADICAL WOMEN
HOST CANDIDLY
REVOLUTIONARY
CONFERENCE/Page 10**



**CAMPAIGN FOR
GOVERNOR
OF CALIFORNIA
Woo stirs a helluva
response/Page 3**

The Freedom Socialist

Voice of Revolutionary Feminism

July-September 1990

Volume 12, Number 1

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Special Feature

Crisis in the East bloc— Death-knell for Stalinism, new hope for socialism

A collection of articles on
the anti-bureaucratic upheaval
in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and the
prospects for imminent revolutionary renewal.

Soviet showdown: workers vs. Gorbachev



Unbelievable, isn't it, that only a year has passed since Eastern Europe started tossing its Stalinist pooh-bahs onto the junkpile. Hell, it's been

only five years since perestroika was launched in the Soviet Union. The pace of change in the East is dizzying, incredible, hypnotic. The workers states are being remade. The question is, into what? And who will end up doing the making?

Is capitalism the wave of the future there, as everyone seems to think? Or is it a political revolution, a fight for real socialism, that's now taking shape?

Everyone agrees that Stalinism is headed for the chutes—and conventional wisdom says that Stalinism and socialism are the same damn thing, i.e., that socialism's had it. The only thing left for the East to do is slink back into the capitalist corral with as much grace and as little noise as possible.

A superficial look at the East European arena supports this appraisal. Communists have been bounced by pro-capitalists in elections in East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In Poland, the Solidarity government has already begun the shock transition to full-fledged market relations. Gorbachev set off buyer panic in the Soviet Union in May by announcing the removal of price controls on bread.

Other indices of anti-socialist drift: burgeoning nationalist antagonisms, even pogroms, in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Romania, all presaging the possible Balkanization of the entire Soviet bloc. Also, resurgent fascism: anti-Semitic Pamyat gangsters in Moscow; roving Nazi skinheads in East Berlin; exhumed Iron Guardists in Bucharest. Dying Stalinism pukes up the undigested savagery bequeathed by the an-

ciens régimes.

The picture given by gloating Western headlines: bloody fratricide, shrieks from the bestiary—and vulture capitalism winging in to pick the bones clean.

Let us, as an antidote to despair, probe beneath the headlines for a look at deeper, and decisive, truths.

Hold the gold! Funny thing, Wall Street is not nearly so sanguine as its journalistic minions about the prospects for capitalism's rebirth in the workers states. Take the Soviet Union. Capitalists must wonder, after salivating for 70 years at the prospect of plucking the USSR's vast markets and resources, whether the pleasure can be worth all the pain.

Judge for yourself. Three years ago, Gorbachev's brain-trust figured that perestroika would put some 15-20 million Soviet workers out on the streets (current "worst-case" estimates run to 40 million)—without the total pro-capitalist makeover that the Solidarity government is trying to ram down Poland's throat. Three years later, perestroika is going belly up: Gorbachev hasn't yet been able to pull the plug on all those millions of workers. In the meantime, the Soviet economy is beginning to smell like a beached whale and the Soviet state is flaking away at the edges.

In April, Gorbachev backed off his contemplated removal of price controls as a key to bringing the Soviet Union wholesale into the world marketplace. A springtime slump through the Urals had convinced him that workers wouldn't stand for it. Still, there was the Soviet economy—on the beach. So in May he announced the removal of price controls on bread.

You've read about the ensuing consumer panic and know that storm clouds are gathering like Gargantua's



Novosti Press Agency

wrath over Moscow. That's not the half of it. Gorbachev has yet to really tackle the pro-capitalist "renovation" of industry. When and if that happens, and plant doors swing shut, and those millions of workers find themselves out on the bricks—watch out.

What is Gorbachev going to do? What are the *capitalists* going to do? They want to bring the USSR into the world market? That means the utter decimation of Soviet industry, uncompetitive as it is. Are Wall Street and Tokyo prepared to spend the zillions needed to keep the country from crashing—and then to rebuild it to capitalist specifications? George Bush can't even keep America's streets from

crumbling, at least not while underwriting the world's fascist dictatorships. Japan is rolling in dough, but is nonetheless cash-short for this mammoth project.

Hanging in midair. Perestroika was first conceived as finding a midway point between Soviet "socialism" and outright capitalism by using market "correctives" to scrape the bureaucratic rust off the hull of production. Perestroika's initiatives—partial dismantling of the state monopoly of foreign trade, introduction of the profit incentive into industry, the beginning conversion of collective agriculture into

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Centerfold poster: Doug Barnes designed and produced this issue's special poster paying tribute to Leon Trotsky and his ideas on the 50th anniversary of Trotsky's death.

Freedom Socialist Credo

The Freedom Socialist boldly confronts and makes sense of the dizzying events shaping today's revolutionary world.

We're Marxists, Leninists, Trotskyists, feminists, humanists...we believe that all today's gigantic upheavals are links in an enormous global effort to topple the tyranny of imperialism or Stalinist bureaucratism or racist arrogance.

We hail the decisive leadership role played by people of color and by sexual and national minorities in the worldwide class struggle.

We focus on women's non-stop fight for equality which, in the final analysis, challenges every single basis on which capitalism rests. Feminism is essentially an energizing and unifying inducement to international revolutionary upsurge.

Our goal is to make these facts of life apparent. We aim to inject the socialist movement with the revitalizing ideas of Trotskyism and feminism in order to prepare it for victory in this crucial decade.

Next Issue

• **"Towards the '90s":** In the third and concluding installment of the Freedom Socialist Party's Political Resolution, co-authors Guerry Hoddersen and Clara Fraser continue their investigation of the U.S. social movements and assess the perspectives and tasks facing the FSP in this decade.

• **Drugs serial:** Part Three of "Drugs and Death Squads" will discuss the more sinister aspects of Bush's "anti-drug" terrorism and will propose ways we can end it.

• **Plus:** Our usual columns and features.

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Letters

Preconceived notions

I am quite familiar with Nicaragua and was astonished by the bad article ("Eyewitness report from embattled Nicaragua," FS, Vol. 11, #4). Strange you should send two people to test an ironclad analysis. Did you really expect them to come back with anything but Sandinista bashing? The Nicaragua they describe is one forced to fit your preconceived notion of a socialist state, but one that takes little account of reality. I want to ask if the concentration on Miskito communities is due to the fact that neither of your reporters spoke Spanish.

Really, how many lesbians and gays are out of the closet in any Latin American country? Ten years of revolution should change centuries?... You are so quick to pass judgment...

Mother Conoran
Rego Park, New York

Co-author Stephen Durham speaks fluent Spanish—ed.

Greetings from Czechoslovakia...

I received your paper. I like the articles "Poland: Capitalism cannot be imposed short of fierce civil war" and "And the walls come tumbling down."

Jaromír Canibal
Karriná-Ráj,
Czechoslovakia

...and from Poland

Thank you for sending us your newspaper. Your analysis of the situation in Poland is quite good and corresponds to the reality in our country.

Krzysztof Galinski
Czarny LIANS
Gdansk, Poland

Unfair

It is not really fair...for you to maintain (in your February-April 1990 issue) that the governments in the crumbling Soviet bloc were Stalinists without explaining that Stalin has been dead for 37 years and that none of them (except Albania) have called themselves Stalinist since 1956.

If you ask Stalinists, Stalinism has been dead in Eastern Europe for at least 34 years. It would be closer to the truth to call the old regimes Trotskyist because Trotskyists defend the economic organization of these countries, while the 100 percent Stalinists...noticed the predominance of private farming, the profit motive, imperialist banks and economic crisis—state capitalism—in Poland a long time ago...

How can you say there needs to be a civil war to impose capitalism in Poland when you don't mention a single fact that disproves the existence of capitalism in Poland right now?

A former Trotskyist
Ann Arbor

Drug wars

Thanks for part II of "Drugs and Death Squads: the CIA Connection" (Vol. 11, #4).

I guess you noticed that it's gotten pretty quiet on the drug war front since January. Suddenly there's not a lot about it in the papers, just occasional blips, like when it was reported a couple of months ago that the drug war in Washington, DC was a "failure." I'm not surprised, seeing that it's in the government's interest to keep the drugs coming in.

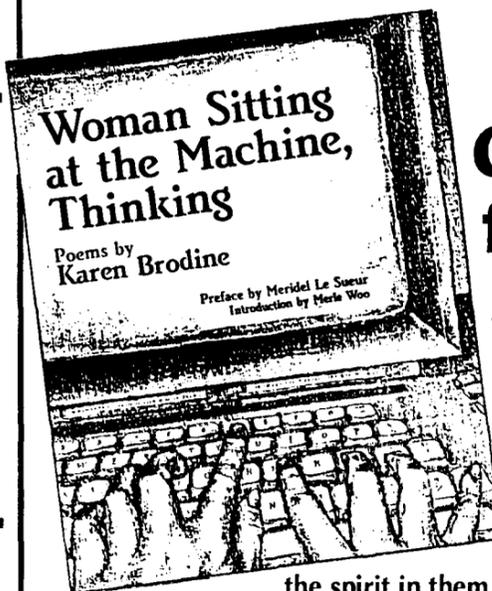
But the reason they're not making so much noise about the drug war lately is because people were starting to listen to arguments for legalizing drugs. People see that this drug war is a mess and it's unwinnable, and the legalization argument is starting to look good...

R.P.
Seattle, Washington

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs.

Correction

Contrary to what we asserted in our tribute to Huey Newton last issue, he was not with the Black Panthers when they stood armed on the steps of the Sacramento statehouse.



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Merle Woo's dramatic run for the California statehouse

The following interview is reprinted from San Diego's Gay and Lesbian Nation newspaper.

During a recent phone conversation with Merle Woo, candidate for Governor of California in the Peace and Freedom Party's June primary, I was impressed not only by her assessment of the issues, but by her quiet optimism and conviction that change can occur. It was also apparent to me that this campaign, within the Peace and Freedom Party and without it, is not about or for Merle Woo—a politician hungry for personal power—for in her there is no such person.

Neither is it a campaign based on the need for one person's ego-appeasement. What makes Merle Woo run is her determination that the leadership in this state be replaced by a visible coalition of leadership of those traditionally excluded: women, people of color, gays and lesbians, the poor and the underpaid and so on. Even should she not win in the primary, she will have made this point and delivered the message about this state's leadership.

