

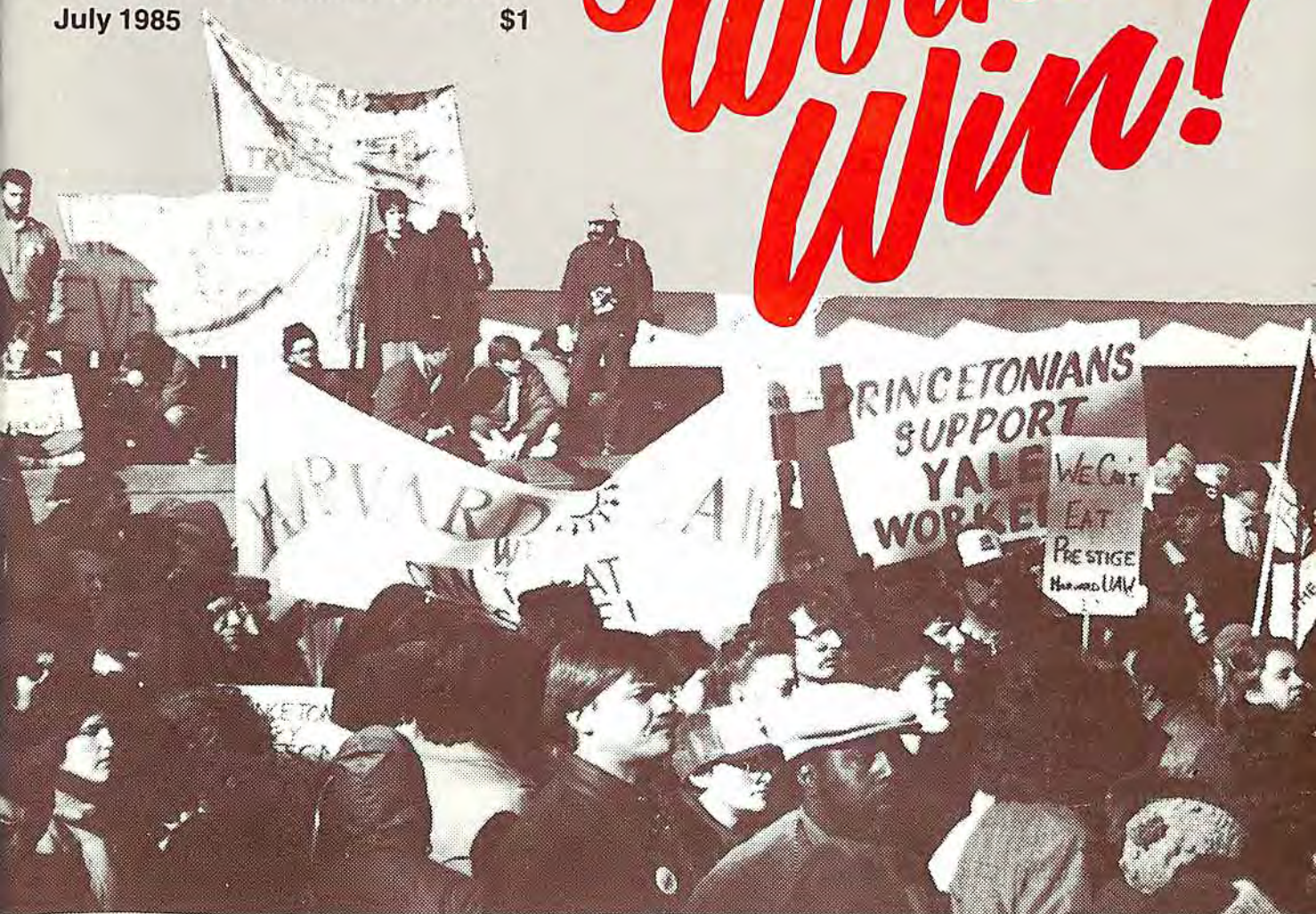
political affairs

JOURNAL OF MARXIST THOUGHT

July 1985

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Yale Workers Win!



The Decline of Reaganism • Gus Hall

Old Wine and New Bottles

Phillip Bonosky

Reagan's Star Wars

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political affairs

**Theoretical Journal
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Political Affairs (ISSN0032 3128) is published monthly, except combined August-Sept. issue, by Political Affairs Publishers, Inc. at 235 West 23 Street, New York, New York 10011, (212) 989-4994, to whom all orders, subscriptions, payments and correspondence should be addressed. Subscription rates: \$10 for one year (Individuals); \$15 for one year (institutions); \$5 for six months; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, \$11 for one year; single issues, \$1. Second class postage paid at the post office in New York, New York. Postmaster: Send changes of address to Political Affairs, 235 W. 23 St., New York, N.Y. 10011.



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The Decline of Reaganism

GUS HALL

When dealing with different sectors of the people, we must always keep in mind that they are constantly in motion, in the process of change. They move with and create new political currents. They change in an ongoing ideological process.

As a result they respond differently to events today than they did a year or five years ago. Their priorities change. When we do not take these changes into consideration, we tend to tail movements and struggles and to misjudge the thinking and mood of the masses. We become tactically stagnant. We cease to give vanguard leadership.

Therefore, it is necessary constantly to update our assessments and refresh our tactics.

It is always important to be alert to what is new and growing. There are situations in which the new should still be dealt with in the framework of the old. But it is most important, from a tactical viewpoint, to be able to recognize when there is a qualitative change in the relationship between the new and the old, a point when it is necessary to see the new as the dominant factor. Then the new must be seen as the framework in which we must deal with the old.

One of the new and growing factors in this period is the overlapping of issues and struggles. The objective developments that bring this about are the triple layers of the economic crisis.

This is especially true of the effects of the structural crisis. When a plant shuts down it affects all workers, all families, all communities, all small businesspeople.

The overlapping also holds for the fear of nuclear war. There are no hiding places from a nuclear war for any section of the population. How this issue overlaps other questions is evi-

dent in the scope of the freeze movement, which tends to cut across all sectors of the population.

The struggles that are taking place over the federal budget bring together, in a new way, the overlapping issues of Social Security, farm loans, interest rates, the military budget and many others.

This does not mean all the effects are equal. For instance, it does not mean there is no need for special demands and struggles against the special effects of racism or for women's equality. What it does mean, however, is that we have to take into tactical consideration that concepts like an all-people's front are much more in tune with these new overlapping developments.

These developments create objective factors that make possible a mansided struggle and emphasize the need for all-around unity.

Another area of mass trends where the new must increasingly be taken into consideration is the maturing of class consciousness. The objective conditions that give rise to class consciousness in the ranks of the workers are the experiences and struggles at the point of production.

In broad circles there is rising class consciousness and growing awareness of the role of the class struggle and the working class.

This creates the objective conditions for broad antimonopoly coalitions and alliances between the working class and its allies. The maturing of class consciousness influences all sectors of the multiracial, multinational male/female working class.

The maturing of class consciousness brings with it a deeper sense of class unity.

For white workers, class consciousness becomes a stronger barrier against the influences of racism and other bourgeois influences. They see more clearly the monopoly corporations as the enemy.

Excerpted from the report of Gus Hall to a meeting of the Central Committee and National Council of the CPUSA, June 1, 1985. For complete text, write CPUSA, 235 W. 23rd Street, New York, New York 10011.

For Black workers, class consciousness develops to where the primary identification is with the class, leading to strong anti-capitalist sentiments. This does not mean class consciousness replaces identification with race and nationality. But the new and growing identification is with the class.

The same process is taking place in all sections of the class. The growth of class consciousness in the ranks of Mexican-American workers, including workers in agriculture, leads to a growing identification with the class. For Puerto Rican workers the dominant identification is with the working class.

For workers who have national and cultural ties with the people of other countries, there is a growing identification with the working class in general, but the trend is toward identification with the U.S. working class, in particular.

With their entry into industry, there is also a new growth of class consciousness in the ranks of women. Because of the experiences of struggle and the need for unity, the class consciousness of male workers becomes a factor in eliminating male supremacist influences.

The same process takes place in the ranks of the unemployed.

This maturing of class consciousness is a critical historic process, a dialectical process that takes place alongside many other developments over a period of time. But at a certain point the change becomes more obvious and operative. It has an effect on objective developments.

As the working class becomes more class conscious its influence grows because the source of its influence is its greater unity and strength.

This is also true for the different sectors; their influence grows as they become more class conscious.

This process of change should be reflected in how we approach the working class. It should determine the level and the framework in which we deal with issues.

We underestimate the level and the rate of this process. Even our description of a multiracial, multinational, male/female, young and older working class is misused. The intent was

to place the emphasis on the oneness. But some place the emphasis on the separate sections. We have to be sensitive to the process, but always keep in mind that the molding and maturing process will continue.

Based on these concepts of what is new and growing, we have drafted a new Party trade union program for discussion and adoption. This new program is in response to the changes in the working-class and trade union movement.

These changes are taking place because of objective developments in the class struggle. They are a response to the effects of the three-layered economic crisis, especially in response to the structural crisis. They are reactions to the Reagan-corporate offensive, to the cutbacks and concessions. They are reactions to the nuclear war danger and the escalating military budgets.

A new trend toward political independence in the trade union movement emerged in the presidential election. This new trend has surfaced on the picket lines and arrests at South African consulates. The new is emerging in the struggle against further concessions, in the fightback against the two-tier wage swindle, in the new level of class unity, of class solidarity.

The new is making its appearance in the decline of anti-Communism in the unions. It makes its presence felt in the growth of the broad Left sector, in the growth of the Party's influence within the movement.

The new is strongest in the rank and file. But it is also making its way into the higher levels of the trade union leadership.

The draft Party trade union program is in response to all these new developments.

The program discusses the older negatives and weaknesses. But it does so in the framework of what is new, not the new in the framework of the old. That's because of the qualitative change that is taking place.

Some comrades have difficulties with this. They tend to dismiss the new, placing an emphasis instead on the weaknesses, in the framework of the old. This leads only to pessimism and to increasingly defensive tactics.

For example, when we judge the labor movement, even trade union leaders, without taking into consideration the objective situations that the working class faces, our estimates are often not in accord with reality.

We have to see the trade union movement in the proper framework of today. The corporate-Reagan offensive is having its effect. The main emphasis must be on this offensive. But we have to place the trade union movement not only in the context of this offensive, but also in the context of what the structural crisis has done.

This presents the working-class and trade union movement with more difficult problems. We must not put the blame on the trade unions.

The major problem is the nature of the objective situation because of the structural crisis. This is what we have to deal with. We can not deal with the unions without taking into consideration the times and the objective situation. We even have to deal with class collaboration in the proper framework.

Especially if we do not have solutions, we should be very modest with our criticisms. We must at all times be partisan to our class and to the trade union movement.

It is easy to sit on the sidelines when you don't have to deal with the specifics of the corporate offensive, the structural crisis, the Reagan Administration, the new Right-wing network, the professional anti-union outfits, etc.

We must not even inadvertently undermine, underrate or attack the trade unions. We must at all times take their point of view into consideration, defend them and refuse to be critical in a way that is destructive.

Not seeing the significance of the new—the independent role of labor in the presidential elections—has already led some comrades to draw wrong conclusions from the elections.

Because they did not see the new—the independent role of labor—these comrades did not see the damage done by Gary Hart's anti-trade-union "special interest groups" campaign.

Of course it is possible to overstate what is new. But it is much more damaging to continue dealing with questions as if there is nothing

new, because that leads to stagnant thinking and inaction.

The structural crisis is causing dramatic changes in the overall industrial complex. Industries have declined. Industries have disappeared. Some new ones have made the scene. The industrial complex is being decentralized. Of some 60 steel minimills, 8 are in Florida, 7 in Texas, 5 in California, 4 each in South and North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia and 2 in Hawaii.

It is difficult to think of Florida and Hawaii as steel centers. This is a new concept.

The high-tech industries are spread throughout the fifty states. The same is true of the electrical, auto and aerospace industries. These new plants now stretch along the freeways outside the industrial centers and along the U.S.-Mexican border. Most of them are unorganized.

This dispersal presents a serious problem for organizing the unorganized.

This redistribution of industries creates some new problems, but in no way changes some basic concepts:

- 1) It does not affect or change the nature of the class struggle.
- 2) It does not cut down the size of or eliminate the working class or the industrial working class.
- 3) It does not change the role of the working class.
- 4) It does not eliminate or change the basic role of the trade unions.

Because the redistribution of industries does not change our basic concepts, it does not change the need for the Party to pursue our policy of industrial concentration.

It does mean, however, that we can not continue to put all our efforts into the older, basic industrial centers. It means we must pay more attention and put more of our human, financial and political resources to work in the newer industrial states, without cutting back in the older industrial centers.

There are also changes in the old industrial states. New industrial centers have emerged in Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Califor-

nia, Massachusetts and others.

Therefore, district Party organizations must also make some structural changes. Party state organizations and clubs in the states that have recently become industrialized must give much higher priority to industrial concentration.

These changes need to focus our work in the shops. While it is necessary to include work in working-class neighborhoods as a feature of industrial concentration, this must not be seen as the only, or even the main, feature.

The transfer of our Trade Union Department to the Midwest was in tune with the new changes. After some ironing out of organizational and cadre kinks, the department is beginning to function and is grappling with problems and tasks. It was a correct move.

The four years of Reagan's racist rhetoric and openly racist policies are now showing up in grim new statistics, in terrible new conditions and poverty and suffering.

The economic upturn has bypassed not only the Afro-American working class and people, but also their communities. The Reagan years have increased the number of unemployed, the number of homeless and hungry, the rate of infant mortality and malnutrition, the number of children living in poverty and hunger, the permanently unemployed, especially the number of youth who are unemployed.

Afro-Americans are 10 per cent of the U.S. labor force and 20 per cent of the jobless. Twenty-five per cent of all Black youth up to 24 years of age have never had a job, never experienced economic stability or security. Half of all Black children live in poverty.

The Reagan years have halted and reversed many of the gains in housing, education, jobs, job training, health and medical care.

The monopoly corporations and the Reagan Administration keep slamming racist economic doors shut.

Attorney General Meese leads an aggressive war to close all the doors that affirmative action programs have opened.

Reagan and the Republican-controlled Senate are riding roughshod on the budget to slam

the doors on job-training programs.

Cut-offs of student loans are shutting Afro-Americans out of college. There has been a marked decline in college enrolment of minority students.

Plant closings shut the doors on Black workers.

The Reagan Administration has effectively cut off all legal or contractual pressures on government-funded construction programs, shutting the door on Black construction workers.

Although there is some increase in the hiring of minorities in the low-paid service and communication industries and in civil service, this does not make up for the job losses due to the structural crisis.

Add to this the Reaganite stacking of the Civil Rights Commission and racist pressures on the Supreme Court to undo integration and busing, to destroy affirmative action programs which eliminate racist hiring practices, and it is clear there is a conscious attempt to turn back the clock on all the advances and hard-won gains in every area of life.

Sometimes one dramatic event, one action, gives the clearest signals about the overall reality, for instance, the dropping of a military-size bomb on the roof of a Black working-class housing complex by the Philadelphia police. This was a racist, anti-working-class act. It signaled a new level of racist violence directed at men, women and children. It was an act of official terrorism.

Although there are several important secondary issues, we have to keep the focus on the main aspect—the racist terror.

