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Socialism in
ONE WORLD

ORGANIZED LABOR IN BRAZIL:

The Struggle Continues

by Stanley Gacek

Only a few months ago, President Fernando Collor de Mello's stringent economic package appeared to have paralyzed the Brazilian labor movement. Due in part to the actions of individual unions and the voice of organized labor, however, Collor's economic plan has begun to unravel and his popularity has fallen.

Shortly after his March, 1990 inauguration, Collor enjoyed a public approval rating of well over 70 percent. This figure partially reflected the warm welcome Brazilians traditionally extend to politicians promising political stability and economic prosperity. But his economic program came as a shock to many who had been lulled by his vague neoliberal campaign rhetoric. On March 16, he froze four-fifths of Brazilians savings in a draconian effort to halt hyperinflation.

It also appeared that Collor had effectively outflanked the left and bewildered some on the right. Ironically, he had stolen certain planks from the PT's (Worker's Party) platform. For example, his promises to tax the rich were points that PT candidate Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva had emphasized during the 1989 presidential campaign. A few on the conservative side, such as rightwing guru Roberto Campos, excoriated the Collor administration for seizing private property by means of the savings freeze. (Brazilian magazine magnate Roberto Civita quipped that if Lula had tried the same thing, he would have been put on the first plane to Cuba.) But it also came as no surprise that many of Brazil's wealthiest citizens were tipped off ahead of time and managed to protect their assets.

Collor's new wage and price policy pushed Brazilian workers to the wall. According to the 1989 wage law, there were to be monthly salary increases based on hikes in the consumer price index. The Collor plan, however, initially "prefixed" wages and prices, giving workers a 5 percent wage once every three months. In spite of Collor's claims that inflation had fallen to zero percent for April, 1990, the Interunion Department of Statistics and Socio-Economic Studies (DIEESE) argued that real inflation that

month was somewhere around 25 percent, with a minimum wage equivalent to only 25 percent of its real worth in 1940.

Although Collor's wage and price policy was both illegal and unconstitutional, the Brazilian judiciary simply ran away from the controversy. A majority of the

Collor also announced that he would be discharging 360,000 public employees.

Although the CUT did not call for a general strike during the first sixty days of the Collor administration, several individual unions decided to assume their risk. Overcoming their initial shock over the

Rick Reinhard / Impact Visuals



Labor party candidate (PT), Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Collor plan, many workers took to the streets in order to recover from the overwhelming losses in real wages (215 percent since January, in many cases) and to oppose the government's threats of discharge resulting from reorganization or privatization. Metalworkers, teachers, longshormen, bankworkers, and migrant cane workers walked off their jobs by the thousands.

The strikers managed to put enormous pressure on both industry and the government. After a fifty-day stoppage, the Ford Motor Company agreed to give the Sao Bernardo Metalworkers Union a total wage increase of 82

percent. In June, the national port workers, faced with massive layoffs following the elimination of the state port authority, went

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Federal Supreme Court justices announced that they would take "under advisement" a petition to enjoin Collor's measures. The Congress, preoccupied with Collor's stellar popularity ratings and the recent October elections, authorized the personal and corporate savings freeze on April 11.

Strikes on the Rise

The Brazilian labor movement, including the militant, leftwing CUT (Single Central of Workers), was justifiably intimidated only six months ago. Both the CUT and the more conservative, pro-corporatist CGU (General Confederation of Workers) openly criticized the Collor plan, but they did not call for a nationwide, general strike. In March, such an action appeared politically untenable and economically suicidal given the impending recession. The Mannesmann Steel Company of Minas Gerais had already "persuaded" its workers (with the threat of permanent layoff) to accept a 30 percent reduction in both hours and pay, over the protests of the union's leadership. In addition to threats of retrenchment in the private sector,

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Janie Higgins



Allende Mourned. This time Chileans honored former Socialist President Salvador Allende in a huge public funeral, despite the wishes of former dictator (and still army commander) Augusto Pinochet. The Alameda Bernardo O'Higgins, Santiago's largest boulevard, was lined full with people waving Socialist and Chilean flags as the funeral procession moved by. Despite having been a political adversary of Allende's, Christian Democratic President Patricio Aylwin's government helped the Allende family organize the funeral. In another swipe at Pinochet's regime, Aylwin honored the estimated 2 thousand people killed in the aftermath of the 1973 coup whose remains have not been returned to their families, and thus urged Chileans to "bury violence and intolerance forever."