"In talking to people, I see that people are feeling less demoralized, less cynical," Woo said. "They see that, with this campaign, they have a chance to lodge not only a protest vote against the current leadership, but to also see something building...a movement for change from the bottom up."

"The issues are: unemployment; education; nationalized healthcare, including funding for full reproductive rights and abortions on demand; elimination of forced sterilization, which mostly affects Native American women,



E. Yamasaki, FS

"With this campaign, people have a chance to not only lodge a protest vote, but also see a movement for change building from the bottom up."

and other women of color; and a focus on full AIDS resources and funding for research and education."

When the Peace and Freedom Party, in deciding that someone from the Freedom Socialist Party should run for governor, decided that that someone ought to be Merle Woo because of her activism and abilities, and also because of her visibility in connection with her lawsuit of UC-Berkeley, Woo says she laughed at the idea. Gradually, however, she says she recognized that if they could focus on an educational campaign around socialist-feminist issues, they could offer a real alternative to the other parties.

"But it's clear to me that it's not just one person in office that's going to make a difference," she said. "We need

to talk about what it means to build a large anti-capitalist movement and get a movement into office.

"The other part of my running, and what I think I bring to this campaign, is that, as a lesbian of color, my presence unites the movement. The clearest message here is that as a lesbian of color, I know I will not get my rights under capitalism. My presence also helps people to know that it is their level of participation that determines their success. I've learned that it is not enough to be a lesbian, but that you must also be an advocate for lesbian rights."

I listened to Merle Woo speak. For eight years she has fought her arbitrary and discriminatory firing as a UC-Berkeley lecturer brought about because of her so-called radical views. And she has persevered because, as she says, "the university is deliberately trying to create a chilling effect on the campus," and this simply won't do for Woo. If she quits, others will have second thoughts about pursuing their own cases of discrimination. So she goes on with the fight. It makes me believe that whatever the fight Woo becomes engaged in, she will go on slugging away until there is a clear victor or loser.

"The goal for me is to have a socialist feminist revolution—that, or we face our destruction," she said. "I have not been by myself in this struggle. I have had lots of support..."

"More of us need to come together. Sometimes I think there's no brotherhood and sisterhood in the lesbian/gay community. If we come together, we could face that common enemy. This divide-and-conquer between male and female, among colors and races, comes from the top level of government.

"Lesbians of color are on the front lines. We are the leadership of the future, and our leadership is invaluable."

Woo thinks her chances of winning in her primary are good. But she may never need our vote in order to be considered successful or a winner, although, of course, votes are always crucial. Beyond that, however, she wins if we learn how to come together, if we learn to examine the system and expose its wrongs; if we learn the value of our visibility and our leadership; and if we join her on the front lines.

She wins if we work collectively and become integral components in the struggle against racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and all other forms of discrimination. She wins, but then, we win, too. □

—M. CORINNE MAKEY

M. Corinne Makey writes a weekly column for *Gay and Lesbian Nation* and is a founder of the San Diego group Lesbians and Gays of African Descent United.

Editor's note: Merle Woo was diagnosed with breast cancer during her gubernatorial campaign. In June she underwent surgery to remove the cancer.

Merle's spirits are high. FSP and Radical Women, with Merle's family and friends, are providing loving support and insisting on the best medical care available.

Merle is recovering well—but she is *angry*: "Cancer, like AIDS, is disproportionately found among people who receive the lousiest health care, work the unsafest jobs, live in the worst housing, are the most cruelly exploited and discriminated-against. And I am *convinced* that we will not conquer these diseases until we get rid of the biggest disease of all, and that's capitalism."

Well-wishers can send messages to Merle at Valencia Hall, 523-A Valencia St., San Francisco, California 94110.

New Alliance Party's sinister song & dance

Merle Woo lost to her opponent, New Alliance Party (NAP) candidate Elizabeth Munoz, in the Peace and Freedom Party (P&FP) primary June 5. Woo took San Francisco and Alameda Counties. Nevertheless, second-time gubernatorial Munoz' greater name familiarity helped her statewide, as did the fact that NAP was able to mail campaign lit to the entire P&FP registrant list—financially impossible for Woo.

Also, Socialist Action, the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party and other leftists refused, for various sectarian reasons, to back the socialist Woo.

Nonetheless, Woo made an impact, especially in the press, a fact that astonished old-time P&FP campaign workers.

There's always the next go-round: Meanwhile, people need to learn more about NAP.

They may sound good on first hearing. Their song is one of "empowerment" for all the oppressed. They sing out for an end to racism, for lesbian/gay rights, for housing, health care, the right to abortion... Sweet music. But in an age when sweet music is made into muzak and used to pitch Pepsi, beware of crooning political hucksters.

You'll never hear NAP sing socialist songs. Yet here is a group that poaches at socialist watering holes—for issues, pieces of ideas, the progressive electoral constituency—while slandering socialists as irrelevant to American politics!

This is the same "lone alternative" to the two-party system whose strategy in the '88 presidential elections was to hop aboard Jesse Jackson's bandwagon if he wound up being the Democratic

Party nominee. This, despite the fact that NAP insisted, rightly, that the Democrats will never accede to Black equality!

NAP was also fishing for Jackson votes for their own candidate, Lenora Fulani, in the event Jackson stumbled. Not only votes: NAP solicits money for something called the "Rainbow Lobby" which, when people confuse it with Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, NAP doesn't mind. The Rainbow Coalition has publicly blasted NAP for duplicity.

NAP is currently cuddling up to Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam. Farrakhan has clout in the Black community and NAP wants some. But Farrakhan is a notorious anti-Semite, homophobe, male supremacist, and bedrock pro-capitalist. So how does NAP square this with their supposed support for women's, gay, and Jewish equality and workers' democratic rights? For that matter, how do they reconcile it with support for Black women, Black gays, Black workers?

The NAP package is snake-oil. What do you expect from a group whose leader, Fred Newman, spent time at the feet of Lyndon LaRouche in 1974—when the master was already well down the road to Nazism?

LaRouche was, at the time, sending goon squads out to smash the Left; today Newman slanders socialists and tries to steal their support. LaRouche brainwashes his followers; according to ex-insiders, Newman runs NAP as a "sex-therapy" cult.

LaRouche today is an outright fascist. Who knows where NAP will end up? □

National Speaking Tour

Embattled Nicaragua: An Eyewitness Account

Dr. Susan Williams and Stephen Durham traveled to Nicaragua in 1989. They lived with Sandinista workers and met with women organizers, unionists, lesbian/gay activists, and Atlantic Coast Indians and Creoles.

The forums will feature their slide show, discussion, and great food. Call the numbers listed below for sites, times, and more information.

Dr. Susan Williams:		
September 8	Tacoma, Washington	206-383-4142
September 15	Portland, Oregon	503-249-8067
September 22	Seattle, Washington	206-722-2453
Stephen Durham:		
September 30	San Francisco, California	415-864-1278
October 13	Los Angeles, California	213-413-1350

If you would like Williams or Durham to speak in your city, contact FSP National Office, 409 Maynard Avenue South, Seattle, Wash. 98104; 206-682-0990.

Eastern Europe: Rebellion at the grassroots



Back in 1917, everyone understood that the workers were to rule in the workers state. Logical, no? Then came Stalin to bury logic. Now Stalinism is a gasp or two from interment and guess who's back from the Land of Shades, shovels in hand, itching to pronounce the last rites?

You bet—the workers throughout the East bloc.

Poland. Can you imagine what's going to happen in Poland, land of "shock" transition to capitalism, as prices and unemployment skyrocket together, as the Stalinists and the sharpies of Solidarity's right wing get rich selling off state property for a song to themselves and their capitalist cohorts, as the country is bled white by debt to the International Monetary Fund?

One hell of an explosion, that's what.

Polish workers have been rising up against Stalinism for over three decades. They came within an ace of dumping the bureaucracy in 1980 and have had ten years to seethe as things just got worse. They've seen a lot in those ten years: they've watched the "hero" Walesa embrace General Jaruzelski and the IMF in the attempt to lead Poland like a hog to market. And if the workers slaved under Stalinism, they're not about to starve under capitalism.

Thirty-five thousand miners laid down their shovels to strike after the shock reforms swelled unemployment and hiked prices in January. Chances are they'll be picking them up soon to help bury the bloodsuckers in Warsaw.

Reunification blues. Cold warriors may be gloating now over the impending German reunification, i.e., the absorption of the East by the West and imposition of West German law and the Deutsche mark throughout the land. Let them laugh while they can.

Here's what reunification means: East German industry, unable to compete with West German, Japanese and South Korean industry, will fold like an accordion. Unemployment will hit the moon—an estimated 1.4 million jobless virtually overnight. Meanwhile food and housing costs, hitherto kept low via government subsidies, could quadruple. East Germans also face being badly shortchanged by conversion to the Deutsche mark: East Germany is bankrupt, its currency worthless. For small savers, Bonn is proposing a two-for-one-swap of equivalent East German notes for D-marks—a generosity likely to have East German workers out on the streets selling pencils.

West German moneymen may be licking their lips at the thought of all that penurious East German labor, but they can't be happy at the hemorrhage of funds it will take to keep the East from collapse. Then too, reunification will bring East and West German workers closer together and—uh oh. You can bet the East Germans won't submit happily to "free market" peonage. West Germans meanwhile are chafing under an official 8 percent unemployment rate and steady erosion of social services. Put them together in common unions and a common polity to share suffering and compare notes and things might really rock and roll in the Reich-to-be.

Women's rage. Immediate trouble is likely to come from women over the question of abortion rights. In the East, abortion is free, no questions asked. In the West, however, a woman must persuade two doctors to grant permission; then she must undergo "counseling" and wait three days for the op-

eration. The West wants its restrictions to become law in united Germany.

You can imagine the outrage this has provoked among East German women by the fact that even West German politicians predict that abortion rights—even more than economic or military matters—will be the flashpoint issue of reunification talks.

Women workers meanwhile are leveling the widest-ranging criticisms of the old regimes and the impending "free market" transitions. Here is a passage from the Manifesto for an Independent Women's Movement adopted by a confederation of East German women's organizations on December 3, 1989:

We women say this: The social changes in (East Germany) were set off by the masses in the streets. Women were present at all stages of this process. They were in the forefront... But as soon as the time came to work out the perspectives for the renewal of socialist society, women found themselves once again excluded.