Our Party clubs must make the connection in their own communities between this crime and Reaganite racism generally, because this act can not be separated from Reaganism, which creates the political and ideological atmosphere for these kinds of vicious official crimes.

This level of raw racism is in keeping with the use of electric zap guns used to torture victims of police brutality in New York City and battering rams to break into homes for illegal searches in Los Angeles. Crimes against Black and other oppressed minorities by city police,

like the murder of Eleanor Bumpers and others, add to the overall reality of unleashed racist violence, sanctioned by the U.S. government.

This kind of racist terror calls for a new level of response by the working class, by the U.S. people and by our Party. It calls for a new level of unity that can demand and win a halt to this new wave of racism.

On the other hand, there are also new mass trends that move in the opposite direction and are not in keeping with the racist campaign of rhetoric and actions of the Reagan Administration.

Objective developments, including the overall decline in the standard of living and quality of life, tend to promote not only class unity, but also a broader Black-white unity. This is expressed on picketlines, in demonstrations, on college campuses, at trade union meetings and in protest movements.

Black, white, Puerto Rican, Chicano, Asian and Native American working-class unity has increasingly become the deciding factor in local and statewide elections. It resulted in the victories over Reaganism in the '84 elections. It resulted in the election of Black officials in predominantly white working-class communities. This unity resulted in the election of progressive Black and white candidates.

To be effective our tactics in the struggle for equality must take into account these new positive trends.

The ultra-Right and the "whiff of fascism" remain a danger. What's new is that for the second term Reagan is surrounding himself with even more ultra-Right-wing elements, like Buchanan, Regan and Meese. More of the fanatical and fascist groups have gone public.

What is also new is the growing public concern about and rejection of and activity against the ultra-Right.

The base of the ultra-Right has not expanded. In fact, the Bitburg fiasco stimulated serious anxiety about the extreme Right and fascist-like activities.

We must do more in exposing not only the

ultra-Right organizations, but the base of their support, both political and financial.

The process of change in many areas has accelerated. Therefore, we must be much more alert, much more tuned in and prepared to make changes so that our policies, and especially our tactics at the club level, keep pace with objective developments.

The ebb in the fortunes of monopoly capital and Reaganism creates objective conditions for the rise, the increased flow in the movements and struggles of the people.

Because of the declining lame duck presidency, the people's political leverage shifts to the U.S. Congress and state and city governments.

Therefore, the Party also has to shift its focus. In many situations the Party clubs can make the difference in how individual congress-people and senators vote, which, in turn, because of the close votes, can make the difference on a final vote on issues.

For instance, because the vote was so close, better work by some Party clubs could have tipped the scales on the MX missile vote.

It has become important during this period for Party clubs to become expert lobbyists. They must become active in building coalitions and ad hoc committees around legislative issues like Social Security, taxes, affirmative action, the military budget, housing and unemployment.

Clubs could spark "Put the Heat on Congress" campaigns, mobilizing their communities and shops to call their congresspeople, using their home district telephone numbers, to register their protests and opinions.

This kind of mass lobbying and legislative work will also lay the basis for the '86 electoral campaign and for the 1985 mayoralty campaigns.

The earlier the independent movements act around legislative issues and tie them to the '86 congressional elections, the more leverage they will have on how Congress will vote in the next 18 months.

Simple, seemingly small actions can be ef-

fective enough to move huge political mountains when they are done by groups and in large numbers.

Some estimate that within days after the Senate voted to cut Social Security, 250,000 cards and letters of protest flooded Congress.

Again, one of the more potent forms of political expression has become calling congress-people and senators on their home district phones. These messages are registered in a computer, printed out, and given to the legislators daily, giving them a composite of the opinions and positions of their constituents.

To launch this campaign the *Daily World* has started a regular box providing the telephone numbers of legislators in their home districts. The numbers will be published daily by states.

Each club should assign a protest secretary, a comrade who provides such telephone numbers and addressed, stamped postcards for club members, friends, neighbors and coworkers to fill out and mail.

These are just a few examples of how the club must become more action- and outreach-oriented.

The post-election period has given further proof that the emergence of the independent forces in the presidential election was not a one-shot deal.

The big debate now among old-party politicians is how best to deal with the trade union movement and the Rainbow Coalition forces in the 1986 elections. Even the new Secretary of Labor, Brock, was picked because the Reaganites think he may be able to make inroads into labor's ranks for the Republican candidates.

Leading Democrats are split over how to relate to labor and the Afro-American community. Senator Edward Kennedy is among those who are dropping their liberal lines and caving in to the Reaganites and Big Business interests.

The dilemma in the Democratic Party concerning their relationship to the independent forces was best articulated by Kennedy: "We are for labor, but not a labor party; we are for women's rights, but not a women's party; we are for

minority rights, but not a minority party."

He might as well have said, "We are for Big Business and we are a Big Business party."

Retreating still further, Kennedy argued, "Those of us who care about domestic spending must do more with less." Less of what? Jobs? Food? Housing? Education? And, less for whom? Not Big Business, but the people, of course.

The Democratic Party's crisis is further deepened by the emergence of the new Right wing, led by Senators Nunn and Capehart. The new Right-wing caucus has money and it is beginning to have an impact on the whole party. Some Democrats are working on the mistaken conclusion that Mondale and Ferraro did not win because their policies were too liberal and Left.

Where does this leave independent sectors that worked within the Democratic Party? Can they continue working in the Democratic Party with these kinds of forces?

The independent forces have two options:

1) They can continue to work in the Democratic Party, or

2) They can do what the conservatives are doing—organize independent forms. This is a decisive question going into the 1985-1986 elections.

These developments are creating difficulties for the independent movements and have created some divisions in the trade union movement.

In the trade union movement there are three tendencies:

1) There are those who want to continue the tactics of political independence developed for the 1984 elections, as expressed by Kirkland. In response to signals from the Democratic Party that it wants labor to be less politically independent, Kirkland said,

The plain truth is that labor is the chief representative force that keeps the real special interests from dominating American life.

He urged trade unionists to ignore those in the Democratic Party who say it should

further distance itself from its natural constituency—that it turn a cold shoulder on labor, on the minorities, and on women's issues. Their formula for electoral success is to stake out a piece of the conservative field and call it the center. They want us to stay in the background and come out only to deliver votes. But we're frankly no longer willing to do that on a national or state level. Our movement today is challenged on virtually every front—the political front, the organizing front and the economic front. We have powerful forces arrayed against us. But we have no intention of backing down.

These statements are expressions of the growing fightback militancy and the sentiment for political independence in the rank and file.

2) There are those who want to go back to being the tail of the Democratic Party. Some continue being the tail of the Republican Party—for example, the Teamsters union leaders who buy time from going to prison for stealing from Teamster pension funds. Some Social Democrats want to stay in the Democratic Party and be more like Democrats than Democrats.

3) And there are increasing numbers of trade union leaders who are talking seriously about organizing a new independent political formation, including a new party. In the grassroots of political independence there is disillusionment and a search for something new. Many are deeply disappointed that no meaningful alternative candidate or coalition has emerged yet against Mayor Ed Koch in New York City.

The advanced forms in Wisconsin are perhaps the best developed and most effective thus far in the country. Separate forces have come together to form a farmer-labor alliance. There are other groupings also. It is possible that a new party will develop from this, taking advantage of old Progressive Party traditions.

In that movement trade unions are playing the leading role, including large unions such as auto and steel. The platform and programs are at a rather high antimonopoly level, good on peace and the struggle against racism.

The Wisconsin development is a reflection of what is happening down below in the grassroots and rank and file everywhere.

We should leave open for the moment the question of whether we should project more advanced concepts of a third party, or whether it would be tactically correct to urge the independent forces to withdraw from the Democratic Party structure. We have to take a good, hard look at this before making any judgments.

A word of caution. As usual, the phony Trotskyite Left sects worm their way into such formations to disrupt, divert, take over and destroy.

Our policy must be to continue to help build the different independent forms. And we should continue in our efforts to bring the different independent sectors closer together into more organized coalitions. Of course, we will also continue our advocacy of a new broad-based independent electoral party.

These new developments call for raising to a higher level the initiatives for broad, Left electoral forms. We must continue and accelerate our efforts to get more workers, Afro-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, women, seniors and youth to run for public office.

A committee set up to support an independent candidate can become an effective vehicle for political independence.

We must continue to increase our efforts to run and elect Communist candidates.

However, taking the new developments into consideration, we want to propose a tactical shift in our electoral work. We are projecting this shift to make it easier for the Left and progressive forces to work with our Party in the electoral arena.

In the current situation, our influence among the Left forces is growing. Our electoral campaigns have attracted such Left forces.

However, our influence does not yet result in these forces being able openly to support Communist candidates. There is still a gap between our influence and the active support we get, especially the public support for Communist candidates. Because there is still fear, these forces let us know privately that they agree with us and appreciate our role and would like to

work with us more openly.

We propose to support or initiate Communist-Left or Left-progressive-Communist electoral coalitions. They can serve the same purpose as proportional representation did in the elections of Ben Davis and Pete Cacchione: they will help cement our relationships with the broad Left.

Needless to say, this has nothing to do with coalitions or alliances with phony Left groups. Our policy is *not* to work in any way with these groups because working with them becomes the obstacle to coalitions and alliances with the serious, broad Left forces.

There are situations in which we have to work with broader Left groups that have been infiltrated by phony Left elements. We have to master the art of exposing and isolating such elements in the mass movements, while winning over the honest, serious Left forces.

What are the advantages of such a Left-progressive-Communist electoral coalition?

It would provide a structure for the Party to

work with broader Left electoral forces.

It would create a kind of shield for people who want to support us but are not yet ready to be public supporters of a Communist ticket.

It would provide a link with growing, organized Left forces.

It would help the Party to overcome some of the legal electoral obstacles and hassles.

Are there pitfalls we must be aware of in pursuing this kind of electoral policy?

It could become an obstacle to Party building, an excuse for hiding the Party, for not working toward public presence of the Party.

However, the Party is now strong enough to resist these pressures, especially if we take measures to resist the pitfalls. Then the advantages will outweigh the dangers.

Will we still run candidates on the Communist Party line? Yes, of course we will, whenever we decide it is necessary and advisable.

Will publicly known Communists run on the slates of independent groups? Of course.

What would be the relationship of Communists to other groups in such an electoral front? We would neither hide nor flaunt ourselves. □

discussion

SI GERSON

I want to express my appreciation for the special emphasis laid on the grassroots, that is the Party club, in Comrade Hall's report. It is axiomatic that if the Party is to grow, it must grow at the grassroots level.

The relation between the general line of our Party, our world outlook, and our work at the grassroots level was once given rough approximation by an anonymous comrade, in four words: "Think globally, build locally."

Si Gerson is chair of the Political Action Committee of the CPUSA.

It was particularly appropriate to raise the question of a shift in our electoral tactics in the context of our work at the club level. To be effective this club work must be intimately bound up with the shop or community in a specific geographical area and a specific political jurisdiction, with the club appropriately named for the area and political district.

It is exactly at the grassroots level where electoral tactics can best be most flexibly applied at this time. We are not thinking of any artificial national device but of tactics that can be practically applied in local electoral struggles and in some

cases on a city or state level.

Such electoral tactics are not entirely unprecedented for us. As was noted in Comrade Hall's report, Comrade Lorenzo Torres ran in his Arizona congressional district under the "People Before Profits" label—and the whole state knew he was the head of the Arizona Communist Party.

Perhaps not so well known is that our presidential ticket of Gus Hall and Angela Davis ran in the state of Arkansas under the ballot heading of "People Before Profits." There was no question, however, that they were Communist candidates. They did not hide it—and the newspapers of Arkansas did everything possible to broadcast it.

In Arkansas we had a situation where the five electors for Hall and Davis were non-Party people and preferred to stand as our electors under the main theme slogan of our Party, "People Before Profits," while supporting the Hall-Davis election platform. The result? We got on the ballot, distributed our platform and other material and received 1,499 votes in a state in which we do not have a single Party club.

Of course, we may make some mistakes in the course of applying this electoral tactic, but the greatest danger is rigidity or hesitation in trying new forms.

As we apply new tactics, we must not forget the warning of Comrade John Rummel of Maine in his remarks earlier today. The enemy, as he warned, will continue its antidemocratic policy of additional restrictions to prevent independent forces from access to the ballot. This spring, for example, North Dakota quadrupled the number of signatures required for an independent presidential ticket to get on the ballot. The number was raised from 1,000 to 4,000, a gigantic task in as sparsely settled a state as North Dakota.

However, some steps forward in the fight for independent participation in the electoral process should be noted. A coalition of five minority parties, supported by other groups, has been formed, and our Party is playing a part in this

grouping. While initially focusing only on ballot access, the coalition program, at our initiative, now advances the general fight for the democratic right to participate in the electoral process, including lifting bars on registration and voting restrictions and demanding access to tax funds for minority parties and to the mass media.

The coalition's statement of principles emphasizes "the untrammelled right to register and vote; to form political parties; to run for public office at all levels; to have unhindered access to the ballot and the means of reaching the public, and to share in tax funds appropriated by Congress for the exercise of the political process."

I'm happy to announce that Representative John Conyers has introduced a bill (HR2320) which, in his words, "creates fair and uniform standards for ballot access and ballot status in all Federal elections." The heading of Conyer's bill places the matter in a broad constitutional framework. It reads: "A bill to enforce the guarantees of the first, fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution of the United States prohibiting certain devices used to deny the right to participate in certain elections."

Among other things, the bill sharply lowers the number of signatures required for access to the ballot to one tenth of one per cent of the number of registered voters. The bill also lengthens the time period in which signatures on nominating petitions may be gathered.

Obviously, the two old corporate-controlled major parties will resist a measure of this sort which widens democracy. We must be in the forefront of the fight to unite masses of people to support the measure and, in the first instance, to see that public hearings are held. This fight must be seen as an organic part of the struggle for democratic rights and as crucial to the development of independent political action, the central element in building an all people's front against Reaganism and for peace, jobs and equality. □

PETE LEKI

Gus said something about solving the "one comrade in a shop" problem. I know about that problem because I've been in that position. Now I have a new problem. It's the "two comrades in a shop" problem and I can tell you it's a much better prob-

lem. I bring you greetings from the Machinists and Aerospace Workers Club of Chicago.

It's been a beautiful spring, so, coming from peasant stock myself, I took my daughter out into our back yard to plant flowers. We found a flat tray, filled it with soil, planted about fifty seeds of different types and watered them. Then we

Pete Leki is an industrial worker in Chicago.

waited. After a week some sprouts broke through. First two, then three, five, seven . . . and that was it. Seven sprouts out of fifty seeds, and I'm not even sure the seventh one wasn't a weed.

What was going on? The soil was good. They were hybrid seeds. Maybe they were old? Who knows? But we were happy to have three nice bean sprouts with strong stems and big leaves. I'll be damned if we didn't come out one morning and something had nipped the tops off all three. Maybe it was a squirrel or birds.

That's the way it is in the shop too. You throw a lot of seeds out, prepare the soil, water them and see what sprouts. The brother that I recruited was not the one I thought I would recruit.