Still North, Still South, Still Waiting. Events in Eastern Europe and now the Middle East may have further obscured the worsening socio-economic plight of Third World countries. Even with the cold war over, the Bush-league U.S. government is afraid of increasing its paltry aid to the poorest countries, mostly African, for fear of being forced to reduce aid to other "deserving" recipients. Since 1981, the U.S. and other industrialized nations have

not even lived up to their pledge to provide an amount equal to 15 one hundredths of 1 percent of their economic output as aid to the poorest nations. Naturally Sweden and other Scandinavian countries along with the Netherlands already provide more than that amount. In 1989, the U.S., Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Australia and Western Europe gave the poorest nations \$12 billion, which unless it increases to \$36 billion in current dollars by the year 2000, will not make a tangible difference in living standards. According to French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, these countries "will never escape from their vicious circle of misery...without outside support." In typical Bushian fashion, vagueness characterized the U.S. response: promise an increase without setting a specific target. Maybe its time to forgo a nuclear sub or bomber...but then again, that might be too specific or the Pentagon too deserving.

Inequality Increases at Home, Too. Not only are poor countries poorer and the U.S. less competitive internationally as a result of Reagan-Bush economic policies, a jump in unequal pay for the same work in the U.S. has created enormous new disparities. Most striking, the lowest paid workers got 29.2 percent less in 1987 than they got in 1970. We all know about the gender gap in wages, the disparity in average earnings between whites and blacks and hispanics, but now, according to the New York Times, economists are really worried: men of the same age and education are earning vastly different salaries (such as a mechanic at Pan Am earning \$16/hour, while at American Airlines, the same

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On the Cover: Prague, Czechoslovakia.

Photo by Henrik Saxgren / 2 Maj / Impact Visuals.

All photos inside are by Donna Binder / Impact Visuals
unless otherwise indicated.

job, same seniority earns \$21/hour). According to these economists, this new 80s-style inequality comes from the proliferation of small companies and a weakening of workplace mores which would have in the past inhibited a Michael Milken from getting (let alone keeping) \$550 million. Other analysts emphasize the impact of capital's attack on unions, especially the effects of deregulation and two-tier wage agreements. According to Harvard economist Rich-

ard Freeman, "the wage spread means [many workers] no longer make it into the middle class. And they are working just as hard as people did 30 years ago." The bottom line is more people who earn less. Sounds like its time for increased unionization, truly progressive taxation, expanded civil rights protections, and job training; in other words, less Republicanism and more Democrats committed to democratic left politics. Maybe voters will pleasantly surprise us.

DSAction

Resources

DSA has published a new giveaway brochure, "Health Care for People Not for Profit: The Need for a National Health Care System." Over 1000 copies were distributed during the American Public Health Association annual meeting in New York City, September 30 - October 3, and hundreds more were given out at the public event held during the Socialist International Council Meeting on October 9th. The brochure makes DSA's argument for fundamental reform of the U.S. health care system and includes quotations from DSA Honorary Chair and long-time health care analyst/activist Barbara Ehrenreich, DSA Vice-Chair Congressman Ronald Dellums, Gerry Hudson, Vice-President of Drug, Hospital, and Health Care Employees Union Local 1199, Linnea Capps, M.D., Chair of APHA Socialist Caucus, and political activist Ron Sable, M.D. Copies of the brochure can be obtained from the DSA National Office, 15 Dutch Street, Suite 500, New York, NY 10038, (212) 962-0390.

Also as part of DSA's campaign for a national health care system, new buttons are available with the message, "Health Care for People, Not for Profit. Democratic Socialists of America." These attractive black on purple square buttons not only deliver a socialist message, they enhance any wardrobe! For bulk orders, contact the DSA National Office.

"Socialism and Sexuality" is the quarterly newsletter and discussion bulletin of the DSA Youth Section's Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Caucus focussing on issues of concern to those communities. A recent issue included articles on international lesbian and gay and bisexual activism organized through IUSY, the International Union of Socialist Youth. For subscriptions contact R.J. Hinde, "Socialism and Sexuality," c/o Chicago DSA, 1608 N. Milwaukee #403, Chicago, IL 60647.

The DSA Environmental Commission publishes the "Ecosocialist Review," which provides insightful analysis and reportage for

environmental activists. This socialist perspective combines red/green politics and is available for \$8/yr. Contact J. Hughes, Ed., c/o Chicago DSA.