...this society has been careening towards the abyss. We have witnessed a rapid deterioration in living conditions and the social situation... And with the fall in wages of men and women,

crats to capitalism.

Workers' councils have sprung up, or are fighting to, in Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, and a struggle is shaping up against government dismantling of social property for sale to capitalists at bargain prices.

In Romania, where Ceausescu was ousted and executed, workers have begun removing corrupt and incompetent factory managers and electing replacements. One of the first acts of the new provisional government was to legalize abortion.

In Hungary, where half-a-million unemployed are forecast over the next few years, the battle will undoubtedly develop against the takeover of Hungarian industry by West German capital—providing the basis for direct unity between Hungarian and German workers.

Interestingly, battles against privatization in Czechoslovakia may break out first in agriculture. Collective farming is a success here—agricultural yield equals Western levels—and agricultural workers show no signs of wanting to return to the backbreaking regimen and inefficiency that characterize private family farming.

The pressure is on. Market reforms in Yugoslavia in the 1960s put some 500,000 out of work and led to debt that today totals \$21 billion. Similar reforms today, being pushed under IMF pressure, promise another half-million jobless. Workers are responding:

ticated and consciously revolutionary leadership is developing. An example is the Polish Socialist Party-Democratic Revolution (PSP-DR).

PSP-DR leader Jozef Pinior analyzes the current situation in Poland:

Political wisdom has led the bureaucracy to look for an agreement with the Church and the (Solidarity) opposition...

The Walesa opposition has agreed to support...the embourgeoisement of the nomenklatura. These reforms...are aimed at providing the world with cheap labor and dooming the youth and majority of workers to destitution...

Sooner or later this will end up in a rebellion of Solidarnosc's grassroots...it is stupid to think that the workers will not react to the capitalist appropriation of the means of production by the ruling elite.

This passage, and PSP-DR's platform, attest to their clear understanding that Stalinist bureaucracy is antithetical to socialism and that it must be forcibly overthrown and dismantled in a political revolution if workers are finally to assume control.



M. Jespersen, Octopus

East German women on strike at East Berlin's Schuhfabrik VEB Goldpunkt, a shoe factory. German reunification will send hundreds of thousands of East German workers into the streets—against unemployment, wage cuts, price hikes, etc. Women, most jeopardized by the coming decimation of East German industry, and by the threat to abortion rights, are already causing sleepless nights in Bonn.

and the lessening of the political power of the workers, it is women who have had to compensate by extra work for the failure of social services, women who have become more and more at risk from male aggression and exploitation as sexual object.

Women have no country to lose, they have a world to win. Now is the time to seize the opportunity to enhance the diversity of our aspirations and demands in the framework of a renewal of Socialism...

Powerful stuff—and ominous for East and West German powers-that-be.

It's breaking out all over. We see seeds of the same movement throughout the workers states, and why not? Workers in all these countries face the same danger, sellout by the bureau-

crats to capitalism. Also, in the last few months, worker pressure has forced the bureaucracy to announce in favor of a multi-party system. As one Yugoslavian militant put it, "The revolution in Romania has changed many things in the Balkans."

Many things. Yugoslavia's national antagonisms, between Serbs and Croats for example, rival those in the USSR. Yet development of independent democratic organizations, blocked for years by nationalist strife, is proceeding swiftly on the crest of the current upheavals. Support is growing throughout Yugoslavia now for the demands of the Moslem Albanian minority for greater religious and cultural freedom.

Leadership. Everywhere in the East the same thing: stiffening resistance to the bureaucrats' sellout to capital and the impulse to overcome divisions, national and otherwise, that have hampered workers' self-organization.

It will take more than militance for the workers to win. Fortunately, sophis-

PSP-DR has also moved far beyond early Solidarity's narrow national focus. For example, in demanding that Poland repudiate the IMF debt, the party characterizes the debt crisis as international and refutes the notion that socialism in any one country can break the stranglehold of world capital.

This position gets to the heart of the problem all right: capitalism is an international system; socialism must supplant it internationally to survive.

Poland's Left leadership is perhaps the most sophisticated in the East. But Poland has been in arms against Stalinism for over 30 years. The other East Europeans, faced with essentially the same crisis, will catch up.

East European workers already know they're in the same boat; international consciousness is there. That consciousness, strengthened by events, and their unconquerable egalitarianism—instilled by the promise, if not the reality, of socialism—will carry them a long way—against the bureaucrats, against the capitalists, towards socialism. □

The fallacies of socialism in one country



Stalinism is crumbling in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. That's the best news we Trotskyists have heard in nearly 70 years.

We've been predicting the demise of that bastard parody of communism ever since Stalin and his henchmen usurped control of the Kremlin in 1923. Stalinism *ain't* communism. You've heard that before, but let's demonstrate the difference again for those who didn't get it the first time.

The real thing. First, Marx's unsullied vision. Simply, it was that human beings, rid of owners and overlords, could cooperatively and successfully plan their economic life and control their own social destinies. Marx foresaw that socialism would appropriate capitalism's already-socialized productive techniques and its privatized wealth and, on that basis, ascend to a higher culture.

Marx took account of the fact that capitalism is a global system. Its wealth and technique have developed on the basis of a world division of labor, the worldwide flow of resources from colonial countries to the industrial centers, and high finance's ability to expand the capitalist market to all continents.

Capitalism controls the planet economically and politically. This means that socialism, from wherever its starting point, must take power worldwide—or else wither, deformed in the womb, à la Romania.

Bottled up. Before and after the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Trotsky insisted that the fledgling Soviet state would not be secure until capitalism was supplanted internationally by workers' revolution. Socialism in a single country, especially in one so historically impoverished and backward as Russia, could not possibly compete with the West.

The USSR—encircled, isolated, left to build capitalism with what Trotsky called "a pre-capitalist inventory"—would fall prey to bureaucratism, to an economic policeman straddling society

to regulate the scramble of too many people for too few goods.

The Bolsheviks tried mightily to ignite the European revolution, but Europe, shored up by massive infusions of U.S. aid, held fast in the '20s and the revolution stayed bottled up in the Soviet Union.

Single-state squalor. Enter Stalinism to gum things up for decades.

True to forecast, Soviet poverty gave a leg up to government careerists, most of whom had flocked to the Bolsheviks only after the 1917 victory. Lodged in the state machinery under the wing of Stalin the "Old Bolshevik,"

they proceeded to take the best of what little there was for themselves. As Soviet isolation grew prolonged, the nascent bureaucrats were able to consolidate into a new and parasitical ruling caste.

The USSR's pariah status was okay with the Stalinists, having lifted them to power—and they moved quickly to cement the status quo. Stalin proclaimed "socialism in one country," the Soviet Union, as the end-all be-all of "Marxism-Leninism" in 1924. He turned his back on further revolutionary commitments at home and abroad. He lauded "peaceful coexistence" with Western imperialism as the proper framework for Soviet development.

Stalin's desecration of Marxism, this theory of single-state socialism, was the logical outcome of the nest-feathering instinct: bureaucrats are by nature short-sighted, opportunistic, anti-revolutionary seekers after privilege and "peace." They "make the best" of bad situations. If squalor serves their purpose, they proclaim it a paradise and work to ensure it lasts for eternity.

Stalin didn't want any more upheavals upsetting his appercart—and to ensure that none did, he sabotaged the

Chinese revolution in 1925-27 and the British general strike in 1926. He spiked all hope for the German revolution in the early 1930s by refusing to allow the German Communist Party to unite with Social Democratic workers to repel the oncoming Nazi menace. This last betrayal paved the way for Hitler, who



The social revolution in such a country [Russia] can finally be successful only...on the condition that it is given timely support by the social revolution in one or more advanced countries...

—V. I. Lenin

repaid Stalin's kindness less than a decade later with an invasion and 20 million Soviet war dead.

Had Stalin ever bothered to acquaint himself with Marx, he might have realized that the Soviet Union could no more coexist with imperialism than human tissue can coexist with cancer. Capitalism must grow or die. Accordingly, capitalist governments must subjugate the labor, resources and markets of the planet. Removal of a sixth of the earth's surface from the imperialist orbit could not sit well with the profiteers and their generals.

Hitler's invasion of the USSR in 1941 was a bloody object lesson in capitalist political economy. Subsequent U.S. efforts to roll back communism via global hot and cold wars are an emphatic restatement of the lesson.

Stalin's paradise. The Soviet bureaucracy could not coexist with the West. Nor, as it turned out, could it coexist with the egalitarian dynamics of the Russian Revolution itself. Soviet workers hadn't gotten rid of the old order just to be saddled with a new gang of slavemasters, and Trotsky's Left Op-

position fought tooth and nail against the bureaucracy's encroachments throughout the 1920s.

Stalin used the machinery of state to smash the opposition and exile Trotsky, then to exterminate millions of peasants and dissidents in the '30s, then to have Trotsky assassinated in Mexico in 1940.

Stalin falsified history, gagged artists, writers and critics, butchered the trade unions. He gutted the Soviet constitution which had codified democratic freedoms for women, gays and national minorities. Having repressed the nationalities in the '20s, he proceeded in the '30s to canonize women's re-enslavement in the home and to outlaw homosexuality.

He effectively demolished the soviets, the democratic representational bodies that had provided the basis for workers' control of the government in the early years of the revolution.

Stalin leveled the most far-reaching democracy the world has yet seen and erected a gimcrack caricature of socialism—a police state resting on top of a planned economy, in a country that had not yet swept away the vestiges of feudalism.

Inevitable fall. What a legacy! The Soviet state is still primitive today, still vulnerable to the West. How could its economy *not* be a nightmare of rotten planning, corruption, and mismanagement? How could alcoholism and cynicism not be rampant among the politically disenfranchised workers? How could long lines and scarce and shoddy merchandise not plague weary consumers?

How could similar conditions not prevail in the clone states that Stalin set up in Eastern Europe after World War II, as per agreement with the U.S., to be a buffer against imperialist control of the rest of Europe and Asia?