It's a great thing to have a new comrade in the shop with you. At a grievance hearing this general foreman is telling us quite frankly that the company has to raise productivity and lower labor costs to the levels paid in Japan and Korea. My partner glares at him and says, "You think you're so smart, well let me tell you there's a movement out there," and he pulls out of his back pocket *Labor Confronts the Transnationals* [International Publishers, New York, 1984—Ed.] like a crucifix shoved under Dracula's nose. Later I was telling an older comrade about this incident and he suggested that maybe we should be a little cautious. Maybe we should. But on the other side, these new comrades pull us forward and I wouldn't want to dampen that enthusiasm.

Another incident has to do with the unity of our working class. A comrade was selected to attend the CBTU convention in Philadelphia, but we couldn't get any funding from our local union. A comrade suggested that we ask our shopmates for help. Nowadays there is always someone selling something to raise money for the children's school or day care, and after a while people get sick of it. Two bucks here, three bucks there. So we felt good when we went around and so many of our shopmates contributed, five and ten bucks at a crack. Support from the Afro-American workers was very strong. But more than 40 per cent of those contributing were not Afro-American.

We have a little backward enclave in our machine shop, which through the years has allowed the company to bypass Black workers in promo-

tions and training. Two of the workers in that department, one Polish-American and the other from Tennessee, made substantial contributions but insisted on putting false names on the sign-up sheet. There is some type of organized fascist-type influence in that crowd (I found Nazi printed materials in the area) that, I believe, centers around the foreman and has served the needs of the company over the years. Yet in the face of these pressures, these brothers felt the need to show their friendship and solidarity. Equally instructive was the way that my partner both appreciated and *expected* their support.

He expected it because, after all, we *are* the working class and he *had* worked for ten years with these brothers on the night shift. This kind of instinctive class optimism and confidence really gives you a boost. Actions like these illuminate the question of class unity.

After last year's election we drew some conclusions about the effectiveness of labor's electoral work. We wrote our District Director, congratulating the union on its efforts to get out the vote. But we also spoke about the 38 per cent in our shop who supported Reagan. We had flooded that shop with materials exposing Reagan. But in the end some workers simply didn't believe the union. The credibility of the union had been damaged by a lack of aggressiveness in fighting grievances and by negotiating weak contracts. In this area the business representatives had dropped the ball repeatedly on matters important to the rank and file. Their reluctance to fight hard on issues like absenteeism, insurance programs, employee contribution to health care, contracting-out, etc., weakened the union's ability to lead its members into political struggle. This led us to conclude that we had to redouble our efforts to see each grievance and issue through, to avoid a defeatist attitude on grievances that evolves when business reps roll over and play dead in front of the company.

We are happy to see that the Draft Trade Union Program underscores these basic ideas. Rank-and-file control and aggressive struggle around economic issues in the shop is the cement that will hold the union together in the political fights ahead. □

PAT FRY

Our club covers the East Side of Detroit. Within its area sits the Chrysler Jefferson Avenue Assembly Plant, employing 6,000 workers, 80 per cent Afro-American. Many having transferred from a plant closed by Chrysler—Dodge Main. It is rumored that Jefferson Assembly will close at the end of the 1985 model year.

A leading comrade works at the plant, and has a long history of trade union leadership at Jefferson Assembly and Dodge Main before that.

We have been a community club but never figured out how to sink roots into the neighborhood. We passed out the *Daily World* at the plant gate at Jefferson once a month, but never talked to the workers, knew what they thought about it, or what was happening on the shop floor.

It never occurred to us that a shop paper was the key to realizing a shop concentration and to Party building. On our own, we would not have come to this.

It was during discussion of our district's plan that the idea came to life. A district-wide committee was established to produce and distribute the *Jefferson Worker*, as it has been named.

The process of producing the shop paper (we are now putting together our third issue) is a collective process. Issues on the shop floor are discussed—which are most important, how they affect unity, how they impact on upcoming contract struggles, etc. Several comrades write articles. (There are always two or three rewrites—and they are always written from the point of view of the worker.)

The committee distributes it at the plant gate, covering both shifts. We distributed 900 copies of the first issue and 2,000 of the second. We are going to produce more for the third issue.

The feedback from the first two papers has been highly positive. One worker told me that the cartoon on the front page had everyone laughing. Another said that the articles were right on target with what was going on in the plant. Another said, tongue in cheek, that he thought the name should be "Jefferson Slaver." Another associated the shop paper with the *Daily World* and urged us to distribute the *Daily* at an upcoming important membership meeting.

The same comrades also distribute the *Daily World* at Jefferson Assembly—on different days

Pat Fry is *Daily World* correspondent in Detroit.

than the shop paper, however. Regularity and consistency are important with both the shop paper and the *Daily World*.

The *Jefferson Worker* has greatly influenced recent events inside the plant. It has pushed the local leadership to come out with leaflets and positions identical to the shop paper, and has helped to bring about a degree of unity among the various opposition caucuses, the local leadership and the rank-and-file against the company.

Following the second issue, the local leadership called for a membership meeting to ask the members for a strike authorization vote over 300 unresolved grievances. The membership turned out like never before. The hall was filled and the members were out into the street. The vote was unanimous. The shop paper played an important role. The paper is becoming a catalyst for action.

As good as this may sound, all these are only beginning steps to our goal—building a shop club and building a rank-and-file movement that will confront the transnationals.

How has this impacted on the club? It has been very good, but we have a distance to go to make the shop paper a collective effort of the club.

Yet there have been many positive things happening. The shop paper is looked on with great pride by all members of our club. It has generated a new excitement about its possibilities. It has become a focus of our educationals. We have discussions on issues arising from the shop floor—class collaborationism, building the Left-/Center alliance, building unity between Black and white workers, Trotskyism, imports. Comrades with much trade union experience contribute richly to our discussions as never before.

As the Chrysler struggle unfolds, and undoubtedly a worker/community fight to keep the plant open, the role of the club will take on new dimensions. Community support work, distributions of leaflets, strike support if necessary, educational forums or discussion groups—all these will be important contributions. Currently, we are getting the *Daily World* into the stores in the surrounding area of the plant.

In conclusion, our experiences prove that the shop paper is a unique opportunity to bring our program directly into the hands of industrial workers who are looking for answers to the profound crisis they confront—the runaway plants, layoffs, forced overtime, speedup, divide-and-

conquer company tactics.

We know these ideas are being discussed on the shop floor. In an interview with a worker for the *Daily World* last month at the plant gate, we asked what he thought of the idea of forcing the company to invest \$5 in this country for every \$1 abroad. He replied enthusiastically, "Yeah, the guys were talking about that in the shop the other

day." They were talking about that because it was raised in the shop paper.

Finally, the Communist Party shop paper is important because workers are able to see the Party, not only through the individual worker who is a Communist, but as a political organization, speaking to the problems they are facing—an organization they wish to join. □

SIG EISENSCHER

Our Party's rebirth in our North Side Chicago area, known as Uptown, began with the opening of the battle to elect Chicago's first Black mayor. Rather, it began with the voter registration drive that determined Harold Washington's decision to run for mayor. I myself was recruited into that election campaign by a middle-aged Black woman with ten kids and a serious heart ailment. She lived down the block from our home and I hadn't known her at all. Now, for the past year, she has been a member of our club. The day that she stopped me on the street to get my signature on Harold Washington's nomination petition was the beginning.

The first thing we realized on plunging into that campaign was that we couldn't hide our light under a bushel. There are all kinds of people getting into it and not all were interested in electing a progressive Black mayor as much as they were interested in riding to positions of power on his coattails.

First off, people were curious about us eager beavers—who we were, what motivated our energetic response to the needs of the common struggle? We agreed that we had to let them know, at least some of us, that we were Communists. That didn't shock anyone, even the local Democrats, because they soon learned that they had to rely on us to mobilize the troops to get things done, while others, self-anointed leaders, social-democratic types, specialized in taking bows for the work we did. But our behavior was modest, and we didn't push the hammer and sickle into anyone's face. Meanwhile we earned our right to an important place in the informal coalition that upset the applecart of racist machine politics in Chicago.

But, at the same time, we made effective use of the *Daily World*. One comrade in our club got

25 subs during the campaign. Mass distributions of the *Daily World* were made at the local unemployment center, while within the coalition, our approach with the *Daily World* was done individual-to-individual. We didn't want to be considered, like the Trotskyites, as sharks who feed upon anything that moves.

Another thing we learned was that we had to distinguish ourselves from others in the coalition. The SDA opportunists wanted a lily-white top committee in our area, which has a 15 per cent Black population. They figured on using the Blacks and others to do the leg work, while they sat on their duffs, presumably thinking. But the comrades intervened to put an end to this racist concept, forcing them to accept several Blacks on the planning committee.

One group, consisting of leftovers from the old SDS, conceived the idea of an all-white organization to "win over the white voters" to support the newly elected Washington administration. We were quick to refute this "Leftist" rationale for Jim Crow politics. This outfit tried to criticize the striking Chicago teachers, claiming that the strike "interfered with education." We challenged them on that too, and with the help of teacher comrades, made them change their tune.

The Rightwing opportunists were for sitting around to wait for the next election campaign—our comrades pressed for immediate local action to defend the new administration from the old machine obstructionists on issues that confront the city today, every day.

So, after all this, where are we?

Our club, which had been stagnant, was slimmed down to four members, after separating out into another club a group of older comrades—good and loyal comrades—whose vision of the Party nevertheless was from the past, who were still reliving the McCarthy era. We also changed the name of our club, to identify us with the area in which we function.

Sig Eisenschel is a veteran trade union and community activist.

We sparked the anti-Reagan coalition, while at the same time campaigning for comrades Gus and Angela.

Since the first of April, this year, we have doubled our membership, from four to eight. Two of the newcomers are Black, and one of the white comrades is a rejoiner, coming back to us after a few years' absence.

We have learned from the Black recruits. They respect the Party's honorable history, but their question is, "What have you done for us lately?" They are hungry for knowledge, and expect the Party to plan their political education immedi-

ately, in the midst of the most intense mass political activity.

Comrades, our new members are a challenge to the Party's capacity to meet their needs. Building the Party means not only to recruit, but to build the Party from within. These new members had been standing on our threshold for a while, deciding finally to come on in. We have a job to do, to make Communists out of them, but the process is not a one-way street. They will make Communists out of us, too. And there are more out there, waiting. Let's go get 'em! □

CAROL PITTMAN

The two Party clubs in Flatbush (Brooklyn) and the Paul Robeson club of the YCL are jubilant over the public recruiting meeting last night with Angela Davis and Scott Marshall. Out of 30 friends who attended, nine joined the Party and two the YCL. Most of these new members are young, working-class activists, predominantly Afro-Caribbean and Afro-American. Six of them are women.

One of our big advantages in Flatbush is that we do have two large clubs operating in the same geographic area; and, in many ways, they complement each other's work. This discussion will deal mainly with one of the two clubs, the William L. Patterson (northern Flatbush) club, which brought in eight of the nine recruits.

This new recruitment accomplished several things besides increasing our numbers:

- 1) It strengthened the working-class character of our club;
- 2) It rooted it more deeply in the community;
- 3) It fortified the racial composition to better reflect the community—now, over half our members are of African descent.

How did the club achieve such results? First, it was no overnight success but a triumph of long-term neighborhood concentration. Although comrades in the club live in neighboring communities, the decision to concentrate in an approximately eight-square-block area was made about eight years ago. While membership turnover in our concentration area has been great since then, the Party's active presence has been constant throughout. Comrades have been active, to vary-

ing degrees of course, in local peace and tenants' organizations, neighborhood and block associations, electoral campaigns (CP, independent, Jesse Jackson and Democratic Party) and anti-repression work. There has also been youth and student activities conducted together with the local YCL club and, before that, the YWLL branch.

The Party has consistently organized buses from the community to peace, Solidarity Day, civil rights, etc., demonstrations in Washington and has taken contingents from Flatbush (always with a Flatbush banner) to local and citywide events.

The Party's presence in the community has been constant. We maintain two door-to-door *Daily World* routes, and have had several public events in the club's name. Between the two clubs there are seven known, public Communists in the neighborhood. Frequent, good leaflets on topical and other questions appear in the Party's name. We are also the only organization in the area which has its own sound equipment, which we use not only for our own street mobilizations but lend to other organizations.

Communists have functioned openly in several of the neighborhood organizations and coalitions, notably in the electoral and peace fields. Through our work we have developed a constituency of *Daily World* readers, friends who work on various campaigns with us, people who come to the Party seeking advice or aid of one sort or another; and a large mailing list which we update regularly. People see us as an influential force in the community and they seek out the Party to help solve their problems. People look to us to take positions and provide leadership on community issues and to lead struggles. This is clear, particularly in tenants' work and electoral struggles.

Carol Pittman is Educational Secretary of the Communist Party of New York.

A local Democratic Party candidate for City Council not only sought our help on his campaign but attended the meeting with Angela Davis. The electoral districts we concentrate in always get high votes for Communist and independent candidates.

What will we do to consolidate our successes?

First, as to our new members: Our next club meetings will be welcoming celebrations where each will be presented with the special '85 new member's certificate and a package of informational and educational material. They will participate in new members classes. Each will be assigned a buddy from the club to be in regular, day-to-day contact. The club executive will meet with each

new member to discuss the comrade's assignment. No one will be allowed to drift.

Second, we have the varied questions of continued Party building and of increasing our influence in the area. We will face the challenge not only of consolidating the new members but the continuing growth and heightened activity of older, more experienced comrades.

To make a long story short: our experience has shown us that Party building is a complex and difficult process that requires conscious effort on the part of all comrades, that if we continue working as we have been and deal with our problems swiftly, we can become a *mass* club of action. □

JUDITH LEBLANC

The club is the initial training ground for cadre. As was said in the main report, it is the collective which molds members into Communists. Contribution to the collective work of the club must become the basic gauge for a cadre's potential.

Cadre development is the most difficult aspect of our work as well as the most critical. Some problems have surfaced as a result of our work to improve club life since the Milwaukee conference.

1) Many club executive members, whether relatively new or long term members, say they do not feel confident about explaining the Party's ideas and positions.

We need regular training of club executives, especially chairs. Exec members should have yearly classes, with new exec members having special introductory sessions. Then we can take bold approaches in organizing new clubs.

Classes need to be conducted from the starting point of what is necessary to be a club chair, organization secretary, education director, media or labor secretary. What is the club's role in strengthening democratic centralism? What are the do's and don'ts of collectivity? How to make a club plan of work which integrates national Party initiatives with the concentration shop or neighborhood and size and strength of the club? The main thread needs to be implementation of the Party's line, answering ideological questions which develop in the course of club work. The style must guarantee that comrades leave classes raring to go, not overwhelmed or intimidated.

Judith LeBlanc is chair of the Cadre Commission of the CPUSA.

2) Are we handling problems and assignments of individuals and clubs in a timely and collective way?

Too often, more subjectivity is churned up in dealing with an ideological or political problem than the original question created because solutions are not sought as quickly as possible.

Even if there are no immediate answers, collective attention to a developing problem helps build confidence of cadre in themselves and in the need for a *collective* solution. Organizing collective discussions which examine problems within the context of the collective's work can help overcome frustration before it demobilizes cadre.

This aspect of cadre training can be particularly important at the club level. Club activity pressures club leaders to learn strategy and tactics "on their feet." The need for club leadership to act quickly and concretely to influence the shop or neighborhood demands timely action on political and ideological problems.

3) A pressing problem is not having up-to-date estimates of the level of development of each person, coupled with an understanding of personal and family life. We need to notice problem tendencies before they become full blown. We're not able to help comrades without really knowing them. Too many people fade off of club executives. We need to cut down on the "cadre surprise factor."