Collector's Item

Willy Brandt, President of the Socialist International, got his and you too can get a commemorative sweatshirt from the recent Socialist International Council meeting. Only 144 of these white sweatshirts were printed with the distinctive fist and rose over the American flag on the front with "Democratic Socialists of America" underneath and with the message on the back, "The So-

Dinah Leventhal



Ehrenreich presents socialist souvenir.

cialist International Discovers America, Columbus Day '90, New York City." You can purchase this limited edition sweatshirt by sending \$25 to the DSA National Office.

New Book

DSA Vice-Chair Dorothy Healey's compelling life story, *Dorothy Healey Remembers*, co-authored with Maurice Isserman, is now available from the DSA National Office

(\$20 plus \$3.00 for shipping). Published by Oxford University Press, this insightful account "provides a rare look into the inner workings of the Communist Party that - despite Healey's best efforts - refused to reform," says Barbara Ehrenreich, who also notes, that "mostly this is the engaging and personal story of one of the American left's most brilliant and fearless women - a pioneer in the '30s and role model for activists in the '90s."

Election Endorsements

The DSANPAC has endorsed two congressional candidates: DSA'er Democrat Neal Abercrombie seeking to regain the House seat representing Honolulu, Hawaii, and independent socialist Bernie Sanders making his second bid for Vermont's lone House seat against frosh congressman Republican Peter Smith, who beat Sanders in a close three-way race in 1988. Both candidates could use financial support to pay off debts as they have encountered typically well-financed Republican opposition in very close contests. Checks can be made out and sent to DSANPAC and will be forwarded to the respective campaigns -- be sure to indicate which candidate or if both in an accompanying note.

Events

On October 13th, sixty students and trade union activists gathered at Harvard University for DSA's second annual Campus-Labor Institute. Joe Faherty, the next President of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO welcomed the participants who proceeded to enjoy a full day of discussion on "talking union," international labor solidarity, building coalitions with labor, national health care, and labor support on campus, among other topics. The students were urged to get involved in the labor movement as an essential vehicle for social change. This Institute was a joint project of the burgeoning Boston DSA Labor Network and the DSA Youth Section as part of the American Solidarity Campaign.

ON THE LEFT



Boston DSA is very active in the campaign opposing Question 3, a measure that would slash Massachusetts state taxes to '88 levels and throw the state economy and budget into chaos. DSA'ers are doing weekly phonebanking and canvassing in conjunction with efforts by unions and other progressive groups. DSA'er Jim Marzilli, former chair of Boston DSA, won the Democratic primary for a State House of Representatives seat in Arlington, M.A., aided by a fundraiser organized by DSA, and is now the frontrunner in the general election.

Los Angeles DSA is helping two members to win local office on the Santa Monica Rent Control Board: Bob Niemann and Jay Johnson. Having filled an unexpired term, Jay is running for one of three four-year seats, while Bob is seeking a two-year slot. Both have received the endorsement of Santa Monica for Renters Rights, the progressive political organization in Santa Monica.

Twin Cities DSA in Minnesota continues its resurgence with on-going support of Paul Wellstone's campaign for the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Republican Rudy Boschwitz. Local activists are doing literature drops and helping to raise money for this watershed campaign. Wellstone is the Democratic Party and Democratic Farmer-Labor candidate and has been endorsed by every major union in Minnesota (except the Teamsters). As a professor at Carlton College, Wellstone has mentored many DSA Youth Section activists. As we go to press, he and Boschwitz are even in the polls, with Republican fortunes fading. Contributions, made out to Wellstone for U.S. Senate, can be sent to the DSA National Office and will be forwarded to the campaign.

Central Kentucky DSA sponsored a successful forum on October 8th featuring Bill Bishop, columnist for the Herald-Leader, who spoke on the topic "State Politics and the Progressive Community." The Local's current activist projects include a letter-writing campaign urging the House Intelligence Committee to take up the allegations raised in the Houston Post that some of the bankrupt savings and loans provided funding to covert CIA actions.

Chicago DSA sponsored a conference on the need for a national health plan attended by 110 people on September 15th. Summaries of the conference have been prepared by the Local. This conference is part of the Local's on-going organizing efforts in support of a national health care plan. The Local is fundraising, leaf-letting and canvassing for DSA'er Ron Sable's campaign for Alderman of the 44th Ward. A forum featuring DSA Vice-Chair Bogdan Denitch was held during the Midwest Radical Scholars Conference on the weekend of October 20th.