When you add to the internal misery the continuing Western ownership of the bulk of the world's economic assets and the ongoing, manifest U.S. intent to eradicate the workers states—well, how could Stalinism not be tottering at the edge of the abyss? □



"Well, Fran, it looks like Communism's down for the count. The USSR is disintegrating; Eastern Europe's going capitalist; Chinese hardliners are reaching the end of their road. Won't you finally admit that socialism has failed, that it's finished, ended, kaput?"

"Stan, how can something that's never been born be dying or dead? I agree that Stalinism has had it. But just because Stalinists and capitalists have insisted for 60 years that Stalinism is socialism, we don't have to make the same mistake.

"Moscow and Wall Street had obvious reasons for equating the two: Moscow thought it would make the bureaucracy look good. Wall Street knew it would make socialism look like hell. But let's you and I take a look at the question with an eye to finding the truth."

"OK, Fran, what's the difference between Stalinism and socialism?"

"First, Stan, let's go to the source and see how socialism existed in the minds' eye of Marx and Engels, as opposed to how it was painted up in Stalin's advertising brochures.

"They saw socialism as a global system in which free personalities could develop and flourish in a community of social responsibility and material abun-

dance. Key to this system was workers taking hold of economic life as the foundation of all social and cultural activity and planning production for human use, not private profit. Planning, requiring overall coordination and direction of the economy, would be centralized under workers' control.

"I know what you're thinking, Stan, Stalin said the same damn thing. But Marxists never conceived centralized planning to be a bunch of Moscow hotshots ordering flunkies hither and yon to meet quotas cooked up by Kremlin hacks who want to look good in reports to the Central Committee:

"The Committee wants a million tractors by Christmas? Fine and dandy. If the tractors don't get built, blame the plant managers for screwing up. They can blame the workers for showing up drunk on the job.' Dump down and cover your ass—that's the Stalinist way.

"But that isn't what Marx had in mind. And here is where economic planning meets up with the need for political democracy."

"Fran, what's democracy got to do with economic planning?"

"Well, Stan, Stalin built his police state, gave orders, do this, do that, no discussion, we'll shoot you. The bureaucracy built itself a 'socialist' economy that cannot adequately feed or house its people even today!

"You see, a planned economy requires discussion, debate, critiques and control by the people responsible for carrying it out, the workers. Planning demands democracy, workers' democracy. That's the point of a workers state.

"Look at it from the production angle: a plan begins with assessing existing conditions and industrial technique at the local, regional and top-most levels. How do you make realistic assessments? By ensuring that those most involved in the project, the workers, offer opinions, clarify problems, hash out disagreements, make proposals on what to do next, then vote on how best to get the job done.

"Intelligent, clear-eyed, workable

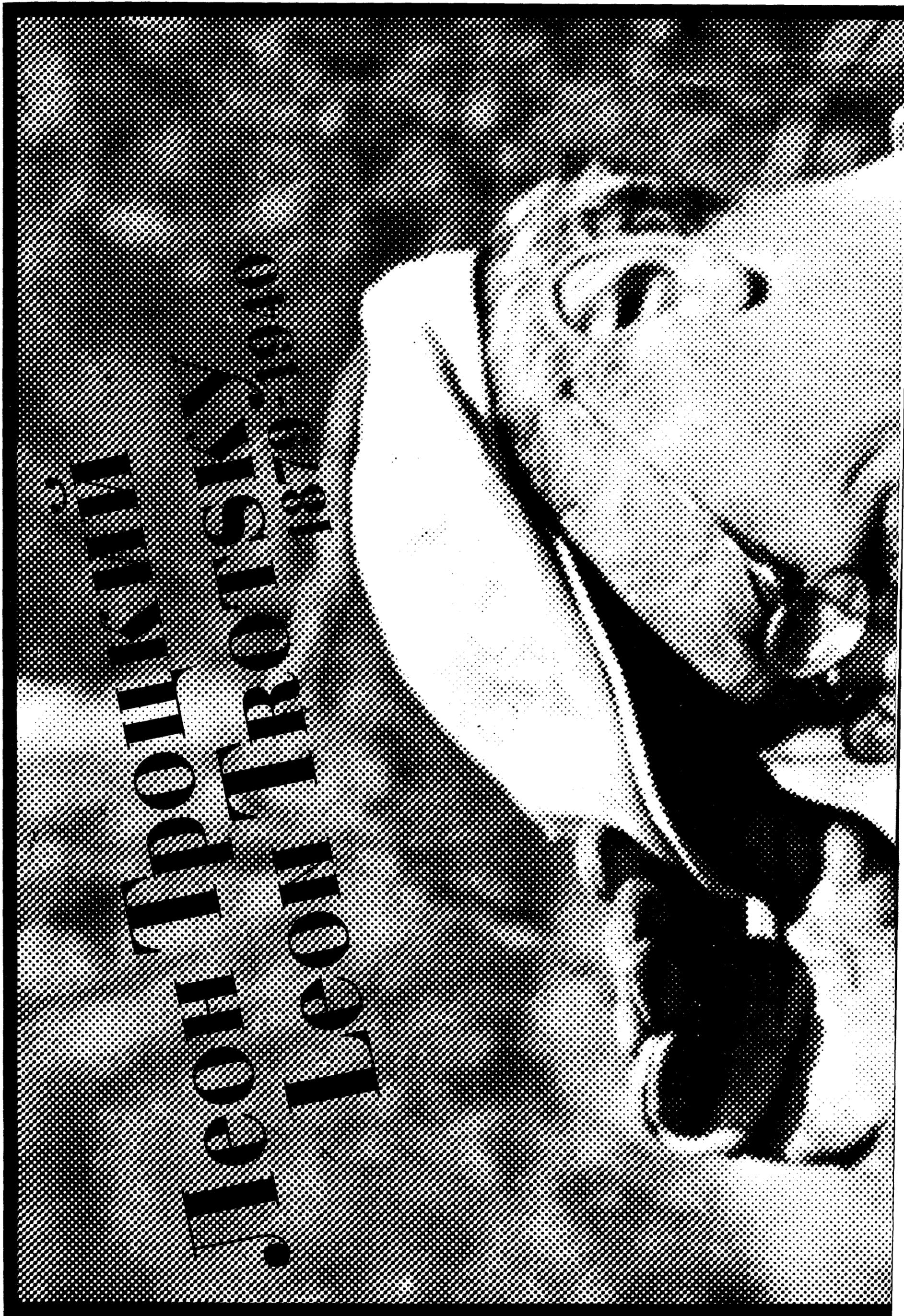
planning demands the fullest democracy. Imagine trying to prioritize local objectives, in harmony with regional and overall needs, meanwhile integrating various far-flung industries and resources to ensure that all needs get met! You'd better have your shit together, know what your resources are, know what your problems are, and know how to use those resources to get those problems out of the way.

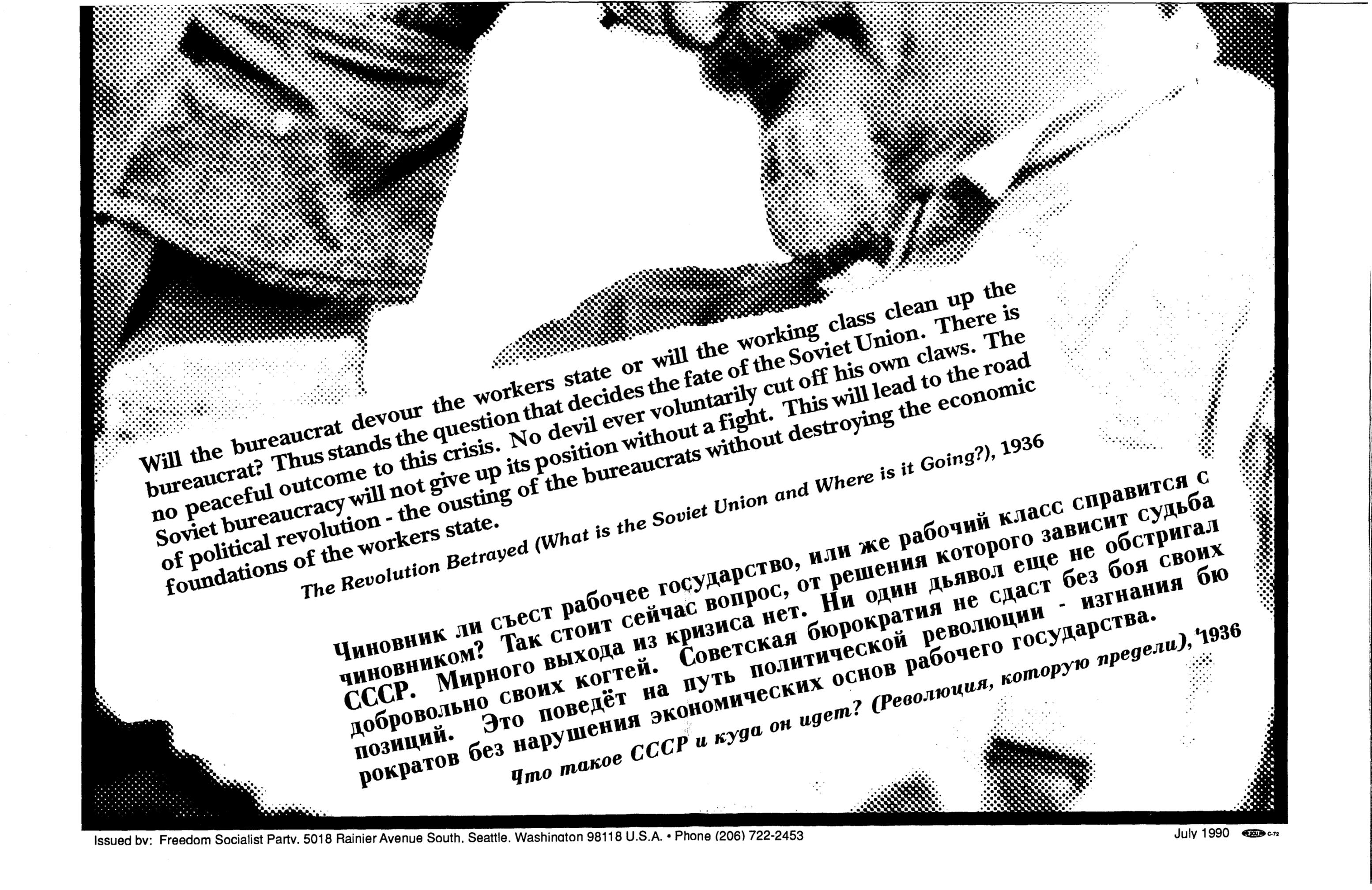
"How are you possibly going to know unless the workers tell you the truth? How can they do that if they're bullied, or threatened, or treated like pack mules and dummies? Why would they *want* to if they have no say in how things get done?"