4) An important ideological factor is class consciousness, which was discussed in the main report. One of its main reflections is the difficulty convincing members to be club officers, especially chairs. To be conscious of the indispensable contri-

bution of our Party reflects commitment to the working class.

At times, members say they are "too busy" to be on the executive. We need to convince comrades that leading a club is not a trade-off for other mass work. It is the key to maximizing the club's *collective* work and initiative. The work of an individual is only as important as the work of the whole club.

We need executives which combine working-class comrades with working-class kind of cadre. This description pinpoints the kind of cadre we need—cadre who strive to know, understand and are with the working class. Cadre who learn from the working-class experience all that gives our class its revolutionary cutting edge.

We must train cadre in a strong partisan approach towards the Party and the working class, guided by a drive for collectivity in overcoming obstacles.

With more emphasis on executives toward the class, we can more and more have clubs with an action orientation.

It is also important to sharpen the training of cadre assigned to mass movements, especially trade unions and Left forms. We have to make a big shift in this area of cadre training in order to sharpen the leading role of the Party, enhance our influence and ability to build the Party and the press.

This approach is basic to training good trade unionists, organizers, youth or peace activists. We need classes which mold Communist mass workers, Communist trade union leaders, Communist peace activists who are able to rally greater and greater numbers of people to the Party, Party program and to read our press. Communist leaders are needed in every mass movement who can give leadership which convinces people that the Party is essential. □

SCOTT MARSHALL

The excellent discussion we have been hearing from every speaker, from so many clubs, gives us a picture of how our Party is changing, how we are developing clubs that are projecting the Party into every struggle of the working class. We are a Party on the move, and the report gives us, in the clearest terms, a guide to action.

There is every indication that we are on the verge of some explosive growth for the Party. Such growth makes the main report's emphasis on the clubs critical. When you hear about situations, such as in Ohio, where a whole club of building trades workers is coming into the Party at one time, then you know we have to concentrate on helping shop clubs. We have to do everything we can to help clubs develop working-class atmosphere and style so we can consolidate new members.

The call in the report for some international meetings between Communist Parties on the question of trade is most timely. There is an important shift away from "Buy American" taking place in the labor movement. This is not to say that the campaigns around this call no longer influence workers in industries hard hit by imports, but more and more workers and some unions are turning their fire on the transnationals. How to

further this development, how to fight to protect U.S. workers' jobs, but not at the expense of workers in other countries, are questions we must deal with.

Comrade George Meyers gave an excellent report on the Party's Draft Trade Union Program. The National Labor Department organized several conferences in the course of developing the program. We had a steelworkers' conference, an autoworkers' conference and an electrical workers' conference. We have had East Coast and Midwest Party trade union conferences based on the draft. (A West Coast conference will be held soon and other industry conferences will be held later this year.) All of these have enriched the document. Every Party trade unionist we talk to is anxious to see the program, and excited about the prospect of using it in the labor movement.

I could best sum up the reaction by telling you how one comrade in the Midwest responded to the draft. This comrade is a steelworker with over 30 years in the mill. He told me that he studied the draft for two days. Then he got together a group of unemployed workers from a shut-down mill. He read sections of the draft to them, and then lead a discussion of what the program meant for them in their struggles. He told me that the workers got a lot of ideas for things they should be doing in the fight for jobs. I think that says it all.

(continued on page 40)

Scott Marshall is secretary of the Labor Department of the CPUSA.

Old Wine and New Bottles

PHILLIP BONOSKY

Stephen F. Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, Oxford University Press, 1985, 236 pp, \$17.95.

The very title of this book suggests that there might have been something awry in all previous approaches to "thinking" about the Soviet Union. Indeed, the book itself makes that point pretty conclusively, but only in the process of arguing that there is more than one way to skin a cat. The "cat" is the Soviet Union and "skinning" it means merely overthrowing it, though not in so many words.

The main reason why Cohen has been forced to "rethink" the Soviet experience (by which he implies not the Soviet Union itself but "our" *impression* of it, our *perception* of it) is really the same root reason (though he would recoil from such an association) Hitler's generals had to "rethink" their experience of it. Their previous "thinking" about it (i.e., their schemes to overthrow it) had failed. "The giant empire in the East," wrote Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, "is ripe for collapse. And the end of Jewish rule in Russia will also be the end of Russia as a state." He would confide later to his generals: "We have only to kick in the door and the whole rotten structure will come crashing down."

Five years later still, Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt would say to his captors: "I realized soon after the attack [on the USSR] was begun that everything that had been written about Russia was nonsense." (Quoted in William Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, Fawcett, 1978.)

Even much earlier, in 1931, George Bernard Shaw, after visiting the Soviet Union, would write: "Most of what is current today in England and America about Communist Russia is written by persons who should never have been taught to write, and read by people who should never have been taught to read." (*The Nationalization of Russia*, Indiana Press, 1964.)

"Few foreigners," wrote Walter Duranty in

I Write As I Please (1935), "understand . . . the Russian character, which perhaps accounts for the fact that so many of them talk and write such preposterous nonsense about Russia, and that most of them take home from Russia the proofs of what they want to find there, whether it is paradise for the peasant and worker, or hell on earth for all."

The "thinking" about the Soviet Union since 1917 could (and does) fill libraries. But it has been so sharply divided, with so many differing reports and points of view, that a passing stranger reading these testimonies could be forgiven if he concluded that nobody had seen the same Soviet Union twice.

This intense polarization on the question of what the Soviet Union was in the past and what it is today has continued for over 60 years. But today the question has been raised to an even higher political intensity by the Reaganites. It is no exaggeration to say that it is on the Reagan-Schultz-Weinberger clique's interpretation of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire," against which a world crusade must be launched, that the very fate of our country (and the planet) uneasily hangs.

It would be pleasant to be able to report that Cohen's "rethinking" of the Soviet experience (by that, always meaning the American Kremlinologist's view of it) has led him to a truly fundamental reorganization not only of his "facts" (which remain marinated in vintage anti-Sovietism) but of his point of view as well. But the truth is that Cohen's thesis can be stripped down to the not-too-original idea that if you failed to skin the cat the old way, try a new way. His only concession to the world as it is today is his rather grudging admission that this "new way" has a better chance of succeeding in conditions of detente.

It is a symptom of the state of anti-Soviet scholarship (if it's possible to use such a phrase) that Stephen Cohen is nevertheless seen as a

"liberal," writes a column for the undoubtedly liberal *Nation*, called "Sovieticus" (which sounds vaguely like a generic title for some obscure disease), teaches what is described as a popular class in political science at Princeton, has published a biography of Nikolai Bukharin and a collection of anti-Soviet "underground" *samizdat*.

If his generally hostile attitude toward the Soviet Union (as it really exists) would seem to qualify him more readily as a reactionary than a liberal, both he and others who live in the Alice in Wonderland world of liberal politics would be quite surprised at the idea. For to be *against* "Stalinist" Russia is to be liberal!

But mainly, Cohen has won his stripes as a liberal in his role of dragon-slayer in the field of Soviet studies. Here there is more substance to his credentials and therefore here is where we shall properly begin our appraisal of the present book.

Between the late 1940s and the early 1960s," Cohen writes, "most Anglo-American Sovietologists embraced as axiomatic a set of interrelated interpretations to explain the past and present (and sometimes the future) of the Soviet Union. That explanatory consensus became known as the totalitarian school. It was, for all practical academic purposes, the only school of Sovietology, an orthodoxy for almost twenty years."

Nor did this "school" dominate the thinking merely of scholars, it should be noted, but it underlay government policy as well! Cohen goes on:

More was obscured than revealed. Historical analysis came down to the thesis of an inevitable "unbroken continuity" through Soviet history, thereby largely excluding the stuff of real history—conflicting traditions, alternatives, turning points, and multiple causalities. Political analysis fixed on a regime imposing its "inner totalitarian logic" on an impotent victimized society, thereby largely excluding the real stuff of real politics. . . .

Therein originated the intellectual crisis that overtook academic Sovietology by the 1960s, especially in political science and history.

But the crisis remained passive for years. Something dramatic was needed to precipitate it openly, to make it visible, to make it become a *problem*. And the event that finally did just that could not have been foreseen. It took the form of a beep-beep from outer space. Already, the "younger generation" has no way of knowing the consternation that swept through the corridors of power when that beep-beep started coming into our living rooms. Suddenly, this Soviet Union, the image of which had been so firmly fixed in the public mind as a backward, finger-and-toe-counting nation of half-civilized peasants, hopelessly behind the Western world scientifically, had come through with a true shocker. It had sent the first earth satellite into outer space, and the world had to learn a bit of Russian therefore: *sputnik*.

The implications of this beep-beep were awesome—and fearful.

Only then, notes Cohen, "after the Soviet Sputnik was launched in 1957 [were] Soviet Studies amply funded, organized and expanded."

Fear was the spur. Now all eyes were turned to the USSR and for the first time since 1917 perhaps, with some humility. Hegiras of educators and scientists made their way to Moscow to "learn the secret." They were now willing to sit at the feet of scientists whose names they had never been able to pronounce before, even if they knew them. At home, schools across the nation began to introduce the study of Russian into their curricula so that America could better keep tabs on what the Russians were up to scientifically. The prestige of the professional Kremlinologists plummeted to zero. It was now clear that their endless books and knowing articles and glib TV interviews had been based on no objectivity at all. They were all callow wish-fulfillment fantasies. Not scientific study, but incantations. Not history, but prayer.

This dose of cold reality, however, did not last long. When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be. But when the devil recovered, we know he went back to being the devil again.

Awe of Soviet achievements lasted only until the Americans sent their own satellites into

outer space, even reached the moon, and the old attitude of patronization of Soviet science and arts and life returned with all its former arrogance.

Nevertheless, new jolts lay in wait, although they were not directly dealt by the Soviets. These came from within America itself. One can perhaps date them from the U-2 incident. But, with hardly a pause in between, a series of national catastrophes exploded on the people with such cumulative force that America was left reeling and gasping for breath. These episodes included a number of assassinations, the criminal debacle of Vietnam, Watergate, and, some add to this, Iran. Meanwhile, more and more countries opted for socialism (cut to the Soviet pattern) or at least for a nonaligned position in world affairs that was at the same time an undercutting of American imperialism.

There had been student riots, burning down of cities, killing of high officials, mass desertion of soldiers, mass resistance to war, a spread of turmoil that seemed a threat to bring the country down into ruins. And all the time this was happening to America, which enjoyed all the privileges and virtues of democracy, nothing like it happened at all to the Soviet Union. There the students attended classes and did their studies; the population, though beset by every species of consumer shortage, nevertheless behaved itself; nobody burned flags, tore up draft cards, nobody was going to war. In fact, looked at from America, the Soviet Union appeared to be inexplicably stable, settled, focused, even stodgy. Cohen in fact would call it the most conservative country in the world.

But it was there—solidly. And once again, it presented American Sovietologists with a dilemma. Writes Cohen:

A different opinion [of the Soviet Union] formed in the late 1960s and 1970s, reflecting the general need of academic self-criticism provoked by Vietnam and Watergate. Some senior scholars began to see "bias and blunders" in that "persistent failure of our efforts to understand and explain Soviet reality—past, present and future" derived significantly from an "unwitting intrusion of politics into academic studies."

Significantly, this "failure" to understand Soviet reality was helped along by "some ex-Communists and refugees from Communism whose political zeal often exceeded their self-proclaimed expertise."

Thus, with cold war studies of the Soviet Union mainly conducted in a "partnership" of "government agencies, the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations," the "scholars," despite their attempts to free themselves of previous superstitions about the Soviet Union, were still caught in this academic Bermuda triangle, and found themselves as helpless in their efforts to reach an objective evaluation of the Soviet Union as the "totalitarians" had been.

Did anyone notice? Of course some did. But they suppressed their discomfort, their uneasiness. "To ask why dissenting voices were so few and quiet is to raise the question of the impact of the 'loyalty security' crusade, of political fear, on the Soviet studies profession."

Nor was this fear gratuitous. During the height of the McCarthyite witch hunts of the 1950s, "at least 600 professors and teachers" were fired. "Consensus," far from being the reluctant agreement of squint-eyed skeptics whose hardbitten doubts could only be overcome by overwhelming proof, turned out to be, in fact, the enforced unanimity of cowed academics who feared losing their jobs. Also, there was the unique factor working in the field which decreed that "liberals" who transgressed against the anti-Soviet "norms" could be and would be punished; reactionaries, liars, anti-Soviet "crusaders" were, however, immune. You could never be wrong if you were anti-Soviet!

But even though the older generation of Sovietologists had been chastened and, for the moment, humbled by events, proven to be so glaringly off the mark where Soviet reality was concerned, still none of the new generation of Sovietologists (the "revisionists") felt that the cave-in of the vast structure of anti-Sovietism erected on the foundation of "totalitarianism" (the proposition that the Soviet Union was best understood as a monolith of evil) meant the whole structure was wrong, that the underlying hypothesis was wrong. As Cohen himself

would point out: despite the collapse of 20 years of delusion about the USSR, to which debacle the revisionist school had made a significant contribution, "none of us has turned out to be 'pro-Soviet.' "

Ponder that statement and you will find the clue to everything insane in the field of Soviet studies. What Cohen is saying is that the closer one comes to truth the greater the danger of being labeled "pro-Soviet" grows. Is to be truthful to be, willy-nilly, pro-Soviet? "Not surprisingly," he writes, "revisionist scholars still worry about appearing to be 'softheaded' or 'soft on Communism' if only because it might jeopardize their access to policy circles." (Which includes invitations to the White House.)

Nevertheless, with the "totalitarian school" in shambles all around them, the revisionist school found that it had demolished one dragon only to raise a new one. The proposition that the Soviet Union might be exactly what it claims to be—developing socialism, and on the road to communism—is completely ruled out as an acceptable hypothesis. Therefore, a new but more plausible theory to explain its nature and account for its durability had to be found. *Delenda est Cathago*—Carthage must be destroyed, but this time by a different route than Hitler took. Why not go back to Homer and see if the old wooden horse trick can work again?

This is the problem of the second part of Cohen's book. His assignment is to explain why the Soviet Union has not collapsed, despite all its flaws, its mortal contradictions (and our prayers and dreams). None of the past failures, he asserts, need depress us about our prospects for the future. There is a way to "change" the Soviet Union (and disintegrate its "empire"), but first we must change our own way of looking at it.

It was wrong (says Cohen) to see the Soviet Union as a single-minded, one dimensional nation of cowed people who follow, like automats, the dictates of a single will imposed on them by an alien force, expressed by the Communist Party. The Soviet Union is not a monolith. It is prey to the same divisive, contradictory

forces that all societies experience, and it behooves her American well-wishers to latch onto those forces which promise "reform" from within. We are not plotting her overthrow, Cohen doesn't forget to remind his readers; we merely want "reform." This is what makes liberals out of us.

Cohen starts his unbuttoning of the Soviet overcoat by asserting that "there is no iron-clad historical inevitability" about any historical phenomenon, and those who have seen in the Soviet Union an inevitable continuity between its beginning with Lenin through Stalin to its present deplorable state are wrong. Nothing was "inevitable." A valid alternative existed in 1929 when Stalin fully took over power. That alternative, in fact, has resurfaced in our day, plays an active role inside the Soviet Union itself and is the dividing line among the Communist Parties of the world. As Cohen puts it:

Through its various stages, the history of the anti-Stalinist idea has been reflected most tenaciously in the historical fate and rediscovery of one Bolshevik leader—Nikolai Bukharin, whom Lenin called the "favorite of the whole party," but whom Stalin condemned to death at the Moscow purge trials of 1938.