DSA Youth Section activists in cities throughout the country, including Pittsburgh, Washington, D.C., Rochester, New

York City, and Los Angeles set-up tables and met with Marxist folk-rocker Billy Bragg during his recent U.S. concert tour. Bragg and the Youth Section have been working together in his last few tours to promote democratic socialist politics. Emphasizing songs with biting socio-political commentary from his recent EP, "Internationale," Bragg gave opening raps about current events, talking about the collapse of Stalinism, homelessness, and the crisis in the Middle East, and urging the young crowds to check out the DSA table. In an interview with Scott Frizlen and Fred Gustafson in *The Allegheny Socialist*, Bragg said that he appeals to his American listener's sentiments of justice and compassion in advocating socialism because they seemed to respond better to this than to the conventional arguments they've been conditioned to ignore.

New York City DSA not only provided 50 volunteers to the SI and SIW meetings, they also kicked off that week's activities with a book party for Dorothy Healey's new autobiography, *Dorothy Healey Remembers*, co-authored with Maurice Isserman. Over seventy-five people packed Hoagy Carmichael's on October 4th and heard Dorothy give a quintessential pitch for democratic socialism and DSA membership. On Labor Day, NYC local activists gathered over 500 signatures for the

American Solidarity petition campaign to win anti-scab legislation, and as we go to press, they are walking the picket line with strikers "permanently replaced" at the Daily News.

DSA Locals throughout the country have been sponsoring forums, participating in demonstrations, and organizing letter-writing in opposition to the U.S. military buildup following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2nd. Almost all DSA locals meeting in the last two months devoted some time to a discussion of the crisis. Some locals, such as **San Diego**, are active in coalitions which condemn the Iraqi invasion and protest the U.S.'s unilateral military actions. **Peninsula/Stanford DSA** organized a day-long teach-in about the historical, cultural as well as political dimensions of the conflict.

Peace Now

In the midst of the crisis in the Gulf and the unfolding disaster in Jerusalem, the Peace Now movement has tried to keep alive the dialogue between the left in Israel and the PLO. In the second week of the Gulf crisis, Peace Now re-established private dialogues with central Palestinian leaders in the occupied territories. These meetings have been brutally frank. In answer to the Palestinians, a Peace Now representative calculated that about two years had been lost by the seeming alliance between Yasir Arafat and Saddam Hussein.

At press time, Peace Now was calling for an inquiry into the shootings on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Peace Now plans to pressure the Israeli government to strengthen the inquiry commission to ensure full investigative powers and to ensure that its recommendations will be heeded. *Al-Hamishmar*, the newspaper of Mapam, Israel's socialist party, questioned the official Likud government story regarding events leading up to the Jerusalem shooting.

Peace Now contends that their message of "real security and peace," brought about through a two-state solution, is more important than ever.

York City, and Los Angeles set-up tables and met with Marxist folk-rocker Billy Bragg during his recent U.S. concert tour. Bragg and the Youth Section have

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Welcome!

Opening Remarks by Willy Brandt

As this is our first Council in the United States, we should -- as a matter of courtesy and respect -- introduce ourselves to the American people, with whom we have much in common: We share the same historic political values of personal freedom, justice and democracy; likewise we detest dictatorship and any discrimination against individuals, whether because of their creed, race or sex.

Since the early 1950s, when this International of independent political parties was re-established in Western Europe, we have challenged communism. The Leninist hubris of a party laying sole claim to unmistakable truths was totally alien to social democrats. But we have also always challenged the totalitarianism of the other extreme: the fascist and reactionary regimes in Europe, in Latin America, and elsewhere.

By demonstrating our solidarity with the oppressed worldwide, we have been able to establish close bonds beyond Europe. I think we can justly claim that since the mid-'70s our family of political parties has become an International in the true sense of the word. By now, we have as many member parties from Latin America as from Europe, and we are happy to have with us parties from Asia and Africa and also from North America.

The names of our member parties differ due to different national traditions. Being conscious of the more than a century-long struggle for workers' participation and international solidarity, this democratic family of parties calls itself the Socialist International -- still like the association founded in Paris 1889 a hundred years after the French revolution.

I know that the word "socialist" does not have a very favorable connotation for many Americans and, nowadays I am afraid, for people in other places, too. Let's face it, socialism has been discredited by the mess created in the so-called "socialist countries." But there should be no doubt that what existed in Central and Eastern Europe was anything but democratic socialism (or social democracy, as I prefer to call it).

Therefore, we have wholeheartedly welcomed the peaceful revolutions of 1989 which dismantled the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall. We are delighted that the various parts of Europe are growing together, and that we can welcome here friends who for many years had been prevented from joining us. When we talk about substance instead of labels, as we should, there is no reason to hide our record on peace, human rights, and justice.