"OK, Fran, workers' democracy. Great. How do you get it?"

"First we overthrow the capitalists and take away their industry, Stan. Then we dismantle the state apparatus—army, police, courts, government

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Will the bureaucrat devour the workers state or will the working class clean up the bureaucrat? Thus stands the question that decides the fate of the Soviet Union. There is no peaceful outcome to this crisis. No devil ever voluntarily cut off his own claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its position without a fight. This will lead to the road of political revolution - the ousting of the bureaucrats without destroying the economic foundations of the workers state.

The Revolution Betrayed (What is the Soviet Union and Where is it Going?), 1936

Чиновник ли съест рабочее государство, или же рабочий класс справится с чиновником? Так стоит сейчас вопрос, от решения которого зависит судьба СССР. Мирного выхода из кризиса нет. Ни один дьявол еще не обстригал добровольно своих когтей. Советская бюрократия не сдаст без боя своих позиций. Это поведёт на путь политической революции - изгнания бюрократов без нарушения экономических основ рабочего государства.

Что такое СССР и куда он идет? (Революция, которую предали), 1936

Stalinism and fascism

A case of mistaken identity



Is Stalinism a variant of fascism, the "totalitarian" twin of Hitlerism?

That's the assertion of capitalist pundits, academics and sundry other red-baiters, and to hell with it.

Stalinism is certainly fascist-like in its methods of rule, but fascism it isn't. The latter horror is an inevitable outgrowth of dying capitalism's inability to maintain social order via "normal" police methods or the charade of parliamentary democracy.

Fascism grabs for power as the logical political expression of late capitalism at that juncture where the need to jack up the profit rate clashes irreversibly with the living standards and democratic impulses of the working majority. So it was with Mussolini and Hitler, whose job it was to crush the rambunctious Italian and German working classes, slash their wages to nothing, and herd them with cattle prods into

war production—all for the greater profits and glory of Ansaldo, Thyssen, Krupp, etc.

Big business finances and goads to political action those middleclass masses of small business owners, managers, functionaries, some more privileged workers, sundry bigots, etc., who face ruin by capitalist crisis—and who are all too willing to scapegoat the workers and super-oppressed for their troubles.

So it is with the U.S. far right—Nazis, Klansmen, LaRouchies, Moonies, and so forth. Financed by oil-men, defense contractors, et al., they are organizing for the day when the Democrats and Republicans can no longer successfully manage the "democratic" impoverishment of the American people—through plant closures, social and health care cuts, etc.—or continue their efforts to legally impose a police regime through "anti-drug" assaults on the U.S. Constitution.

Fascism is the putrid emanation of decomposing capitalism; Stalinism, conversely, is an *aberration* of post-capitalist society, an "accident" that happened when the newborn Russian Revolution was corralled by imperialist aggression in the 1920s. It is an ongoing expression of poverty and backwardness in the Soviet Union and all those countries where socialist overtures have taken place.

Stalinism not only expresses, it exacerbates, the backwardness of the post-capitalist states. Stalinists have insisted that socialism can be built in single countries, on the basis of material and technical poverty. They have worked instinctively to sabotage socialist revolutions for the sake of "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism—leaving the West in control of most of the planet, and the "socialist" states to founder as also-rans in the race with imperialism for humanity's future.

Domestic Stalinist police repression have smothered the creative intelligence, personal initiative, collective harmony, and human spirit that are the heart and soul of socialist economy and government.

Yes, fascism is necessary to capitalism—and Stalinism is a millstone around socialism's neck. Where fascism expresses the organic impossibility of healthy capitalist development, Stalinism has stood as the aberrant political barrier to the flowering of socialism.

To eradicate the threat of fascism, one must uproot and destroy the profit system. The current anti-Stalinist upheavals in Eastern Europe—aided by timely anti-capitalist revolts in the West—will finally clear the way for socialist renewal.

It is fatal to equate the two political regimes, fascism and Stalinism. The equation obscures the life-or-death distinction between the two socio-economic systems, capitalism and socialism. Worse, it fuels the delusion that capitalist restoration is inevitable and good in those societies where Stalinism is disintegrating.

Let's avoid delusions. The Eastern European shakeups are a wonderful first step back toward the road that leads to socialism. A needed second step is a preemptive strike against fascism—a revolt that closes the book on capitalism—in the West. □

Opportunity knocks for Trotskyists



The Soviet upheaval has opened up extraordinary advantages for the world socialist movement and for international Trotskyism. It's time right now for Trotskyists to repay the favor.

The shakeup has triggered shock, disbelief and bewilderment among all Stalinists not calcified by Communist Party ideology. What could be a better time for Trotskyists, who understand what's happening, to initiate discussions with the many Stalinists willing at least to listen? Broad layers of activists in movements influenced by Stalinists—and that's *all* the movements—can now be won to an understanding of how the cancer of bureaucracy wasted the original promise of socialism.

It can be done. When the Khrushchev revelations shattered the CPUSA in 1956, the U.S. Socialist Workers Party was there to engage the bomb-struck Communists in debate. The SWP recruited some, befriended or neutralized others, and sparked a revival of radicalism in time for the sizzling '60s.

The subsequent degeneration of the SWP doesn't mitigate the significance of this achievement an iota, nor does it alter the fact that the upheavals offer Trotskyists a similar historic opportunity to spearhead a radical renaissance now. □



Armenian protesters face off against Soviet troops in the Armenian capital, Yerevan. National repression has long served as a foundation of bureaucratic rule; the struggle for workers' democracy in the USSR will succeed to the degree that workers of different nationalities unite on an equal basis, as happened in the Urals miners' strike last summer.

...Socialism can work

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institutions, etc.—that kept them in power. Then we build our own state.

"We arm the workers in case the capitalists get frisky and try to retake power. That's what's meant by the dictatorship of the proletariat. We dictate to the capitalists: back off, get lost; you're out of business.

"But we also want *democracy*—for the workers, the majority. So we have workers' councils. These councils—the Russians called them soviets—are the representative bodies that are the basis for workers' control of the state and society. They're where we meet to hammer out policy on all the great issues: production and distribution of goods, the administration of state, education of children, town planning, health care, environmental law, everything. The councils are set up at the local, re-

gional, national and international levels. Delegates are elected from the lower to the higher bodies, to ensure integration of local and regional with overall interests.

"All of society would be represented in the council system, Stan: we'd have workers' councils, women's councils; councils of those who were racially and nationally oppressed; consumers' councils; seniors' councils; artists' councils; councils of the disabled—all kinds of councils! These councils would function as autonomous expressions of the needs and interests of the groups they represent. Yet they would be integral parts of the system as a whole, working collaboratively and collectively to achieve a harmony of interests."

"But they had soviets in Russia, Fran, and they still wound up with Stalin. What's to prevent that from happening again?"

"Let's step back a minute, Stan.

"Remember we said earlier that socialism would take over what capitalism had built and go from there? That was Marx's idea. And that's what socialism has to do! If it's going to work, so-

cialism has to take over and improve the highest existing productive, cultural and educational techniques and resources—those already developed by capitalism.

"Socialism is supposed to meet all people's needs. Only capitalism has created the material foundation for that. We couldn't plan without capitalist accounting and administrative methods. Modern-day training and education are impossible without capitalism's cultural resources. It's on the basis of these resources that socialism will be able to draw the majority of the people into the democratic administration of the state, control of production, and so forth.

"Going back to the Russian Revolution and Stalin: The Bolsheviks took power in a poor, backward country. Culture? Resources? What they had was thin to begin with, and most of that was destroyed in the world war and the civil war that followed the revolution. No way could workers' democracy take hold in Russia—unless revolutions in the rest of the capitalist world succeeded and brought help.

"To make a long story short, none did. The revolution stayed bottled up in

the Soviet Union. Capitalism kept hold of most of the world's wealth. What you had in the Soviet Union was chaos—and along came Stalin to bring 'order.'

"To repeat, Stan, capitalism is a *world* system. Socialism, therefore, has to take over the world to flourish. It can't just work in one or a few poor nations as Stalin tried to pretend it could."

"One last question, Fran. After 70 years of Stalinism, what chance does real socialism have of even getting a hearing among workers today?"

"Better than you might think, Stan. First, Stalinism is falling apart, which means there's one less roadblock to socialist revolution than there was. Second, while Stalinism dirtied up the socialist idea, capitalism is more than ever a horror story—a festering grab-bag of fascism, Third World famine, crime and corruption, social bigotries and economic austerity in the Western 'democracies.' People have just about had it. They want out of the madhouse. Where's the door? Look at the exit sign: It still says socialism." □

...Soviet showdown

from front page

private farms—made some inroads, but were stalled by worker resistance, bureaucratic inertia, and the plain lack of technique it takes to rev up a modern economy.

Then too, perestroika's unspoken assumption has been that market anarchy and economic planning could co-exist indefinitely. This is a fundamental absurdity. Gorbachev learned, if he didn't already know, that the middle ground is a no-man's land, a limbo between two irreconcilables—the market and planning. One or the other ultimately must go.

It's evident that Gorbachev would now like to hand the USSR over to capitalism. But he can't. The capitalists wouldn't know what to do with it if he could. Meanwhile Soviet disintegration accelerates. Gorbachev is losing control. A vacuum of power is opening up inside the USSR.

Toward midnight in Moscow. How long do you think Gorbachev can hold on by trying to restructure the Soviet Union on the backs of Soviet workers?

Considering that the assembled multitudes in Red Square on May Day this year booed him off the podium, the best guess is, not long.

The Soviet president is in a pickle: the USSR must modernize, and he sees only one way—via the capitalist market. But the market means misery for workers and they've made it plain that they're not going to sit back and suffer its consequences.