"Stalinism" is the enemy, and "Bukharinism" is the sword by which to lay the enemy low. "Stalinism" (i.e. living socialism) will still be overthrown by its old enemy, and with Lenin's blessing! Here is the wooden horse to be smuggled into Moscow; take the citadel from within!

Thus, old ghosts are aroused to go back to battle again. And those of us who thought that the past is the past are forced to think again. And if one wonders how domestic Soviet affairs (no matter how ancient) can possibly concern, or affect, American affairs, Cohen is ready to illustrate.

He has chosen to dramatize the issues in the world as one issue—between "Stalinism" and "anti-Stalinism." He has personified his issue by creating a devil and an angel. The devil is Stalin. The angel is Bukharin. It all becomes a primitive morality play. Although Stalin, the man, is dead, his evil lives after him in "Stali-

nism," which is what the Soviet Union itself is in the grip of. The antidote to the malignancy is to be found in the ideas (and personality) of Bukharin, whose star has risen once more and will in fact soon dominate the socialist heavens, as Eurocommunism.

Thus we are forced to go back to this ghost and see if those old bones really live.

We can start by taking a look at the letter which Lenin sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party in which he gives his estimate of various Party personalities, including Bukharin. It is on this estimate of Bukharin as the "favorite of the whole party" that Cohen bases the authenticity of his claim that not only the man but the ideas of the man had Lenin's sanction. It is necessary to read the whole relevant passage because it illustrates both the method and morality of professional "anti-Stalinism." Wrote Lenin:

In my opinion [Bukharin and Pyatakov] are the most outstanding forces (of the younger ones), and regarding them the following should be borne in mind: Bukharin is not only a very valuable and important theoretician in our Party, he is also legitimately regarded as the favorite of the whole Party; but it is very doubtful whether his theoretical views can be classed as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he has never studied, I think, has never fully understood dialectics). (Dec. 24, 1922.)

In its full context the characterization of Bukharin takes a somewhat different shape. One can commit forgery by omission as surely as by commission. And it is precisely the section of Lenin's letter that came after the word "but" that Cohen suppresses, and on which Stalin bases his most telling criticism of Bukharin.

Here is what the "rude" Stalin had to say about him the course of the debate over NEP (in 1929):

It is said that Bukharin is one of the theoreticians of our Party. This is true, of course. But the point is that not all is well with his theorizing. This is evident if only from the fact that on questions of Party theory and policy he has piled up a heap of mistakes . . . These mistakes of Bukharin's followed from a wrong

theoretical line, from the defeat of his theories. Yes, Bukharin is a theoretician but he is not altogether a Marxist theoretician.

And Stalin practically predicts the appearance of the Princeton professor on the scene some fifty five years later:

It may be said that it is not worth dwelling at length on Bukharin's theory of the kulak growing into socialism, since it itself speaks, and only speaks, but cries out, against Bukharin. . . . But presently the situation has changed. The petty bourgeois elemental forces, which have been breaking out in recent years, have begun to encourage this anti-Marxist theory and made it topical. . . . Now this strange theory of Bukharin's is aspiring to become the banner of opportunism. That is why we can not now ignore this theory. That is why we must demolish it as a wrong and harmful theory.

And what is this "wrong theory" which has made its reappearance on the scene today, and why should it concern us? Cohen is very explicit about his reasons for resurrecting Bukharin. He asserts that the Soviet Union went off its socialist track when it ended NEP (New Economic Policy) under Stalin's influence and disavowed Bukharin. Cohen maintains that NEP, if followed, would have led, and still can lead the USSR (and the rest of the socialist world) to a "humane socialism," to a "socialism with a human face," to Eurocommunism.

He sums up Bukharin's position thusly:

The linchpin of his program was the encouraging of private peasant accumulation, thereby broadening the rural demand for industrial products and increasing the marketable surplus of peasant agriculture. He hoped that the peasant sector could be transformed from "a natural consumer economy into a commodity-producer economy." This meant encouraging the prosperity of all rural strata, but particularly the middle and better-off peasants. (Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution*, 1973.)

Or, in Bukharin's notorious command: "We must say to the whole peasantry, to all its strata: enrich yourselves, accumulate, develop your economy." And it was out of this "enriched peasantry" that socialism would emerge. "We

do not hinder kulak accumulation and we do not strive to organize the poor peasant for a second *expropriation* of the kulak." (Italics in original.)

This program of Bukharin's can be seen to dovetail neatly with similar policies today (in China, for example) of seeing the future of socialism as developing out of an unbridled market economy, with the class struggle (and much else) entirely eliminated by fiat.

Lenin's name had been invoked as sanction for Bukharin's line (and by extension for today's Eurocommunism). What did Lenin actually say about NEP—the "linchpin" of Bukharin's program (though it had not yet been spelled out before Lenin's death)? At one point Lenin said: "The New Economic Policy"! A strange title. It was called New Economic Policy because it turned things back. We are now retreating, going back, as it were; but we are doing so in order . . . to make a bigger leap forward." (Speech at Plenary Session of the Moscow Soviet, Nov. 20, 1922.)

Why was the retreat necessary? "We live in a country devastated so severely by war, knocked out of everything like the normal life, in a country that had suffered and endured so much, that willy-nilly we are beginning all our calculations with a very, very small percentage—the pre-war percentage." (Ibid.)

In all his references to NEP, Lenin emphasized the forced nature of the concessions to foreign and domestic capitalism that it involved. But at no time did he see in NEP the all-class formula by which the country would move smoothly into socialism. NEP was a stage out of which socialism could *develop*—but only under conditions of working-class power and socialist control.

It was on the reading of NEP as a *stage* that Stalin moved to speed up the socialization of the farms into collectives, which process began with the elimination of the kulaks as a class.

But there was another reason for resorting to pressure-cooker means. At no time does either Cohen or Bukharin show any awareness of how late the hour was. They as-

sumed that Western (and Japanese) imperialism would keep their hands off the USSR while it peacefully went forward, developing socialism at a leisurely pace, not through concentration on heavy industry first and the collectivization of the farms, which implied not only tremendous self-denial and deprivation of consumer products, but *struggle* as well against those classes which opposed this line.

But Stalin felt differently. He was well aware (as Lenin had been before him) that socialism was living on borrowed time and must make the most of it. In 1931 (still during an aspect of the NEP debate), before a meeting of leading personnel of socialist industry, he put it, as they say, cold turkey: "We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good that distance in ten years. Either we do it, or we shall go under."

Ten years from 1931 brings you to 1941—a prediction that could hardly have been more on the mark. And though when the actual attack came, Stalin was not fully prepared for it, the system itself by then had acquired the means to repulse it. As an authoritative statement in *Pravda* on the centennial of Stalin's birth (Dec. 21, 1979) put it:

Centralized leadership, iron discipline and a high degree of vigilance were required in such conditions so as not merely to hold out, but also to overcome the country's technical and economic backwardness, within the shortest time and without any assistance from outside, and to carry out social transformations along socialist lines. One also had to agree to certain temporary limitations of democracy, which were to be eliminated later.

When the Nazis did strike in June 1941, they hoped that their appearance on Soviet soil would be the signal for a general uprising of the peasants, led by the kulaks. But, to their surprise, no such support (except in a few instances: General Vlasov was the main example) was forthcoming either then or later.

What the Nazis did find was a "scorched earth"—a land of burnt down farms, blown up dams, destroyed or evacuated factories, a vast partisan movement in their rear which harried

them day and night till the very end of the war.

There were no kulaks to greet the Nazis in the city square offering bread and salt, and though some individual collaborators existed, they had little influence on the population in general. The kulaks had been eliminated as a class years before, and the farms had been collectivized. When the order came to burn down the farms, the collective farmers did so without hesitation, leaving the Nazis nothing.

French farmers did not burn down their farms (and were not asked to by the French government). For them their farms were their private property. To lose them was to lose everything. France fell in six weeks, its farms intact. The Soviets fought for five years, their farms put to the torch by themselves. And won.

It is quite within the realm of historical probability to claim that because "Stalin" defeated "Bukharin" (taking these names to represent policies) in 1929, Hitler was defeated in 1945.

But all this is brushed aside by the would-be revisionists, who lay claim to an interpretation of Soviet history whose only justification is an unconscionable arrogance so evident in the colleges. It is an example of the effort to usurp the very subject of Marxism from Marxists. They want to force on the intellectual world an interpretation of Marxism (drawn mainly from the Trotskyite stew pot) which *replaces* Marxism.

Thus with the matter of "Stalinism," first forged as a concept by the master illusionist himself, Trotsky. Cohen's whole thesis rests on the assertion that though Stalin is dead, "Stalinism" lives. Now, most of the world's Communists have settled their revolutionary account with both the period and the man, have drawn up the debits and credits, pro and con, and struck a balance. It is quite accurate to say that there are no "Stalinists" in the Communist movement today. But "Stalinists" there are, nevertheless: they are to be found among those who claim that his power continues undiminished one-third of a century after his death and remains dominant in the Soviet

Union itself. Comments the same article in *Pravda*:

To attribute such abilities to a single personality, even if an outstanding one, and assume that its will allegedly determines the course of history and can change objective laws of history means to fall into idealism and voluntarism, and ignore the creative endeavor of the masses of people.

Tochna! as the Russians would say. Exactly!

Nevertheless, this remains the claim. And yet a most peculiar aspect of the charge of "Stalinism" is its frustrating elusiveness. What is it exactly? Stalin did not originate a set of ideas which either added to or further developed Marxism-Leninism. His fame rests on his defeat of Trotskyism and the various Rightist trends, including that sponsored by Bukharin. He is credited with being the force behind the drive to industrialize the country. He is credited (and damned) for having moved to collectivize the countryside and eliminate the kulaks. He is faulted for letting himself be caught unprepared by the Nazi assault, with serious military and civilian losses. But he is credited with having maintained the morale of the nation during the war (and his speeches of that period still stand up), and for having forged the postwar policy that speeded up rebuilding the devastated Soviet economy and consolidated the socialist world as it vigorously pursued the policy of coexistence with the capitalist world expressed through trade, armament control, cultural exchanges and the UN.

But the critics of socialism concentrate on one aspect of Stalin's policies, which they identify with socialism itself. That is, of course, Stalin's well known assertion that the class struggle intensifies domestically after power is won by the working class, and steps to suppress counter-revolution must also be correspondingly intensified.

The consequences of this policy are well known. But neither can the conclusions drawn from it today, especially by the enemies of socialism, be accepted. For their contention is that opposition to working-class rule was expressed benignly, that it was principled, no more than

the other side of an amiable debate, an acceptable alternative, like Bukharin's.

This was far from the truth then and is less true now. Counter-revolution existed in the 20s and 30s. Sabotage was real. Conspiracies flourished. Foreign intervention never ceased its plots. The mistake lay in putting too much trust in repressive force, and too little in the power of the people themselves to contain and expel or digest alien elements.

Nevertheless, if at great cost, the basic integrity of socialism was preserved, and the people of the Soviet Union (including those directly victimized) accept with grim pride this period in their history as the bitter price paid for their survival and their future.

Those who point to the excesses as proof that today, in the socialist countries, no real counter-revolutionary forces exist, and that no repressive measures should be taken against them, are deliberately misrepresenting Soviet history and reality.

For the fact is, though internal resistance might lessen when the working class comes to power, and if the international climate remained positive, it would gradually fade away entirely, such is not the way it really works.

For the new element introduced into the situation today is that as counter-revolutionary forces are eliminated in each separate country internally, the burden of carrying out counter-revolution has been assumed externally—mainly by the United States. Everywhere in the really free world—from Angola and Afghanistan to Poland and Nicaragua—the internal counter-revolution is supported and stoked actively by the Reaganites, who have declared a crusade against the socialist world. This situation of endless intrigues, of day-and-night CIA activity, of bribery, of sedition, of counter-revolutionary schemes that take every form, from

blowing up schools to poisoning presidents, has again created a climate where it's not possible to tell friend from foe at a glance, and friends or the innocent, will certainly suffer (and this is intended by the CIA).

Thus there is a rationale even for repression. Genuine revolutionaries are as much opposed to arbitrary repression (and especially terrorism!) as doctors are to pneumonia. But without a diagnosis of the disease neither the doctor nor the revolutionary can hope to prevent it or to control it if it occurs despite their best efforts.

But in any case, repressive measures and regimes, as such, are not *non grata* to the Reaganites, as ex-Ambassador Jean Kirkpatrick made amply clear on more than one occasion. Nor are they high on the pursed-lip list of some liberals, who reserve their sharpest arrows for socialist countries that defend themselves.

But there's the nub of it. For when it's all boiled down to its essence, the main grievance its liberal (and reactionary) critics have against socialism—"Stalinism"—is that it survives.

Communist Parties, stigmatized as Stalinist, but whose struggle are so heroic, and who embody the voiceless, unrepresented millions of insulted and injured of the world, have proven that they know how to win power for the powerless, how to defend the power they win, and how, educating the people as they go, to move on to socialism and beyond, to communism itself.

So, as the French put it, *plus ca change, plus c'est le meme chose*. The more anti-Sovietism changes, the more it remains the same. A full "rethinking of the Soviet experience" remains to be done. The "revisionists" have only taken the first step, and have recoiled from the logic of their own bit of courage. They should go forward and state the truth, even though it turns out to be "pro-Soviet." □

Reagan's 'Star Wars'— First Strike Against Disarmament

DANIEL SPECTOR

Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative—commonly known as "Star Wars"—is the most serious blow at arms control and disarmament since the nuclear era began.

Star Wars is the brainchild of the Heritage Foundation, an ultra-Right think tank that develops foreign and domestic policy for the Reagan Administration. Itself only a few years old, it is the latest addition to a decades-long U.S. strategy aiming to establish nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union.

The demagoguery of the Reagan Administration's campaign for Star Wars is as incredible as the technology it proposes.

The Administration claims that Star Wars would be a defense shield against a nuclear attack; in fact, the purpose of Star Wars is to provide a shield for the U.S. nuclear first-strike arsenal of MX, cruise, Pershing and Trident missiles.

The Administration claims that Star Wars would lead to disarmament; in fact, by militarizing outer space, Star Wars would raise the arms race to a qualitatively new, and therefore more dangerous, level.

The Administration claims that Star Wars would induce the Soviet Union to negotiate; in fact, Star Wars is a futile (but dangerous) attempt to bypass any negotiated limits to the arms race by gaining military superiority over the Soviet Union and forcing the USSR into submission.

The Administration claims that Star Wars would bring about a more secure future; in fact, it will worsen U.S.-Soviet relations and waste hundreds of billions of dollars that could be used to improve the lives of working people in this country.

At their January meeting, Secretary of State George Shultz and Foreign Minister Andrei

Gromyko agreed that preventing an arms race in space would be one of the three integral aspects of the Geneva negotiations. Now the Reagan Administration claims it never agreed to such a formula and demands that the Soviets agree to cuts in their missile force.

In other words, the position of the Reagan Administration is that the Soviets should disarm themselves while the U.S. goes ahead with its nuclear buildup (Star Wars, development of the MX missile, cruise and Pershing deployments in Europe, Trident deployments on submarines).