Mayor David Dinkins Remarks

After decades of struggle, the dream of a world liberated from the crushing weight of fascism and totalitarianism is quickly becoming a reality -- from the shanties of Soweto to the crumbling bricks of the Berlin wall.

I am pleased to welcome so many distinguished political leaders to the City of New York as the Socialist International Council begins its first meeting on American soil. I am delighted to be joined by my friends from the Democratic Socialists of America, who have been strong supporters of mine all along.

America does not have a mass democratic socialist movement. But, in the past, this country was a leader in the democratic socialist cause -- contributing such legendary figures as Eugene V. Debs, Norman Thomas, A. Philip Randolph, and my friend Michael Harrington, whose recent death we mourn and whose presence we miss so terribly.

Michael Harrington taught our entire country of the widespread existence of poverty, of the "other America." He devoted his life to fighting injustice and oppression, and his words instructed and inspired all of us who knew him and heard him. I know that it was significant to Michael that he was the first American Honorary President of the Socialist International; and I wish he were here today, to join me in welcoming you to his home town.

Today, we must rededicate ourselves to Michael's mission -- to close the yawning gap that exists between the rich and the poor in so many nations of the world. I first met Michael during the civil rights movement, when the American Socialist Party garnered its forces in the struggle for equality and justice led by the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr.

Of course, poverty knows no race or national origin, but it is a stinging fact that, in this country, economic deprivation and race too often go hand-in-hand. The democratic socialist movement has helped us to recognize this link; and, in the words of A. Philip Randolph, it has provided us with "a world perspective, and the basis of the concept of the indivisibility of democracy, freedom, and peace."

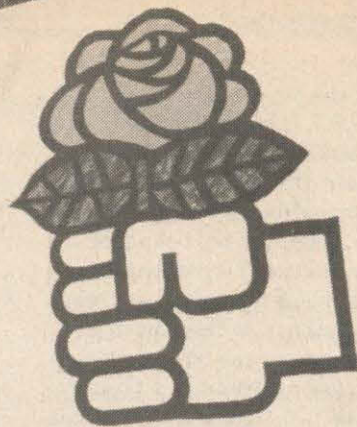
Socialist ideals have played a powerful role in this city and in this country -- which have served as gateways

for millions of immigrants, many of whom were socialist activists. Public education, a strong and vibrant trade union movement, and many great cultural institutions are products of the socialist movement. As Eugene Debs said, socialists believed in an America of "great possibilities, of great opportunities, and of no less great probabilities."





**ORTH - SOUTH DIVIDE:
ATIONS FOR THE 1990s**



**Council Meeting of the Socialist International
New York, October 8-9, 1990**



Photos by Donna Binder / Impact Visuals

DSA Hosts Socialist International

by Jim Chapin

Led by Bogdan Denitch, DSA's Permanent Representative to the Socialist International, the DSA delegation to the Socialist International (S.I.) included Honorary Chair Cornel West, Pat Belcon, DSA NPC member, Motl Zelmanowicz, a DSAer active in the Jewish Labor Bund, Jo-Ann Mort, DSA NPC member, Jack Sheinkman, President of ACTWU, NYC Commissioner of Finance Carol O'Cleireacain, Terri Burgess, Chair of DSA Youth Section. Skip Roberts, Chair of DSA's S.I. Committee, welcomed the Council to the United States on behalf of DSA.

As part of its role as a "host party," DSA organized a reception for SI delegates on October 8th. The Drug, Hospital, and Health Care Employees Union Local 1199 and AFSCME District Council 37 sponsored the reception held at Local 1199's

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SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL 1990

**N Y C
U S A**



Dinah Leventhal

**a special
report**



- Willy Brandt
- Audrey McLaughlin
- David Dinkins
- Jack Sheinkman
- Jose Francisco Pena-Gomez
- Anita Gradin

headquarters, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center. S.I. General Secretary Luis Ayala introduced Local 1199 President and New York State Democratic Party Vice-Chairman Dennis Rivera, who graciously welcomed the delegates on behalf of his 75,000 member union. S.I. President Brandt responded by thanking the unions for "bringing the delegates back to the movement," provoking cheers from the 300 attendees.

On the following evening, a multi-racial audience of 500 heard Brandt speak warmly of the late Michael Harrington at a DSA sponsored public event, which also featured Jose Francisco Pena-Gomez, leader of the Dominican Republic PRD, Jack Sheinkman, President of ACTWU, Clare Short, British Labour Party MP, DSA Vice-Chair Bogdan Denitch, and Mexican opposition Senator Porfirio Munoz-Ledo. DSA Honorary Chair Barbara Ehrenreich was the moderator.