Time was when Stalinist terror could dictate in the Soviet Union. But this is the Age of New Thinking, and terror can no longer cut it.

No more soft soap. Gorbachev got a taste of the direction workers' thoughts are headed when thousands of miners struck in the Urals last summer. The miners didn't even have soap to wash with, and governments have fallen for less.

Soap and more were on the strikers' minds: self-management of the mines for one thing, and the ouster of the Communist Party from its monopoly of state power. Here you have in embryo the struggle for workers' democracy, for control of the workers state.

Some crucial things about this strike: one, it lit off similar strikes in the far-off Ukraine, despite lack of contact other than press reports between the strikers of the two regions. Then there's the fact that Kazakh, Russian, Tatar, German, and Caucasian miners held together as equals during the walk-out. What does this mean? Consider that national antagonisms and inequalities have formed a basis for the Russified bureaucracy's power for 60 years. These same antagonisms are now the linchpin for Soviet disintegration—and mulch for pro-capitalist organizing from the Baltics to the Moslem republics. But the miners' solidarity, transcending national partitions, stands as a challenge to bureaucracy and capitalism, as the foundation of an alternative to both.

A central question. The task is to articulate and develop this alternative, and it's happening. Last December in Moscow, some leaders of the miners got together with representatives of leftwing socialist groups from around the country and formed the all-Russian Committee for the Socialist Party, which ran candidates on the New Socialist ticket in the March 4 elections, winning several races.

The New Socialists are struggling to develop a coherent ideology. They recognize that "free market" means the Latin-Americanization of the Soviet Union. But they reject centralized planning of production. This they equate with bureaucracy.

Nonetheless, in implicit contradic-

tion to their repudiation of centralized planning, the New Socialists insist that production be controlled by democratically elected workers' councils at every level. They admit that "democratic control cannot exist without some kind of planning."

Exactly. If workers run the economy, they are going to try to ensure that social needs get met. Goals will be set—and this entails the conscious *direction* of production to meet them.

But what kind of planning? Local? Regional? In certain branches of industry only? What but economic Balkanization can result if the productive *whole* is left to the winds? The New Socialists will find that the reciprocal impact of the various regions and branches of industry are far too great to allow for any isolated success.

A woman's mission. Remember who started the Russian Revolution in February 1917? Women textile workers in Petrograd, the lowest-paid workers in the city, who got fed up having to stand in long lines after work to buy bread—only to find

women don't want what Gorbachev has to offer.

Perestroika is stalled, of course, not least by women's resistance. Meanwhile, the inequalities and ugliness of the old ways persist. Soviet feminists decry, as they have increasingly for the last decade, women's confinement to the lowest-rung jobs, the lack of childcare and health safeguards, rising infant mortality, and the fact that, 70 years after the revolution, women are still expected to keep house for nothing.

All these inequities, and the age-old lack of bread. The Soviet system is a

try to strangle the Russian Revolution. Stalin meanwhile had to erect a police state to protect the Kremlin's privileges from poor workers at home. Economic planning was a joke under the ignorant, nest-feathering elite. Social relations became those of bureaucratic masters to slaves.

Soviet socialism was a backward horror, impoverished, oppressive, a caricature, and thus a bureaucrats' paradise.

Inevitably it floundered; now it's falling. And it's up to the Soviet workers to pick up the pieces.

How will they do it? They're in the process already: forming the New Socialist Party, reaching across national lines in strikes, voicing an increasingly feminist criticism of things-as-they-are, and linking up workers' with consumers' demands, aspirations and outrage.

This is workers' democracy struggling to be born, chewing away at the bureaucratic foundations.

Soon up, perhaps: revived soviets, real ones, democratic representational bodies just like the ones that were the basis for workers' control of the state in the days before Stalin.

The bottom line. The workers' fight against bureaucratism is at bottom a fight against Soviet backwardness in relation to capitalism. Victory lies finally in socialism's triumph abroad.

Workers want equality and food on the table. Moscow cannot possibly deliver. Capitalism promises even greater horrors than Stalinism. It's the same all over the Eastern bloc: the bureaucracies are crumbling, the International Monetary Fund is circling, world capitalism is licking its lips. Circumstances compel an international, socialist solution to the crisis.

The New Socialists are moving toward fully recognizing this and that's good. Also, people are reading Trotsky in Moscow and Leningrad these days. That's good too. Human needs and aspirations power the anti-bureaucratic struggle; Marxist theory can shape it and make it successful.

Trotsky laid bare the fallacies of Stalinism and "socialism in one country." His writings can help Soviet workers draw fundamental revolutionary conclusions from the current unholy collusion of Moscow with international capital. And in scraping away some of the mud heaped by Stalinism on the very idea of socialism, his analyses illuminate how that maligned system can finally fulfill the promise of 1917.

Wrapping it up. How's this for a grand finale to the Soviet upheaval?

One hundred and thirty-five million Soviet workers rise up to wrest control of their state from the usurpers in Moscow. The conflict reignites in workers around the world the half-buried belief that they too can seize hold of their destinies.

U.S. and European workers especially take heart from the Soviets, and from Trotsky: they've been bound and gagged for six rotten decades by Stalinist reformism in their unions and social movements. But with the Soviet inspiration they settle accounts with their misleaders. Once that's accomplished—once they're freed from reformist handcuffs—they steamroller the capitalists.

Socialist revolution in the West ensures its consolidation in the Soviet Union and everywhere else.

It all gets done by the end of the decade. □

—ROBERT CRISMAN



Novosti Press Agency



Women textile workers striking for bread in Petrograd kicked off the February revolution which toppled the Czar in 1917. Their banner in the top photo above reads "Comrade Workers and Soldiers, Support Our Demands." Today in Moscow (lower photo) the shelves are still bare, women are seething, and the clock is ticking away on Gorbachev.

there was no bread to buy when they finally got into the store.

Think about how revolutions get started: Russia was being chopped to bits in World War I. Millions were maimed, the bled-white peasantry starved, workers were fodder for war production. The autocracy meanwhile feasted on caviar; capitalists grew fat off the profits of war.

All the agonies of czarist Russia came to a boil that February in the muscles, bones and nerves of those women textile workers. The breaking point had been reached. There was no bread. Enough was enough.

The women struck—and toppled the czar. Eight months later the Bolsheviks took power.

There's a lesson here for all of us, not least for Gorbachev. Women are still the lowest-paid Soviet workers. They still form the lines outside the stores. There is still no bread on the shelves.

Gorbachev knows who among the workers hate perestroika the most—the women. They're the ones who would fill the unemployment lines in the restructured USSR. They do the grunt work of construction, roadbuilding, or janitorial maintenance, in dead-end jobs with no opportunity for advancement. They are the workers who would be lopped off by the cost-cutting mechanisms of capitalist transition.

Fancy being out on the street with a family to feed as the market takes hold and prices rise to the sky. No,

daily insult to workers and consumers. Women of all nationalities—stuck in go-nowhere jobs, sweating in long lines, insulted, beleaguered and boiling—have had it.

Gorbachev, to ease pressure and speed perestroika, would shunt women out of the workplace and into the home full-time, to fulfill their "womanly mission" as domestic slaves. Remember, though, that women were among those miners in the Urals who struck for soap and the ouster of the bureaucracy.

Here we glimpse in embryo the approaching head-on conflict between rulers and ruled, between women workers and the bureaucracy.

Toward October. Gorbachev, heir to Stalin, persists in the dictator's basic mistake. He holds fast to the notion of "socialism in one country"—even if adherence to his brand of "socialism" now dictates finding a transition to capitalism.

Trotsky explained long ago that Stalin concocted the theory of single-state socialism to justify abandoning world revolution, working out "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism, and consolidating bureaucratic power and privilege at home. (See accompanying article "Socialism in One Country.")

Here's the trouble with Stalin's recipe: It left the rest of the world and most of its wealth to the capitalists, who have since used their advantage to

Snapshots (counterclockwise from lower left): RW National Organizer Constance Scott; RW co-founder and Seattle organizer Gloria Martin; international panelists hold the stage; keynoters Merle Woo, Phyllis Hutchinson, Clara Fraser, and Martha Cotera; full house for Woo keynote discussion.



Radical Women's candidly revolutionary conference

From the tenth floor of a Santa Monica hotel overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Radical Women looked into the 1990s and smiled.

This is the decade. It's all in place. Let's go.

"The Third Wave of Feminism: A Candidly Revolutionary Approach," was the theme of Radical Women's 23rd anniversary conference February 17-20 in Santa Monica, California.

Attended by more than 200 people from 18 U.S. cities and nine countries, the conferees joyously concluded that the third wave of feminism, with women of color and women workers in the lead, is headed full-steam toward socialist revolution.

The feminist third wave follows the first wave, the suffragist movement, and the second wave, the women's movement of the '60s and '70s. While both movements changed the face of world politics, both were eventually co-opted by pro-capitalist feminist leaders.

Not this time. The third wave is borne along by workingclass and specially oppressed women who have no more room for reformist half-measures.

"We face a deep global economic crisis," said Radical Women National Organizer Constance Scott. "The issues today are survival issues—the armies of homeless people on the street, the incredible loss of life from AIDS, the widening gap between super-rich and dirt poor."

Conference keynote speaker Phyllis Hutchinson, Seattle labor leader, summed it up: "Capitalism doesn't work, never has, never will," not for women,

not for the working majority. Now, the profit system is crumbling, and the third wave of feminism is here to help wash it away for keeps.

Highlights. The four-day conference was packed. Discussion. Debate. Theory. Workshops. Resolutions. Skits. Poetry. Song.

Participants came from the U.S., El Salvador, Mexico, Puerto Rico, France, England, and the Netherlands.

Conferees applauded the downfall of Stalinism in Eastern Europe and the release of South African freedom fighter Nelson Mandela. They endorsed lesbian socialist Merle Woo for governor of California on the Peace and Freedom Party ticket. They elected a national organizer and 13 members to their National Executive Committee. They launched a \$50,000 fund drive.

They also welcomed two new members: Martha Cotera, nationally known Chicana author, activist and historian from Austin, Texas; and Denise Harvey, Black feminist journalist and editor from the Bay Area.

Fourteen workshops were held, covering such topics as abortion, lesbians of color, union organizing, immigrant workers, anti-Semitism, ageism, fascism, disability rights and poverty.