Most ominous of all, Star Wars makes nuclear war thinkable. "If we can defend ourselves from Soviet missiles, maybe we can win a nuclear war."

That way lies madness. It is the thinking of the Reaganites.

What is the Strategic Defense Initiative?

Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative envisions a vast array of weapons in outer space that would be capable of destroying Soviet nuclear warheads before they reach their targets in the U.S. Components of such a system might include, according to Pentagon specialists, laser, particle, or X-ray beams, powered either by nuclear explosions or other types of chemical and physical reactions, and aimed with gigantic mirrors. The SDI also includes provisions for weapons capable of destroying Soviet satellites that monitor U.S. military activity and U.S. compliance with arms treaties.

Most scientists and engineers consider Star Wars to be a technological fantasy. Whether it is or not, it would be a political disaster for humanity. It would open a new arena for the arms race, which means increased tension, decreased security, and trillions of dollars wasted on weapons of nuclear suicide.

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Star Wars weapons are defensive in nature and would eliminate the threat of nuclear war. Why do you oppose their development?

At the end of the movie "War Games," the supercomputer that almost starts a nuclear war learns by itself that such a "game" has no winners. "The only winning move," it tells its human creators, "is not to play."

The Reagan Administration claims it is necessary to build more weapons to ensure disarmament. Where is the logic in that? The only defense against the threat of nuclear war is arms control and disarmament.

Is it possible to defend a country from nuclear attack? Star Wars is said to be a "nuclear shield." But even its proponents admit that it would not be a perfect shield. The U.S. and the Soviet Union have about 50,000 nuclear warheads. A small percentage of that arsenal is enough to destroy both countries.

In addition, a Star Wars defense would not be able to detect or destroy nuclear weapons that stay closer to the ground—cruise missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and others—and which are extremely accurate and deadly.

Vice President George Bush said that the survival of 5 per cent of the population of the U.S. in a nuclear war is acceptable. Acceptable to whom?

And what would Star Wars defend against? A Soviet nuclear first strike? The Soviet Union has already pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons in any conflict. If both sides were to adopt a no-first-use policy the threat of a first strike would be lessened. But the Reagan Administration refuses to make such a pledge. That is enough to make one wonder about the intentions of the man in the White House.

The Reagan Administration tries to make much of the idea that Star Wars weapons would be non-nuclear. That is not quite the truth. One of the means being considered for generating the powerful laser and X-ray beams is "controlled" nuclear explosions—i.e., nuclear bombs. One of the Star Wars scenarios being considered is the emplacement of hundreds or thousands

of nuclear battle stations in outer space. The nuclear bombs on these stations would be detonated to produce the beams to destroy missiles. No one has yet examined the effect on life of large numbers of nuclear explosions in outer space.

But the nuclear or non-nuclear character of the weapons is beside the point. The question is: Will Star Wars prevent a nuclear war or increase the danger of one?

Reagan says that a Star Wars system would replace "mutually assured destruction" with "mutually assured survival." That sounds good to me.

The Soviet Union and the United States are roughly equal in military strength. The Soviets lead in some areas and the U.S. in others, but the general military situation is one of strategic parity. "Mutually assured destruction" (MAD) means that, because each side has the capability of responding to any nuclear attack by launching a devastating retaliatory strike, neither side would risk starting a war by launching a first strike.

MAD is certainly not our ideal, but there are only two alternatives to it: either continue developing new weapons and weapons systems, or negotiated agreements to disarm.

Strategic parity is now a permanent feature of U.S.-Soviet relations. Any attempt by the Reagan Administration to achieve military superiority will force the Soviets to enhance their military force to maintain parity. That military balance was the basis for, and was embodied in, the 1972 ABM Treaty, the SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation) treaty and the SALT II treaty.

The understanding was that neither side would seek to develop a nuclear defense, because that would automatically change the balance of military power. Right now neither side can strike first and expect to "win," because of the vast numbers of missiles on the other side. But if the U.S. were to develop a defense against Soviet missiles, the U.S. might launch a first strike and rely on its defense to ward off a Soviet retaliatory strike.

Once nuclear defenses become part of the strategy of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, a verifiable strategic parity would be much harder to maintain. If the U.S. develops a Star Wars defense, the Soviet Union would be forced to enhance its ability to overcome the defense to ensure that the U.S. would not launch a nuclear first strike. A qualitative and quantitative increase in the arms race would result, pushing humanity closer to the edge of nuclear annihilation.

That's why nuclear defenses were outlawed under the ABM treaty. They would undermine the strategic parity that exists and heighten the danger of a first strike.

So, although Reagan talks about "mutually assured survival," Star Wars is really an attempt to break that strategic parity and gain a nuclear first-strike advantage for the U.S.

Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger let the cat out of the bag when he stated, "If we can get a system which is effective and which we know can render their weapons impotent, we could be back in a situation we were in, for example, when we were the only nation with a nuclear weapon."

A nuclear shield for the nuclear sword.

Remember that when Reagan came into office he said that a U.S. nuclear war against the Soviet Union is "winnable." That's the philosophy of the ultra-Right nuclear maniacs. All the explaining away that took place after that remark couldn't wash away the horror felt by most of the rest of the world.

There's no reason to believe that Reagan has changed his mind. He's still looking for a way to win a nuclear war. He thinks Star Wars may be the answer.

What's wrong with conducting research on Star Wars weapons? Research doesn't hurt, and there's no way to verify a ban on research. Besides, the Soviets are doing it.

The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, signed by the United States and the Soviet Union, allows laboratory research on nuclear missile defenses, but prohibits research outside

the laboratory. Laboratory research was allowed to prevent one side from gaining a technological advantage. Both countries have been conducting "low-level" laboratory research over the years.

The Reagan Administration tried to get around the prohibition on non-laboratory research by claiming that the research it is conducting does not violate the treaty. But recently it was forced to admit that the Star Wars program is a direct violation of the ABM treaty. Some Administration officials, like Paul Nitze, have stated that the Reagan Administration may break the treaty so it can continue its Star Wars program.

After all the unproven charges by Administration officials that the Soviets have violated past treaties (and therefore negotiating new treaties with them is a waste of time), it now becomes clear that the Reagan Administration has every intention not only of violating, but of breaking one of the most important arms control agreements of the post-World War II era.

That's not surprising. Since the end of World War II, Ronald Reagan has opposed every arms control agreement signed by the U.S. (even in opposition to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who have supported arms control as enhancing the military security of this country).

To cover its tracks, the Reagan Administration is now charging that the Soviets are violating the ABM treaty and the U.S. is just trying to catch up. In January the Administration claimed that a radar station being built in Krasnoyarsk in Siberia is a violation of the ABM treaty. The Soviets responded that the station is designed to track objects in deep space, not missiles in the upper atmosphere. In any case, if the Reagan Administration was seriously concerned about the station it could raise its concern in the Standing Consultative Committee, the body set up by the U.S. and the Soviet Union to resolve questions of treaty compliance. Instead, it has used the issue as part of its campaign for Star Wars and to justify its *real* violations of the ABM treaty.

Research on Star Wars destabilizes the arms control process and undermines the confidence

necessary to negotiate. How can the Soviets take seriously Reagan's professed desire for peace when he continues to add new and deadlier weapons systems to the U.S. arsenal?

Star Wars research can't be done in a laboratory. There's no point in firing a tiny laser beam at a three-foot-high mock-up of a missile. Research with powerful lasers and giant mirrors and other Star Wars components has to be conducted in a setting as close to real as possible. In other words, in this area of technology, research is the same thing as testing and development.

Which is why the argument that a ban on research couldn't be verified doesn't hold water. Any violation of such a ban would be spotted by the extremely sophisticated monitoring systems of the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

The Reagan Administration says it will only conduct research on Star Wars weapons but would be willing to negotiate a treaty preventing their deployment. Estimates of the cost of Star Wars range from hundreds of billions to a trillion dollars. Can you imagine the U.S. government spending that kind of money (*our* money) and then deciding to drop the whole idea?

Because they recognize the danger of research on Star Wars, the Soviets have unilaterally halted their research program and have stated their desire to negotiate a treaty at Geneva that would include a ban on the militarization of outer space.

If Star Wars would only add to the arms race, why is the Reagan Administration pushing it? Who would benefit?

The Reagan Administration is pushing Star Wars because it wants to achieve nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union.

Star Wars would cost hundreds of billions, if not trillions of dollars. In the next five years alone, the Reagan Administration wants to spend \$26 billion.

Reagan is cutting billions of dollars out of social programs because "we can't afford it." We can't afford jobs, housing, education, Social Security, job training, mass transportation, aid

to women and children, aid to farmers, aid to students, aid to the cities.

But Star Wars is an aid program. Look at the list of military contractors lined up at the Pentagon with their hands out and dollar signs in their eyes: Hughes Aircraft Co., Lockheed, Martin Marietta, McDonnell Douglas, Rockwell International, TRW, etc.

Why do you say the Reagan Administration is trying to achieve nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union?

Look at the history of the arms race:

The U.S. was the first to develop, and the only government to use, the atomic bomb (twice, at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945). The Soviets developed the bomb in 1949.

The U.S. developed intercontinental strategic bombers (B-52's) outfitted with nuclear warheads in the mid-1950s. The Soviets developed theirs in the late 1950s.

The U.S. developed nuclear-powered submarines in the mid-1950s. The Soviets developed theirs in the late 1950s.

The U.S. built nuclear-powered aircraft carriers in the early 1960s. The Soviets never built any.

The U.S. developed multiple independently-targeted reentry vehicles (MIRV's—missiles with more than one warhead, each of which is targeted on a different site) in the late 1960s. The Soviets developed theirs in the mid-1970s.

The U.S. developed the neutron bomb in the late 1970s. The Soviets unilaterally decided not to develop their own.

The U.S. will begin deploying the B-1B bomber this year. The Soviets have no equivalent.

The U.S. has led in the development of increasingly accurate missiles (e.g., cruise, Trident D-5, Pershing II and MX missiles). Accurate missiles are not necessary against populated areas. The purpose of increasing the accuracy of its missiles became clear when the Pentagon targeted them against Soviet missile sites and other military installations. In other

words, these missiles could be used in a first strike against Soviet missiles, to prevent retaliation.

The goal of the most reactionary sectors of the U.S. ruling class has always been to destroy socialism. Anti-Communism, and especially anti-Sovietism, are a basic part of U.S. ruling-class ideology and policy because socialism is living proof that workers and farmers can run their own country, that there is an alternative to war, unemployment, racism and repression.

While Attorney General Palmer was hounding, intimidating, jailing and deporting thousands of socialists and trade union organizers in 1919, the U.S. government was sending troops to try to overthrow the Soviet government headed by the Communist Party, which had led the successful Bolshevik Revolution two years before.

During the 1930s, powerful voices in this country argued against joint U.S.-Soviet action to stop Hitler fascism, and instead encouraged Hitler to start a war against the Soviet Union.

The U.S. used its short-lived atomic monopoly after WWII as the cornerstone of its anti-Soviet policy. Pentagon documents from the late 1940s and early 1950s show that the U.S. had developed operational plans for starting and winning an atomic war against the Soviet Union. When the Soviets developed the atomic bomb, the U.S. was forced to change to a strategy of developing overwhelming nuclear superiority that would put it in a position either to blackmail the Soviet Union or to win in a nuclear confrontation.

That policy continues today. The National Security Council Memorandum and Defense Guidance for 1984-1988 instructs the Defense Department to "devise plans for defeating the Soviet Union at any level of conflict from insurgencies to nuclear war." The document says that "the first use of nuclear weapons offers the possibility of paralyzing if not obliterating an opponent," and stresses that U.S. forces "must prevail and be able to force the Soviet Union to seek earliest termination of hostilities on terms favorable to the United States."

That's why the Reagan Administration has

refused to pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. (The Soviets have already made that pledge.)

Aren't the Soviets trying to achieve superiority over us?

The U.S. ruling class began screaming "The Russians are coming!" after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. Sixty-eight years later, they're still yelling, and the Russians still haven't gotten here.

The Soviets have never been the first to develop new weapons or weapons systems. Every new weapons system has been introduced by the U.S.

Since the end of World War II the Soviet Union has made more than 100 proposals for peace and disarmament, almost all of which have been rejected by the U.S. The list of the recent Soviet peace initiatives includes:

- a proposal for the non-use of force in international relations;
- support for an immediate and comprehensive nuclear freeze;
- a pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons;
- a pledge not to develop a neutron bomb as long as the U.S. doesn't deploy the neutron bomb it has already developed, and a proposal to ban the production and stockpiling of neutron weapons;
- a proposal to ban all nuclear testing;
- a proposal to ban the manufacture of all nuclear weapons;
- a proposal to ban nuclear weapons from outer space;
- a unilateral moratorium on anti-satellite weapons research;
- numerous proposals to create nuclear-free zones in Europe, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and other areas;
- a proposal to ban the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and biological weapons;
- a proposal to ban the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction;

- and a proposal for a 10 per cent reduction in the military budget of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and the allocation of part of the money for aid to developing countries.

In addition, the nuclear arsenal of the Soviet Union is based on defense and retaliation, not on first strike. Soviet missiles are far less accurate than U.S. missiles and would be useless in a first strike on U.S. missile silos, because such an attack requires a near-direct hit to destroy the missiles. The Soviets have no forward military bases from which to attack the U.S.

Is it possible for the U.S. and the USSR to agree to disarm?

History proves that when both sides recognize the stakes involved, agreement is possible not just on arms control, but on a wide range of issues.

This year is the 40th anniversary of the defeat of fascism in World War II. One of the outstanding features of the anti-Hitler struggle was the cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States. Both sides understood that, despite their different ideologies and social systems, they had to cooperate militarily, economically and politically to stop Hitler fascism.

The 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the 1972 ABM Treaty, the SALT I and SALT II treaties, other arms control measures, as well as a host of scientific, cultural, social, educational and economic agreements testify to the possibility of U.S.-Soviet cooperation and peaceful relations.

The basis for every U.S.-Soviet agreement has been self-interest. Obviously, the people of the U.S. and the people of the Soviet Union have a self-interest in preventing nuclear war through arms control and disarmament. The Soviet government has given voice to its peoples' desire for peace through its innumerable peace proposals.

The Reagan Administration's actions go against the will of the majority of working people in this country, who want a cut in the military budget, serious negotiations at Geneva, and an end to the threat of nuclear war.

Who supports Star Wars, and who doesn't?

Among the supporters of Reagan's Star Wars are: the military-industrial complex; ultra-Right think tanks (the Heritage Foundation, the Hudson Institute, the Hoover Institute, Rand Corporation), ultra-Right elected officials (Representatives Gingrich, Kramer, Whitehurst; Senators Heflin, Wallop, McClure, Symms), the Moral Majority, and leading Republican Party strategists.

Among the opponents are: the United Electrical Workers of America; the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; the Congressional Black Caucus; the League of Women Voters; the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; the United States Student Association; the American Baptist Churches, USA; the Communist Party, USA; the Young Communist League, USA; the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign; the Federation of American Scientists; the Arms Control Association; SANE; the Center for Defense Information; the Conference of Catholic Bishops; Pax Christi; the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers; and Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Star Wars is opposed by a number of U.S. allies in NATO, including the governments of Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Greece and France. At their June meeting the foreign ministers of the NATO countries refused to endorse the plan, despite a plea from Washington. Even Reagan's staunchest friends, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of England and Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany, have hesitated to give unqualified support because of opposition to Star Wars in their own governments.