During the S.I.W. meeting, DSA co-sponsored a reception for the S.I.W. delegates attended by 150 women at the Workmen's Circle. Jo-Ann Mort welcomed the international guests on behalf of DSA giving a special recognition to the DSA Youth Section. On Sunday, October 7th, the NYC DSA Feminist Branch hosted an in-

spiring gathering (attracting over seventy-five people) at Deborah Meier's home. Tessa Hebb of the Canadian NDP spoke eloquently of their recent victory in Ontario, and its importance for social democracy in North America. DSA's S.I.W. delegation included Chris Riddiough, a DSA Vice-Chair, Ruth Spitz, DSA NIC member, Amy Bachrach, DSA NPC member, and DSA delegates Jo-Ann Mort, Terri Bergess, and Pat Belcon.

More than seventy DSA members from New York and New Jersey locals acted as volunteers and over fifty people contributed financially to support the events. We hope that it will be less than eighty years before the S.I. meets here again!

The One

by Harold Meyerson

With communism's collapse, the socialist project -- modestly formulated, to create a world that is not entirely a corporate subsidiary -- is once more the exclusive province of social-democratic parties. (Given their limited electoral base, the Greens are more an on-again, off-again ally of the so-

Europe was anything but democratic socialism."

While the socialist leaders meeting in New York acknowledged that the effects of communism's collapse have lapped over to discredit even some social-democratic parties that have been staunchly anti-communist from the outset, most viewed the threat as short-lived outside Eastern Europe. The

deeper problem is that, on a nation-by-nation basis, advances in social democracy have slowed to a crawl since banks and corporations went global during the '70s.

Blocked from any major advance at the national level, the movement is turning to international political bodies such as the European Community or the U.N. to offset international markets; as once they developed national agencies to regu-

late national economies. Which is precisely why the Socialist International matters more now than it used to.

Under Brandt's leadership, the S.I. has been converted from a rather tired and purposeless European council into a genuinely global body that charts the agenda for much of the world left. The doctrine of Common Security, which the USA and the Soviets embraced at the Reykjavik summit in place of the unlamented strategy of mutual assured destruction, was formulated by an S.I.-originated committee chaired by the late Swedish Premier Olof Palme. Any serious discussion of re-allocating the world's



Cot: International solidarity that has eluded Europe may be realizable at last.

cialists than they are a rival.) As they met last month in New York, the Socialist International had again become *the* international.

But how much is the exclusive franchise on socialism worth in so capitalist a moment as 1990? "I know the word 'socialist' does not have a very favorable connotation for many Americans, and nowadays I am afraid for people in other places, too," Willy Brandt, the former West German chancellor who has headed the S.I. since 1976, stated in his opening address. "Let's face it -- socialism has been discredited by the mess created in the so-called 'socialist countries.' But there should be no doubt that what existed in Central and Eastern

Left Standing

A genuinely global body charts the agenda for much of the world left.

resources to include the South -- the impoverished nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America -- begins with the market alternatives proposed by a similar group chaired by Brandt himself. Over the last decade, it was to the S.I. that the Sandinistas (not a member party) came to secure Western opposition to the contra war, and it was at the S.I. where the African National Congress won significant support for its battle against apartheid. And in New York last week, the S.I. strongly opposed any use of force in the current Gulf crisis not conducted under the auspices of the U.N.

(Which is not to say the S.I.'s formal deliberations are wildly exciting. Invariably, resolutions have been agreed upon before they reach the floor. Stylistically, the meetings reveal less class solidarity than the dissimilarity of national styles. Proceedings veer from a stultifying parliamentary propriety, to brilliant presentations, to florid displays of rhetoric. During one of these displays, a friend who has attended S.I. meetings for some years leaned over to note that the speaker was "one of the great blitherers of all time." Still, the blitherers can be party leaders, foreign ministers, heads of government -- they're never ruled out of order.)