An ad hoc discussion between Blacks and Jews concluded that they must fight together, as they did during the '60s civil rights movement, to counter the rise of U.S. fascism.

Two new Radical Women documents were presented, discussed and adopted: "Women of Color: Frontrunners for Freedom," and "Women Work-

ers—Sparkplugs of Labor." (For details, please see companion articles.)

Four keynote speakers, Merle Woo, Martha Cotera, Phyllis Hutchinson and Clara Fraser, brought analysis and inspiration to the conference, turning a no-nonsense eye toward the 1990s.

RW co-founder Fraser pointed to women's leadership in struggles from Moscow to Manila, from the U.S. to South Africa, and asserted, "Women are the central issue of world politics."

And, said Cotera, "To achieve our liberation will take nothing less than a revolution. Why put it off one more day?"

International realities. Internationalism permeated the conference.

Proceedings were barely hours old when a Salvadoran guest read a poem in Spanish about a mother's search for her disappeared son. Greetings were read from Australia and Chile. The next day, an international panel of Mexican, Palestinian, Salvadoran and Native American revolutionaries and movement leaders, and a Seattle tradeswoman recently returned from South Africa, discussed the relationship of women's struggles to the revolutionary movements in those countries.

Yan-Maria Castro, of Mexico's Lesbianas y Homosexuales Comunistas Feministas, stated that "the struggle has to be international. Lesbians, feminists and workers together with the Third World will take power."

Meanwhile, as capitalists mislabel the fall of Stalinism in Eastern Europe as 'the death of Communism,' Radical Women cheers it as a step toward true

socialism.

Eastern bloc workers want democracy and prosperity under socialism, RW says, not the unemployment, price hikes, debt bondage and social inequality—especially for women—that the "free market" has in store.

National Organizer Scott proposed, and RW agreed, to send two delegates to five Eastern European countries to seek out, make contact and build alliances with feminist movement leaders. Feminism is on the agenda in both the Eastern and Western revolts, a must for the success of each. Linkage of feminists East and West will unify their struggles and bring the triumph a giant stride closer.

Basics. The conference also discussed and adopted RW's updated, expanded "Manifesto," the organization's basic programmatic document.

The "Manifesto" states:

1. That socialism is the goal, and feminism the means of getting there. They are inseparable because the entire profit structure of capitalism depends on the cheap and unpaid labor of women and people of color. Also because sex inequality, like racism, is a fundamental social prop of the system.
2. That revolution is the answer to capitalism and that the most oppressed by the system—working women of color—will lead it. Their freedom means an end to the interlocking bigotries that paralyze the entire working class.
3. That international socialism is a must. Capitalism plunders the resources, subjugates the labor, and cap-

Photos by J. Foe, D. McGrath, K. Seeley

tures the markets of the world in order to survive. "Peaceful coexistence" with the profit system is impossible.

The "Manifesto" lays out what RW wants. Its 27-page platform carries a comprehensive list of demands, including free abortion on demand, an end to forced sterilization of women of color, nationalized health care, free quality childcare, affirmative action and comparable worth.

The document was expanded to include the needs and demands of older women, women in prison, disabled women, and women in the military. It added calls for the legalization of prostitution and drugs, and for united fronts against fascism.

Cross-color dialogue. Tossing aside traditional speech-making, Yolanda Alaniz, co-author of *The Chicano Struggle: A Racial or a National Movement?*, and Guerry Hoddersen, civil rights activist and Freedom Socialist Party National Secretary, sat down for a talk on racism. The talk was titled "Across the Color Line: A Dialogue on Race Relations Among Women."

Alaniz, a former migrant farm worker from the Yakima Valley in Washington state, the "Little Mississippi" of the Pacific Northwest, told how she learned to hate the white growers of the valley who exploited the primarily Chicano and Mexicano farm workers. Hoddersen spoke of the alienation she felt growing up in a racist white enclave in southern California.

Both women came to Radical Women because of its position that no one will be free until the needs of society's most oppressed are met.

"That kind of politics doesn't have a color line," Alaniz stated.

Alaniz and Hoddersen pointed out that racism has been integral to capitalism for 500 years and is constantly nurtured by it. Yet, contrary to what movement liberals and cultural nationalists assert, racism can be overcome. In RW, they said, racism is exposed whenever it crops up, sometimes by white women, sometimes by women of color. Confronting racism as learned political behavior, they said, rather than as some kind of moral or psychological original sin, enables the offender to learn from the lesson and change behavior, rather than sink into the guilty mea culpas that liberals indulge in.

Such confrontation also cuts the ground out from under cultural nationalists, who insist that skin color is the never-to-be-bridged dividing line among people.

Proof of the pudding, they said, is RW's success in building multi-racial alliances in the women's and people of color movements.

RW's approach, they concluded, is a model for what needs to happen if the revolutionary potential of the women's movement is to flower.

"It's up to us, as women, to find the road to solidarity," Hoddersen said. If we don't do it, who will?"

The top of the wave. In her organizer's report, "At the Crest of the Third Wave: Radical Women in Action," Constance Scott characterized the 1980s as a decade of anti-feminist reaction that split the women's movement. Middle-class feminist leaders like Betty Friedan couldn't stand the heat

and joined rightwing misogynists in promoting a return to "family values."

Workingclass women, pushed to the wall, meanwhile fought on.

Not until the attack on *Roe v. Wade* at the end of the decade did mainstream feminist leaders get active again, but once more in the wrong direction—channeling women into the pro-capitalist Democratic Party, banking on the Dems' "pro-choice" campaign promises while forsaking all other issues.

Radical Women kept up the call for multi-issue organizing, for racially integrated women's leadership, and for alternative, anti-capitalist political organizations and parties.

Even mainstream feminist leaders are beginning to pay lip service to multi-issue demands, but are, all the

while, steering the feminist movement toward a reformist dead-end.

But the third wave isn't following those leaders into another abyss.

Women workers, women and men of color, lesbians and gays, the disabled, the poor—all the disaffected—know that the capitalist system has no place for them but on the bottom rungs of misery, or the graveyard.

That knowledge, embodied in the explosive leadership of working women and women of color, is what gives the third wave its power to achieve unlimited victories in the 1990s, in the U.S., East bloc, Third World, and Europe.

Said Merle Woo: "We face a transitional epoch. A transitional epoch full of life and beauty, and with Radical Women I know we're going to make it to the other side. To socialism." □

—JULIE RUSSIE

Gender, keyboards, and the future of U.S. labor

Did you know that:
Women comprise between forty-five and fifty percent of U.S. workers today?

Sixty-seven percent of women between the ages of 18-64 now work outside the home?

By the year 2000, ninety percent of new workforce entrants will be women and people of color?

It's all true—and that means a revolution-in-process for U.S. labor. This is the conclusion reached by Heidi Durham and Megan Cornish, pioneer Seattle tradeswomen and unionists, reporting on their document, "Women Workers—Sparkplugs of Labor."

Durham and Cornish had the facts to back their assertions, primarily statistics gleaned from government reports after months of exhaustive research.

Another fact: women together with men of color (nine percent of the workforce) and lesbians and gay men (statistics unavailable, but assume at least ten percent) are a definite and decisive majority of U.S. workers.

This majority has changed the complexion of labor and is revolutionizing the U.S. political scene.

It's not just a matter of demographics, it's the placement of women workers: Durham and Cornish pointed out that communications, finance, government and other service industries—where most women and people of color work—have replaced heavy industry as the fulcrum of the U.S. economy. Jobs in heavy industry, where

white male workers predominate, have dwindled. Manufacturing is expected to produce only 17 percent of the gross national product in the year 2000, down from 30 percent in 1955.

The lowly computer keyboard has become the button of power: Decisions that determine the rate and direction of capital flow worldwide are made via computer. Women bank tellers, payroll clerks, data entry operators, bookkeepers, and money-market secretaries finger the keyboards that enable those decisions to be made.

These women make the capitalist system go. They can shut it down tomorrow.

Women have at least as much power as industrial workers at the "point of production" ever did to halt production and bring the system to its knees.

They also have the power to dump the system's labor lieutenants. "The dramatic shift in U.S. workingclass power means that the labor bureaucracy's days are numbered," said Cornish. For decades the bureaucrats have kept a lid on women and workers of color to keep "labor peace" with the capitalists and protect their cushy positions. They've made sure that white males get the best jobs and pay, to divide them from the super-exploited.

But women are joining unions in record numbers (140,000 in 1988 alone), and they're not going to stand for the old discriminatory ways. They're leading strikes

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The color of revolution

Nancy Kato, author of the document "Women of Color: Frontrunners for Freedom," laid it on the line.

"The struggle of women of color for equality is central to the elimination of the profit system and the success of revolution in North America."

The reasons are rooted in history and contemporary reality. "In 1992, it will be 500 years since Columbus landed and brought the private property system which destroyed the communistic matriarchies of Native Americans. Since then, race and sex have been the excuses to enslave people of color, pay them less, and keep them in the worst jobs."

Today, "women of color are being hit first and hardest by layoffs and poverty, the AIDS crisis, the slashing of social and health care services—all the evils of the decaying system."

This oppression, Kato said, "creates women of color with an attitude. We have to become the most tenacious and creative fighters against capitalism. And we understand how to defeat it. We see the interconnectedness of race, sex, sexuality and class oppression and how these work to divide the working class. We know best how to overcome these divisions so we can win liberation."

Kato cited women of color's role on the job and in the labor movement, connecting social and bread-and-butter issues and teaching white male workers that race and sex antagonisms are fostered by management to control all workers.

She stressed the special leadership of lesbians of color, who explode the myth that women are destined to be unpaid domestic slaves within the nuclear family, the basic social unit of capitalism.

Discussion of Kato's presentation opened with praise for her document as a valuable tool in explaining the necessity of women of color's leadership. She received high marks for her fresh, down-to-earth, accessible language.

Much discussion centered on whether the U.S. might not continue to oppress the Third World even after a U.S. revolution led by women of color and other oppressed. This concern, voiced by a Mexican comrade, rested on a perception that U.S. work-

ers benefit from imperialism and that U.S. women of color aren't as oppressed as their Third World sisters. Speakers responded that relatively few workers benefit from U.S. oppression. Those workers are primarily white and male; imperialism, capitalism's lifeline, actually helps strengthen the oppression of women, especially women of color, at home.