Isn't Star Wars on the agenda at the Geneva talks?

Yes. At their January meeting, Secretary of State George Shultz and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko agreed that the Geneva negotiations would address "a complex of questions concerning space and nuclear arms—both strategic and intermediate-range—with these questions considered and resolved in their interrelation-

(continued on p. 38)

Victory at Yale

YALE WORKERS' CLUB of the COMMUNIST PARTY

The recent organizing victory of Yale's workers, after years of struggle, including a ten-week strike, has implications far beyond the ivyied walls of academia and the 3,600 workers within them. The organizing drive which led to a successful contract spanned five difficult years for the labor movement. This period included the first election of Ronald Reagan, the smashing of PATCO, the wide acceptance of concessions, the conversion of the NLRB into an anti-labor board, the introduction of two-tier wage systems, and the reelection of Reagan. But the Yale victory reaffirms the value of class-struggle trade unionism, unity on an industrial basis, organizing the unorganized (including women and clerical workers) and proves the old adage that the best defense is a good offense.

This article discusses some reasons for the Yale workers' victory and its implications for the labor movement.

Description of work unit

Yale's non-academic employees include 1,000 service and maintenance workers, 2,600 clerical and technical workers (c&t's), and 1,500 managerial and professional employees (m&p's).

The service and maintenance workers are organized in Local 35, Federation of University Employees, affiliated with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, AFL-CIO (HERE). Local 35 came through four long strikes between 1969 and 1977, defending itself against union-busting tactics and achieving an excellent contract in the process. Nevertheless, the union's size has been shrinking in recent years in the face of subcontracting.

Before this organizing drive, the clerical and technical employees had a low level of union consciousness. Few of them had ever been in unions, and many c&t's accepted anti-working-class stereotypes which were encouraged by management, and had a negative image of the "blue collar" workers in Local 35. Further-

more, they saw the difficulties of union struggle, which were made clear by Local 35's 13-week strike in 1977.

The clerical and technical workers, 82 per cent women and 13 per cent Afro-American, come from a wide geographic area around New Haven. There is a huge variety of job classifications, ranging from stock clerk to accountant, secretary to library assistant, electronic technician to research assistant and lab aid. These varied working conditions made the organizing task even more difficult.

The family and financial situations are equally varied. Some workers are spouses of and know they will be at Yale only a few years. Some are working for a year after college before going on to graduate school. Others have been at Yale for 15-20 years without any real advancement. Approximately 30 per cent of the c&t workforce are heads of households, including many single mothers; in addition, there are also many part-time workers. Turnover is high, about 25 per cent per year.

The c&t's are spread throughout 200 buildings covering several square miles of New Haven. In addition, groups of workers are located in surrounding towns and throughout Connecticut. Although a few buildings have large concentrations of workers, many have 10, 5 or even 1. Even in large buildings, workers on different floors, or even neighboring offices, frequently did not know one another before the organizing drive began.

It seemed, at times, that the only thing the c&t's had in common was that they all worked for Yale University. In the end, that proved enough.

Return of class-struggle trade unionism

The initiative for the Local 34 organizing drive came from Local 35. This union had achieved perhaps the best contract in a U.S. private university in terms of wages and job security, but it had become clear that the strength of

its 1,000 members was insufficient to meet Yale's growing attacks. A decision had to be made: retreat from hard-fought positions, or go on the offense and organize the white collar workers. Standing alone, Local 35 was vulnerable; if it could organize the c&t's into a sister union, both could negotiate in strength and unity.

There had been earlier drives among Yale's clerical workers, but they had assumed that the c&t's would not be willing to associate with the organized service and maintenance workers in Local 35. In 1971, District 65 lost an election by a large margin. In 1977, an OPEIU effort received 45 per cent of the vote. In 1982, the UAW withdrew from an ongoing drive in favor of Local 34. None of these earlier drives committed the massive resources and emphasized the class-struggle approach of the HERE organizing drive.

Previous drives offered, sometimes explicitly, "no-risk" unionism. The argument went: "When we bargain with the university, we will start with what we have, and try to convince the University to give us more. There's no reason we should have to strike. Besides, if you don't like the contract, you can vote it down and vote out the union, you will have lost nothing."

This approach represented a lack of confidence in the workers' ability to understand their own self-interest; it also reflected illusions that the University would negotiate in a "reasonable" manner, just because the union won an election. It reflected "class collaboration" attitudes, based on the concept that management will cooperate with the union for their mutual benefit.

Even before the Local 34 organizing drive, the leadership of HERE had shown its commitment to organizing the unorganized. Back in 1973, the New Haven Local 217 of HERE hired four young organizers and extra office workers to undertake "the most aggressive organizing drive Connecticut has seen in many years in any industry." As a result, Local 217 grew from 440 members in 1973 to 3,000 today. The organizers who got their training in the Local 217 drive played a major role in the Yale campaign. Now, based on victories in Las Vegas and at Yale, the

HERE International has announced a drive which will send 40 organizers to Boston, Washington DC, Chicago and Orange County, California.

In 1980, HERE entered the fight to organize Yale's c&t's with a massive commitment of resources. On the average over the four-year struggle, there were six paid organizers on staff, plus help from others on loan from HERE and other local unions.

The drive was strongly backed by Edward Hanley, International president of HERE, and Director of Organization Vincent Sirabella. John Wilhelm, the New England Vice President of HERE and Local 35 Business Manager, headed the drive and became Local 34's chief negotiator.

From the start the Local 34 drive rejected the class collaboration concepts of earlier drives. The question of the workers' power was repeatedly emphasized. *Alone, anything can happen to us, but through a union we have the power to make Yale change. Yale is not going to give us better wages because they suddenly see the light. They will give us better wages because we have the power to make them give us better wages.*

From here, the next step was class solidarity. *We should associate ourselves with Local 35 because together we have more power to accomplish the things we all want.*

In workshops for the organizing committee before (and since) the union election, the class struggle nature of the drive was made clear. It was explained that the Yale Corporation (Yale's governing body) is run by rich and powerful men who are associated with the largest banks and corporations in the country. They hate the idea of workers having any say in how Yale will be run, and they fear the effect a successful union at Yale will have on workers everywhere.

Local 34's class-struggle approach was not restricted to rhetoric.

When the union filed for an election in January 1983, the University adopted stalling tactics which could have postponed an election indefinitely. The union leadership dismissed suggestions that hiring a hot-shot lawyer would

speed things up. We will get an election, they said, when we force Yale to agree to one.

To do this, a publicity campaign was organized which exposed Yale's stalling tactics. But more important, the workers themselves were organized around the "stalling" issue. Every day of the hearings, a different group of 15 rank-and-file workers took a personal day off work and traveled 50 miles to the labor board hearings in Hartford. Over the weeks, hundreds of workers witnessed Yale's obstructionism. They returned to work angry and determined. They talked about what they saw and urged their fellow workers to join the union and attend the hearings. Weak union members became stronger. The workers held protest meetings on their lunch hours to demand the stalling stop. After six weeks of hearings, Yale gave in, and an election date was agreed to.

The dialectic of class struggle came into play. Yale's stalling tactics heightened the organization and anger of the workers and this, in turn, made the election victory possible. Even so, the vote was close: the union won by only 39 out of 2,500 votes on May 18, 1983.

After the union's election victory, the workers had to elect a negotiating committee. At this time, and throughout the negotiating process, the theme of the union leadership was, "negotiations take place in the offices and the labs, not at the bargaining table."

While negotiations dragged out through 10, 20, 30 sessions with no progress, the union responded by organizing workers' actions. Groups of workers marched into their supervisors' offices to protest the lack of progress in negotiations. Mass protest meetings were held at lunch time. In February 1984, close to 1,000 c&t's participated in a candlelight vigil in front of Yale President Giamatti's house. Finally, as a March 26 strike deadline neared, over 1,500 c&t's came to work wearing bright red buttons declaring, "I don't want to strike. . . . But I will!" In the face of this determination, Yale agreed to a partial contract, which allowed the union to build its strength while negotiations continued through the summer.

Thus, throughout negotiations the empha-

sis was on the power of the workers as an organized force. This continued during the strike, which began in September 1984 and, perhaps most important, is continuing today as the union moves to consolidate its victory.

Local 34 handles grievances in the same spirit. The goal is to have one steward in every office or lab, or about 500 stewards for 2,600 workers. The union constantly emphasizes that grievances will be won not merely by knowing the contract, but by organizing the workers in support of the issues. In this way, not only can the contract be enforced, but it can also be extended. For example, in a department which had no Afro-American workers among its 85 c&t's, an angry delegation of stewards forced the hiring of two Black women who had been laid off from Yale.

The class struggle approach is again seen in the continuing effort to organize the unorganized. The managerial and professional (m&p) workers at Yale are still unorganized. Under current labor law, it would be almost impossible to have an election for this group of workers. The response of Local 34 organizers to this situation is, "If we can organize the great majority of m&p's, we don't need an election. We can go to Yale and demand recognition. If they refuse, we can threaten a recognition strike, now backed by Locals 34 and 35."

On the picket line

When, in September 1984, it became clear that Yale was unwilling to come to a fair settlement, and was unwilling to agree to any form of arbitration, the members of Local 34 voted to strike. Out of 2,600 c&t's, the overwhelming majority of union members, and a number of non-members, joined the strike. Over 1,500 c&t's were out, joined by 95 per cent of the 1,000 members of Local 35.

Before the strike, the union signed people up for picket duty on three different shifts at over 100 different locations.

These picket lines played a vital role in the strike. While it was impossible to cover every entrance to every building, the picket lines stopped or delayed many deliveries and serv-

ices. More important, they were a constant reminder to students, faculty and administration at Yale that business was not as usual. They also served as a constant reminder to the residents of New Haven, who passed dozens of picket lines whenever they traveled through downtown New Haven.

The picket lines played an equally vital role as the main source of organization and communication. Picket captains had meetings almost daily, and were able to keep their lines informed of developments in negotiations and around the campus, and to mobilize them for important actions. The picket line became the basic unit for organizing aid to strikers facing particular difficulty. Picketers were also involved in maintaining communication with strikers who were not picketing, and trying to involve them in activity. More than one striker agreed to come by the picket line "for a few minutes" and ended up becoming a regular picketer or even a picket captain.

The strength and solidity of the strike surprised even the union organizers. Although almost all were completely new to unionism, only 200 strikers returned to work over the 10 weeks of the strike, despite pressure from creditors, managers and (sometimes) family members.

Local 35's support was both vital and inspirational. The membership was almost unanimous in respecting Local 34's picket line, despite numerous threats from the University.

This support was repaid in January, when Local 35's contract expired. Following their own 10-week strike, 1,300 Local 34 members signed a letter promising to respect Local 35's picket lines should they find it necessary to strike.

Community and labor support

When the c&t's struck in September 1984, support came pouring in from all sectors of the labor movement, the local community, students and faculty, not only at Yale but from other universities as well.

Area unions mobilized their members for support rallies before and during the strike. Before the union election, local unions combed their lists for members with relatives at Yale, to

persuade them to vote for the union. As the strike loomed, financial support poured in, and there was even discussion in the New Haven Central Labor Council of calling a general strike if it would help the Yale workers.

The national labor movement also pitched in, with letter and donations coming from around the country. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland spoke at a support rally early in the strike, endorsing the concept of equal pay for work of comparable worth. Unionists from the whole Northeast converged on New Haven in December 1984 for a support rally.

Local support was not confined to the labor movement. In the country's seventh poorest city, Yale University is widely recognized as a parasite, occupying prime downtown land, consuming services, but paying no taxes. One New Haven alderman referred to the Yale Corporation as a bunch of absentee slumlords.

Support from the local community took many forms. The New Haven Board of Aldermen passed a strong resolution calling for a settlement. The Association of New Haven Clergy, representing the city's Black clergy, met with Yale's president, and followed up with a prayer meeting and press conference for a settlement. Local bakeries sent their products to the picket lines every day of the strike. And horns blared continuously as residents expressed support as they drove past the picket lines around town.

The overwhelming percentage of women in the union, their leadership in the rank-and-file committees, and the emphasis by union organizers on the issue of comparable worth all struck a special chord of support in women's organizations both locally and nationally. Judith Goldsmith, president of NOW, spoke at a support rally at the same time as Reagan's advisors brought the issue to national attention by denouncing comparable worth as "looney tunes."

The union put major emphasis on developing support from the Yale community, including students, faculty, m&p's parents and alumni. This support directly affected the operation of the University. Nearly every student had to go off campus for one of the 500-plus classes which had been relocated because fac-

ulty and students refused to cross picket lines. There were consistent student support rallies and actions, and some students withheld tuition for the second semester at the risk of being dropped from school. A three-day moratorium on classes heightened student and faculty participation in demanding a negotiated settlement.

Campus organizing spread from Yale to other universities, and by the time a settlement was reached, there were support groups on at least 60 campuses from Boston to Ohio. The strike was watched with special interest by the clerical organizing drive at Columbia, and the Yale settlement was followed quickly by recognition of the union there.

The Communist Party, through the work of its Yale Workers' Club, the *Daily World*, and support from the Party and its friends in the labor movement throughout the Northeast, played a role in many aspects of community and labor support. The 1,000 copies of the *Daily World* distributed weekly during the strike came to be looked for and welcomed on the picket lines. They helped many workers recognize some of the most important aspects of the struggle: the unity between Local 34 and 35, the strong national and local support movements, and the national and even international significance of their struggle.

The important role of the *Daily World* was reflected in the enthusiastic response of Yale workers to a slide show shortly after the strike settlement. The show, billed as a fundraiser for the Daily World Committee, consisted of photographs chosen to illustrate the high points of the strike, taken by a volunteer *Daily World* photographer who is a member of Local 34.

Union democracy

From the start, Local 34 emphasized that participation of the workers was essential.

Union organizers insisted that union supporters had to talk to their coworkers. There was a lot of resistance to this: It meant identifying with the union before coworkers and supervisor, and it meant standing up for one's beliefs.

This approach paid off. The "outside agita-

tor" image could not stand up when, instead of receiving a leaflet from a union organizer, c&t's were invited to lunch by their coworkers to discuss the union. Union supporters learned that if they wanted a union, they would have to run it themselves. And hundreds of workers, mostly women, for the first time in their lives took an active part in determining their future.

In the fall of 1981, the union published the names of 435 Yale c&t's on a statement of support for the union entitled "Standing Together." The signers, proud to have taken a stand, formed the core of what was to become the Local 34 contract committee: solid union supporters who would do union work on the job, in their offices and labs.

In addition to the contract committee, there was a steering committee. This group, eventually growing to about 140 workers, met after work once a week in each of the three major geographic areas of Yale. It was the main place for educating the emerging union rank-and-file leadership and implementing union programs.

Finally, there was the "rank-and-file staff" (or simply "the staff"), a body of 60 to 75 workers who met once a week on a campus-wide basis, and more frequently in informal area groups. In this body, the full-time organizers discussed all programs, and staff members took responsibility for organizing work in specific departments.

These bodies were not elected. In practice, any worker who wanted to could be on the contract committee, and was likely to be drafted onto the steering committee, and then the staff if he/she showed any sign of willingness and ability to work. The only requirement was to put in the time organizing on the job, making phone calls and house visits at night, and attending meetings.