Much of the credit for remaking the International goes to Brandt, who assumed its presidency determined to break social democracy out of its European ghetto. In the past fourteen years, the S.I. has grown to include ninety-one member parties from across the world. The S.I.'s Secretary General, Luis Ayala, is a Chilean who fled his homeland in the aftermath of the 1973 military coup. The New York Council meeting was addressed by Salvadoran social-democratic leader Guillermo Ungo (an S.I. Vice-President) and attended by former Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto. It admitted as new members the social-democratic parties of Estonia and Lithuania -- over the mumbled doubts among some delegates over the dubious politics of many of the Eastern European social democrats -- and considered the applications of numerous others. (The Italian Communists --

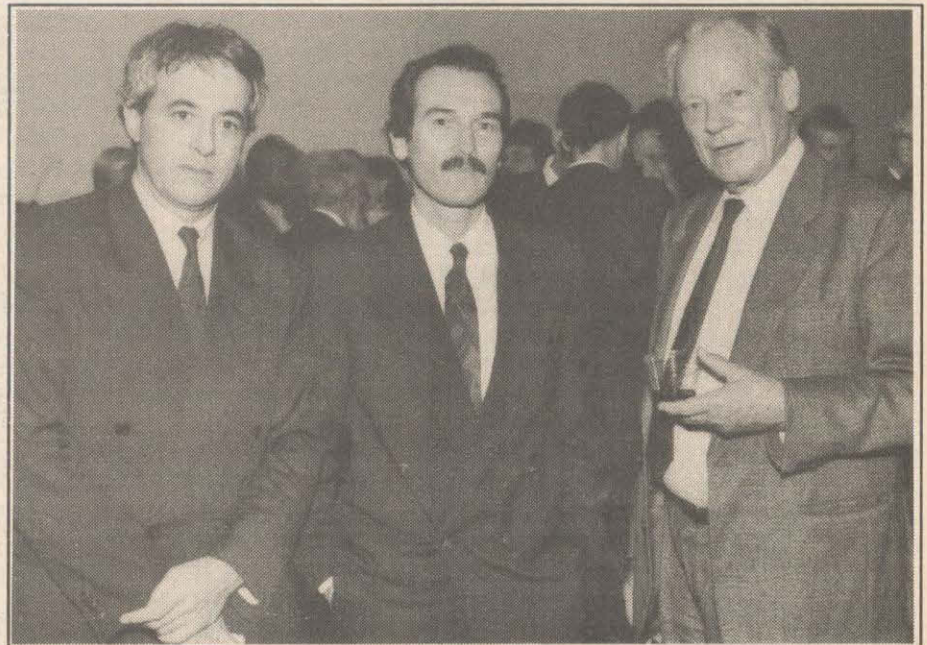
longtime non-Leninists who have just changed their name to the Unified Party of the Left -- would love to get in.) It heard from both Egyptian and Israeli member parties on the conflict in the Gulf. (Israeli Labor Party members have used earlier S.I. meetings to meet with their Palestinian counterparts, however.)

Moreover, twenty-eight of the S.I.'s ninety-one member parties are in government, even in this Year of the Market. Socialists are governing in France and Spain, in Austria, Sweden, and Australia. Last month, surprising even themselves, Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP), an S.I. member, came to power in the provincial elections in Ontario, the state that comprises about one-third of Canada's population. The NDP campaigned with considerable assistance from the feminist and envi-

gender equality in wages, parental-leave policy, aid to the Third World -- the most prosperous, healthy and egalitarian nations on the planet are those that have had long periods of social-democratic rule.

And yet, the social democrats are playing on capitalist terrain, and they know it. "No one has to convince us that market forces are indispensable for economic growth," Brandt said, "but we also believe that private interest must be attuned to the public interest in social justice and ecological survival." Since the '70s, socialism (and in America, liberalism) has been struggling to catch up with the newly global economy. Electronic banking and transnational corporations have smashed the state well beyond the capacities, if not the fantasies, of the most fervent new leftist. As the socialists discovered in France when they came to

Miller Photography



Dennis Rivera, center, President of Local 1199, with Luis Ayala, S.I. Secretary General, and Willy Brandt, President of Socialist International.

ronmentalist movements, forces with which many of the S.I. member parties are now closely aligned. Finally, by every available index -- average income, infant mortality,

power in 1981 after twenty-seven years of conservative rule, a social-democratic transformation in one country was all but impossible. Faced with higher wages and more

humane working conditions in France, capital simply packed up and moved elsewhere. If socialism is more international and the S.I. playing a somewhat weightier role than before, the credit is considerably Brandt's, but the fundamental reason is that capitalism got there first.

International Leveling Upward

Some socialists don't even discuss socialism in national terms anymore. I asked Jean-Pierre Cot, the ebullient, Oxford-accented Frenchman who heads the Socialist Group in the European Parliament (they have 180 of the 518 seats -- the largest party there), what the socialist project will consist of over the next ten or twenty years, on both a national and an international scale.