Later in the discussion, Kato was attacked by two attendees for including a white woman among the consultants and editors of her document, even though two women of color had played the same role.

With members of RW's National Comrades of Color Caucus in the lead, speakers hit the mikes in droves. (NCCC formed so RW members of color could meet to discuss and work out policy proposals on issues of importance to them.) Chicanas, Blacks, Asian Americans and whites exposed the attack as a covert cultural nationalist assault on the politics of the document.

Kato had upheld women of color's leadership of a racially integrated workingclass movement. Cultural nationalism upholds race as the primary bond among peoples and class be damned.

Conference delegate Nellie Wong, Bay Area branch CCC coordinator, commented tellingly that cultural nationalism not only divides people of color from whites, it drives wedges between different groups of people of color. Other speakers had noted that an aspect of the attack on Kato, an Asian American, was that she had passively acquiesced to a white editor's control. Passivity is a stereotype applied to Asian Americans by the dominant white culture.

The upshot of the discussion was that cultural nationalism is a divisive perspective that aids capitalism—which thrives because people of different races and sexes fight each other instead of it.

As Kato put it, "Our very political instinct and survival need is to build a united movement. We can't do that without speaking to everyone's needs. Together with all others demanding a decent world, we will change the course of human history." □

Your contribution will be used *now* to finance a socialist feminist tour of five Eastern European countries, as well as publishing Radical Women documents, and organizing a host of projects.

Fund for Feminist Seditious*

* si-dish'ən, noun: conduct or language inciting to rebellion against the authority of the state.

Give generously to the Radical Women Fund Drive!
Goal: \$50,000 • Deadline: November 30, 1990

Please send donations to Radical Women National Office, Valencia Hall, 523-A Valencia, San Francisco, California 94110. Phone 415-864-1278.

Milestone privacy ruling builds on NAACP & Panther triumphs in Freeway Hall Case Victory

A condensed version of this story appeared in the Seattle Times on June 12.

If you believe in social change, the odds are you'll spend a lot of time in court.

Every great civil rights movement of the last 35 years has waded through this country's legal system, getting to know the jails and judges and the endless trials and appeals which are part of the laborious process of social change.

It's really a job for the foolhardy or the rich. Yet it's usually those with more convictions than cash who end up battling for the hearts and minds of America by taking their demands for expanded rights into the courtroom.

Not all activists end up there voluntarily. Some of the most important civil protections have been won by those on the defensive.

The NAACP, Jim Crow, and the courts. In 1956, the segregationist power structure in the South tried to destroy the NAACP by demanding it turn over its membership lists to state officials. State legislatures passed special laws and attorney generals got special injunctions to force the organization to do so.

By the end of 1957, the NAACP was outlawed in Alabama and tied up in litigation in Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida.

When the Alabama courts fined the NAACP \$100,000 for refusing to surrender its membership lists, the group went to the U.S. Supreme Court. In a landmark decision, *NAACP v. Alabama*, the court ruled that membership information is constitutionally protected, saying:

"Inviolability of privacy in group association may in many circumstances be indispensable to preservation of free-

dom of association, particularly where a group espouses dissident beliefs."

Membership to minutes. Because of its history, the NAACP was one of the first organizations to aid the Freedom Socialist Party in another case involving a precious right: the right to meet in private and speak freely without fear that someday what you say will be broadcast to the world.

This case, known as the Freeway Hall Case, began in 1984 when the FSP and nine individuals were sued by a hostile ex-party member for return of a six-year-old donation.

In 1985, a King County Superior Court judge in Seattle ordered the FSP to hand over names of members and supporters, financial records, meeting minutes, and other internal documents. The party appealed, and won protection for everything but the minutes.

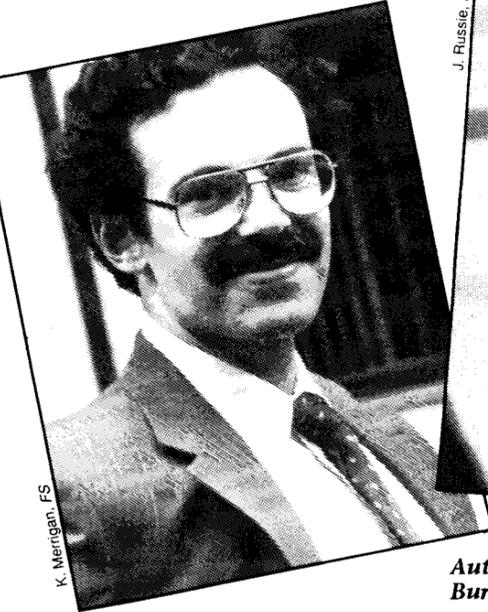
That's when they took their cause to the community.

The party won quick and effective support when the regional chapter of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, two locals of the Washington Federation of State Employees, and the Seattle NAACP filed an affidavit describing the crushing harm that would come from undermining the right to belong to organizations and engage in discussions that are democratic, candid, free-wheeling, and *private*.

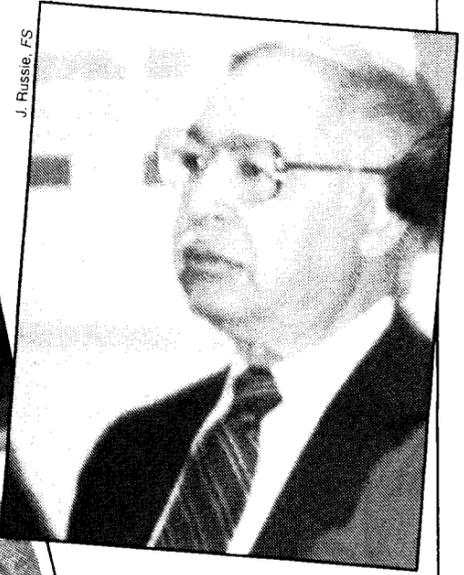
On February 22, 1990, the Washington State Supreme Court issued a unanimous, precedent-setting decision which upheld the claim that party minutes are protected by the First Amendment.

Like the ground-breaking NAACP decisions protecting confidentiality of members' names, this ruling is crucial to those who, on the road to a more equitable world, unexpectedly find themselves detoured to a courtroom bench.

The decision boosts privacy guarantees for *all* organizations. Union



K. Merrigan, FS



J. Risse, FS

Authors Fred Hyde (left) and Philip Burton (right).

minutes can't be read by bosses; church and lodge gatherings are more secure.

The FHC decision takes the constitutional principles in *NAACP v. Alabama* one step further. It recognizes that the right to join an organization is meaningless without the right to participate fully in its internal life, including confidential discussions.

The Supreme Court also relied on the decision in the Black Panther Party's 1976 suit against the FBI for spying and harassment. In that case, the government retaliated by trying to obtain names of party members and contributors. The Panthers fought back, pushing the federal courts to spell out a strict balancing test to protect groups from illegal prying and disruption.

No easy road to justice. Like the earlier NAACP and Panther victories, the Freeway Hall Case ruling did not come easy.

Six years of intense organizing and public education rallied community support. Thousands of people and hundreds of organizations spoke up in defense of First Amendment rights.

The defendants paid their dues, and are still paying. One risked losing her home by putting it up as a bond. Others were sentenced to jail on contempt charges, later dropped. The lead attorney was forced to fend off a bid by the opposition lawyers to put her private law practice into receivership.

The case is far from over. After being bounced from court to court since 1984, the FSP now returns to King County Superior Court where they hope to get this harassment case dismissed. But the man who brought the suit, Richard Snedigar, can still attempt to show that his need for the minutes is so crucial that it overrides constitutional rights. FSP needs continued support to ensure enforcement of the new

legal precedent.

When they return to the courtroom, they'll be in good company. With them in spirit will be the dedicated civil rights workers, the Panthers, all those whose earlier legal struggles were indispensable to the great social gains made over the last decades. The way is well-marked by fighters who have gone before, and the FSP is confident of success. □

—PHILIP L. BURTON AND FRED HYDE

Criminal lawyer and civil rights leader Philip L. Burton has served in many offices for the Seattle branch of the NAACP, an organization he has worked with since 1949.

Fred Hyde, Freeway Hall Case defendant and attorney, represented Clara Fraser in her successful lawsuit against Seattle City Light because of sex and political ideology discrimination.

Editor's postscript: Since Burton and Hyde wrote this article, the case defendants have received a check for \$2,506.74 from Richard Snedigar. The money is payment for a portion of the expenses the defendants incurred in filing and pursuing their appeal.

Though granting such an award is normal procedure, Snedigar requested that it be waived in his case, appealing for sympathy because he has "endured over six years of litigation"—even though he is the one who initiated the suit! The court stuck by its decision.

Snedigar may choose next to try to breathe new life into the fight for the minutes in the lower courts, or he and his attorneys may decide to proceed directly to trial. Stay tuned...

Yes, I can help!

I can collect endorsements, publicize the case, and share my skills.

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Accept my contribution for legal and information costs.

To: Karrie Peterson, Case Coordinator
New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S.
Seattle, WA 98118 • 206-722-2453

- Add my name to the mailing list and keep me posted.
- Contact me to help with defense committee work!
- Enclosed is \$_____ to help FSP defend First Amendment rights.
(Make checks payable to the Freeway Hall Case Defense Committee.)

Name _____
 Address _____ (please print) Phone _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

...Gender, keyboards

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(they've always done that), ousting the labor skates, and demanding that unions act on such crucial issues as abortion rights, comparable worth, affirmative action, childcare, and job safety.

Women are bringing labor's traditional economic concerns together with the widest-ranging social issues, and this is no accident. Female workers are exploited on the job, at home, and in society at large. Economic and social discrimination are intertwined for

them, and fighting one cannot proceed without fighting the other.

Women of color, suffering all the capitalist oppressions, see most clearly how racism and sexism intertwine to divide workers. They always move first and most resolutely to overcome the divisions and unite the labor movement.

A united, rank-and-file, female-led labor movement will shove the labor bureaucrats out of the way once and for all, and finally face off against the capitalists. This, sure as night follows day, will detonate a socialist revolution.

The face of labor has changed; it's entered the computer age. Those women's hands that control the keyboards hold the key to the future. □