From union program to union contract

The great emphasis on broad membership involvement continued after the union's election victory, when a negotiating platform was constructed. Meetings were held in every department, where all c&t's, both union members and nonmembers, were invited to make sugges-

tions. There were intense discussions over what the salary structure should be like, what kind of seniority system was best, etc. The proposals were submitted to John Wilhelm, Local 34's chief negotiator, who combined them into a draft proposal. This was circulated to the membership, and a revised draft was issued based on the discussion.

Finally, a membership meeting was held to approve the proposals. While the issues were discussed and a consensus reached in advance, members were urged to attend the meeting to show the Yale administration that the demands had the backing of the entire workforce. Before the meeting, the steering committee asked members to sign up to attend the meeting after work. Contract committee members were responsible for carpooling with their coworkers, so that no one got "lost" on the way to the meeting.

The Local 34 contract—as it was finally ratified on January 22, 1985, after 15 months of negotiations and 10 weeks on strike—reflected all of the demands of the membership and was considered a victory by everyone involved. There were substantial wage gains and a complete overhaul of the promotion and transfer and job security provisions, along with a dental plan, substantial increases in pensions and medical care for retirees, and numerous other gains.

The Local 35 contract, signed six days later, also reflected substantial gains. In previous years, the University was forced to yield financial improvements with one hand, while they eroded the strength of the bargaining unit with the other. This will be a thing of the past, because there are now 2,800 union workers at Yale, instead of 1,000, who have shown their willingness to strike, if necessary, to reach a fair contract.

Structure for the future

With the contract signed, Local 34 has turned to organizing for the future. Its style of work is institutionalized in a new set of bylaws, approved by the membership on April 25th.

There are six full-time staff members, six of-

ficers, three trustees, and a 50-member executive board, all drawn from the ranks of Yale workers. These 65 people correspond, in function and largely in person, to the old rank-and-file staff. The contract provides for department stewards, averaging about 1 for every 25 workers, who correspond to the old steering committee, and for ordinary stewards in every "work unit," corresponding to the old contract committee.

The bylaws specify duties for the officers, but emphasize that their main job is to organize:

To fulfill its purposes, the Union requires a clear program, rooted in the needs of the members and the situation confronting members at any time. *The major responsibility of the Union leadership is the planning of such programs and the organization of the membership to carry them out.* (Emphasis added.)

An indication of the direction of the new union's program is given in the section of the bylaws outlining the purpose of Local 34. In addition to promoting the interests of the members of Local 34, the bylaws call for working with Local 35, with students, faculty and the rest of the Yale and New Haven communities and the labor movement to "advance the interests of workers generally and working women in particular, to repay in full measure the solidarity of the labor movement and the community which helped give birth to Local 34."

The vision of Local 34's leadership for an activist union with membership involvement and control, and strong ties to the labor movement and the community, is inspiring, and the progress to date impressive.

The struggle against discrimination

Before the Local 34 organizing drive, most of the c&t's had never been in a union and never been on strike. The experience opened a new world view for many of them. An identification with brothers and sisters in the broader labor movement and with their struggles began to grow. This class consciousness was fostered in particular by the staunch refusal of Local 35 members to cross the lines, although their own contract carried no protection for supporting a

strike by another union in this manner.

The experience on the picket line strengthened class unity through a new understanding by many white c&t's of the divisive role of racism, and its role in generating superprofits for the bosses. Before the strike, a union study showed that women at Yale average \$1,000 per year less than men, and Afro-American workers make \$1,000 less than the average. This linked the concepts of comparable worth and affirmative action as methods of ending discrimination. While Local 34's demands did not include an explicit affirmative action clause, demands were incorporated with the specific goal of closing the gap. Most significant were the upgrading of the lowest job classification and reevaluation of jobs. Local 35 won explicit provisions for affirmative action in hiring.

The union adopted methods of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, with massive civil disobedience demonstrations involving hundreds of union members and their families as well as support from Reverend Ralph Abernathy and Bayard Rustin. The first "witness for equality," involving the arrest of over 100 strikers in front of Yale President Giamatti's home, was a major step in the development of most of the participants.

A Black Caucus, formed during the strike, played a decisive role in winning active support for Local 34's battle from Afro-American student and community organizations. As well, the caucus served to bring Black union members into leadership during the strike. With no Afro-American paid organizers, few Black rank-and-file staff members and a slowness to address the University's racism through public contract demands, the union was not initially seen as fighting for all the workers. The results of the strike show that objectively, those measures which served to address the inequities against Black workers pushed the whole union forward. The strike experience, including the picket lines, meetings, a large Christmas Party, victory celebrations, and smaller social gatherings also served to foster new social and personal relations between white and Black union members.

A major challenge for the fledgling union

will be to build on these conditions to insure full participation by Black members at every level and to develop key demands in regard to hiring, training, promotion, job security and working conditions that will end inequalities in every area. It will be especially important to address the fact that only 13 per cent of c&t's are Black, while Afro-Americans constitute more than one-third of New Haven's population.

Consciousness raised

The experience of economic victory has carried over into a heightened awareness and involvement in political struggle by the membership of Local 34. Although this has never been initiated by the union organizers from HERE, it follows directly from the tactics they employed during the organizing drive and strike, and from the recognition that the union needed support from other members of the university community, other unions and from various political forces in the surrounding community.

Union members were in the front row of an anti-apartheid march from the New Haven Green to the headquarters of the Yale Corporation to demand divestment from South Africa. Contingents from Local 34 marched behind the union banner in the mass demonstrations in Washington on August 27, 1983, and April 20, 1985, and led the New Haven Labor Day parade in September 1984. Local 34 members participated in a recent delegation of New Haven area trade unionists who were hosted by the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions in the Soviet Union.

Conclusions

The long struggle at Yale has shown that it is possible to organize unorganized workers; that it is possible to organize white collar workers; it is possible to organize women workers. It is possible to organize these workers in a militant organization, and it is possible to win substantial victories against a powerful foe. Locally, the Greater New Haven Central Labor Council is discussing a major area-organizing drive based on the success at Yale.

There are many lessons to be learned from this victory. Standing out is the vital importance of unity. Unity within Local 34; unity between Local 34 and Local 35; solidarity with the rest of the labor movement; support from the Yale and New Haven communities; support from women's, civil rights, peace and other progressive organizations: all reflected a wide recognition of the importance of the Yale workers' struggle and played a vital role in its success.

Objectively, the key ingredients were class struggle and class solidarity. The events at Yale came to be seen as an important part of a struggle by the working class to break away from the setbacks of recent years and to go on the offensive. This struggle requires the solidarity of all who are affected by it.

Star Wars (continued from p. 30)

ship." In addition, they agreed that the "objective of the negotiations will be to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on earth, and at strengthening strategic stability."

Now the Reagan Administration has taken the position that Star Wars is not negotiable and that the Soviets must agree to deep cuts in their strategic missile system if the talks are to succeed.

Reagan's position is designed to derail the Geneva talks. He wants the Soviets to say "uncle" and disarm while he continues his nuclear buildup. He is using the talks as a cover for expanding the arms race into outer space. If the Soviets won't agree to this (and no one concerned about peace would), Reagan wants to use the failure of the Geneva talks as an excuse for going ahead with his nuclear buildup.

But there's no alternative to dialogue and disarmament. The people of our country, and the people of the world, want peace.

Peace can not be secured by sending the arms race into outer space. It can only be secured by arms control and disarmament. The only way to achieve arms control is through negotiation based on the recognition and acceptance of strategic parity and the legitimate secu-

The new union recognizes that the struggle goes far beyond a single contract, or even contracts to be gained in the future. To quote from its victory statement:

Nationally, our success will provide hope to millions of others resisting the antiworker offensive by management today, and especially to working women and minorities determined to end economic discrimination in America.

The hope provided is demonstrated by the dozens of invitations Local 34 has received to speak to unions and unorganized workers. Future historians may record the Yale victory as one of the first harbingers of the great labor upsurge of the 1980s. □

rity needs of each side.

We must prevent the Reagan Administration from turning the heavens into the gateway to Hell!

We offer this emergency program:

1) Write and call your senator and representative to demand: a moratorium on all space-based weapons research and no funding for Star Wars.

2) Demand that the Reagan Administration abide by its treaty commitments, especially the 1972 ABM treaty prohibiting the development of nuclear defense systems.

3 Urge your organization, union, church to pass resolutions in opposition to Star Wars and in favor of serious negotiations at Geneva. Get your city council to memorialize Congress to stop Star Wars.

4) Demand that the billions of dollars earmarked for Star Wars be spent on providing jobs to the jobless, homes to the homeless, food to the hungry, and aid to those in need.

5) The struggle against Star Wars is an important aspect of the struggle to defeat Reaganism. We urge all those who are a part of the anti-Reagan fightback to put the defeat of Star Wars on their agendas. □

In the Struggle Always

Gus Hall, *Fighting Racism*, International Publishers, New York, 1985, 312 pp., cloth \$14, paper \$4.95.

The body and soul of a big part of humanity are deprived of life's satisfactions and weighted with unequal burdens, pain and humiliation as a consequence of *racism*.

The Afro-American people, throughout their whole history in our country, have been the especially targeted victims of racist abuse and discrimination. The entire working class and much of the nation have suffered great material and spiritual loss as a consequence.

Gus Hall writes that:

Racism is social backwardness based on prejudice, bigotry and ignorance, but there is more to racism . . . Racism is a special Big Business tool for preventing the unity of the working class and the unity of people in struggle against state monopoly capitalism. (P. 4.)

Indeed, racism is a mechanism to foster color and racial prejudices, and to extract extra profits from the exploitation of the color-abused and the color-"preferred" toilers, though in unequal measure.

In fighting racism we are not dealing with a skin-deep prejudice. We are confronting a deadly weapon in the hands of our implacable enemy in the class struggle. This ideological weapon is designed to pollute the minds of the masses and divert them from the path of reason, the path of united

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JAMES E. JACKSON

struggle against the common enemy.

The myths of white supremacy, chauvinism and racism are often palmed off on white workers in lieu of hard cash. But the masses of white workers today are not about to sell the measure of class strength that comes of Black and white unity for some Confederate money that won't spend. There is widespread recognition that racism is "fool's gold" for the working class and can only buy a white worker a seat on the back of a bus going in the wrong direction. Racism is a hole in the bottom of the boat that must be plugged lest all aboard go under.

The working class is coming to conclude that racism is the moral equivalent of scabbing. Gus Hall observes that "most workers have always despised scabbing." He shows to those white workers who need the showing that—

Gaining an advantage from discrimination is like scabbing. It sacrifices the interests of the whole class for the momentary, individual, selfish gain. We need to build up a tradition against benefiting from racial discrimination that is as strong as the tradition against scabbing. (P. 85.)

In this book, Gus Hall takes the full measure of racism—"the nation's most dangerous pollutant" and predator against working-class and people's democratic unity. He approaches his task with a confidence and optimism based upon a solid grasp of the historical background of the current phase of the struggle, and rich personal experience as a partisan in the struggle for

equality and against racism in its brutal and subtle manifestations.

Gus Hall invokes appropriate references to the scientific formulations of Lenin, Marx and Engels on various aspects of the meaning and struggle for the solution of the nationality question, for social progress and for the victory of the working-class goal of socialist society.

The author tells us that "the thoughts in this book are based on and reflect the collective thoughts of our Party, the Communist Party, USA." Referring now and again to notable Party resolutions and other significant works, Gus Hall, general secretary of the Party, unfolds with clarity and conviction the winning strategy of the Communist Party for conducting an effective mass struggle against racism.

Combat against racism is an imperative prelude to working-class victory. And, correspondingly, working peoples' victory over state monopoly capitalism is a precondition for final emancipation of the peoples of our country suffering from racial and national discrimination, from all manner of racism and inequities.

When the Communist Party speaks in a book-length statement through its general secretary on this question of *fighting racism*, a subject which has seized our country for the two centuries of its life, people of social responsibility, whatever their station or political commitment, are obliged to listen. This work is of special, challenging importance to the rank and file of labor and the most forward-looking forces in the leadership of the trade unions.

Gus Hall's *Fighting Racism*

makes a statement vital to the solutions of all problems related to the people's progress.

He shows the bonds between the needed renewal of the thrust for freedom from the entangling backwardness of racism and a new social/political initiative of the working class for the historic advancement of the nation. He demonstrates its connection with the securing of peace, with the ending of the arms race on earth and the banning of weapons from space.

The elimination of racism, this terrible hobble on the feet of social progress in our nation, will not come about by patience and wishing. It must be fought for, and the struggle must be related to and made a natural part of all good and needful causes, above all that of the working-class struggle. In the words of Gus Hall:

Those who can not see the work-

ing class as the major force in the struggle for social progress can not see the possibilities of winning the struggle against racism either.

The struggle against racism leads to a struggle against opportunism . . . wherever there is opportunism there is bound to be racism—and wherever there is racism there is opportunism. (P. 31.)

Furthermore, Hall writes:

As crisis contradictions sharpen, racist pressures increase. Yet, this is but one aspect of the dialectic. The other—and the more important for us—is that this sharpening of contradictions gives rise to struggles which exert pressure for greater unity, which in turn helps to create conditions in which the fight against racist pressure can be more successfully overcome. (P. 64.)

Here is a sourcebook of tactical leads for advancing the front of the struggle of the millions who are

daily engaged in confrontation with the ideological antagonist of people's democratic and working-class progress and enlightenment. In this book the particular fight is related to and illuminated by the science which gives guidance to the strategic cause of our epoch, the universal cause of the emancipation of the multinational working class, the leading social force in the liberation of the peoples from all manner of oppression, exploitation and discrimination.

This book is a banner and a weapon for reaching out to the hands and into the minds of millions, for waging a new level of winning struggle against racism for the sake of justice, democracy and social advancement, for realizing a further strengthening of the international and interracial unity of the working class. □

MARSHALL (continued from page 16)

The Draft Program comes just after the AFL-CIO's *Report on the Changing Situation of the Workers and Their Unions*. We disagree with many of the ideas of that report, but we welcome the discussion. It shows that even in the top levels of the labor movement there is a growing awareness of the need for changes. We also know that the fresh winds blowing in the labor movement have their source in the ranks.

What we are developing in the Trade Union Program is an important tool for the Party. It is a tool to build the Party in the labor movement.

This program is a guide to action for Party trade unionists, but we have always said that it would be a narrow view to see it as an inner-Party document. The program can be an important part of building the Left in labor. Many of the ideas in this program will become the property of the labor movement; they will help move workers to action.

We need open forums on the draft. We need to mail it to labor leaders. We need to take it into

labor temples and union offices for on-the-spot discussions. We need to hand it out at plant gates to unorganized as well as organized workers. District labor secretaries and trade union commissions have important work to do with the draft.

It would also be a narrow view to discuss the draft only with shop clubs or trade unionists in the Party. It should be discussed in all clubs with a view to strengthening our ties to the labor movement. The draft can be an important tool for developing ties and coalitions between labor and the Afro-American and other oppressed peoples. The program points out the changes taking place in labor and the positive trends towards class consciousness and unity.

The draft needs amplification. We need articles and fuller development of many of the ideas in the program. The *Daily World* and *Political Affairs* have both said they will open their pages for the widest discussion. □

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