"Nationally, it's not very interesting," he told me. "What is interesting is that we have to have a European policy. We have to give a socialist content to Europe." What socialism is about over the next generation, he said, is an international leveling upward -- increasing the power of such bodies as the European Community to ensure that wages and working conditions in Spain, say, do not undercut those in Germany. For Western Europe, if nowhere else, this is a plausible agenda for the next few decades: the international solidarity that has eluded Europe may be realizable at last.

"It won't be easy," Cot continued. "The European construction has been basically market-oriented. After all, we created the Common Market in 1957. The name in itself is a program, and not a very socialist one at that. Our task is to get the European Community to have more power in such



Dinah Leventhal

fields as environmental policy, social policy, industrial norms, and monetary policy. Environmental policy is essential. We have a very small continent with lots of people and a hell of a lot of pollution. We can't manage these problems at our micro-national levels, so we need to create a wider political space in which to

Unraveling of the East

While many Eurosocialists are eager to replace the NATO/Warsaw Pact security structure with a more pan-European model (a vision the Bush administration fiercely opposes), most believe that the political and economic unification of Europe will not include the East for at least a generation. The European Community will likely take on as new members Austria, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland -- Western, if historically more neutral (and more social-democratic) nations -- and draw the line there. The gaps between Northern and Southern Europe, even between Sweden and Greece, pale beside that between Western

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Socialists Ponder a Changed World

By FRANK J. FRIAL

Buzzed by the collapse of one of its oldest foes, the Communist movement, but uncertain about its own role in the post-cold-war world, the Socialist International gathered in New York this week to set a course for the future.

It was one of the first public meetings of the international since Communist Governments fell in Eastern Europe in the last 12 months, and it was its first meeting in this country in more than a century.

Willy Brandt, the former West German Chancellor who has been president of the Socialist International since 1976, chaired the two-day meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria.

Mr. Brandt suggested that Socialism is a victim of semantics. "Let's face it," he said, "the term has been dis-

Before the meeting began, some Socialists expressed the concern that the collapse of state-run economies in Eastern Europe would discredit all Socialist Democrats. "Although Europeans do make a distinction between Communism and Social Democracy, the collapse of the first and only socialist experiment in history will have long lasting repercussions on the Socialist movement as a whole," said Hans Janitschek, a former general secretary of the Socialist International. "It may, in fact, kill it all together."

Free of an Albatross

"On the contrary," said Condit West, a member of the Democratic Socialist Party of America and a professor of religion at Princeton University.

"We no longer have this albatross on our backs," she said, referring to Com-

servers from 100 countries, were taken up with discussions on traditional socialist concerns, such as bridging the gaps between rich and poor nations and disarmament.

But the conversations in the corridor dealt almost exclusively with the future of socialism in the wake of Communist collapse.

"Eastern Europe is not going to become part of the Western European Community," said Bogdan Denitch, leader of the Democratic Socialists of America. "That's just an illusion. And the Socialist International is perfectly situated to mediate between the groups forming in the East."

"The failure of Com some sense for us a Jean-Pierre Cot, a European Socialist Parliament. "We there could be democracy."

In striking contrast

to the news blackout engineered against the "Eurosocialism and America" Conference in

December, 1980, the recent Socialist International Council meeting received considerable press attention. Well-placed articles appeared in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, along with a series of articles in *New York Newsday*, including a column, "Socialists Zap Lenin," by Pulitzer prize-winning columnist Murray Kempton. The *LA Weekly* did a cover story on the meeting and *National Public Radio's Morning Edition* aired a four minute report. Of course, the *Wall Street Journal* could not resist taking a shot at socialists meeting at the Waldorf-Astoria (I guess they decided to skip the delegates reception at the headquarters of Drug, Hospital and Health Care Employees Union Local 1199). *El Diario*, a Spanish language newspaper and *The Forward*, a Yiddish language weekly, also covered the meeting. --ML

implement our policies. That's our task for the next thirty years -- creating a full-fledged European welfare state."

and Eastern Europe. The apprehension that hung over the S.I. Council wasn't simply the result of the Gulf crisis: the social democrats

are fearful of the unraveling of the East.

"I visited East Germany just three days before it merged into the new Germany," Sten Andersson, the Swedish foreign minister, told me. "Unemployment is now about 15 percent, and they expect it to increase to 20 or 25 percent, not counting the people who have dropped down to half-time work. And the eastern part of the new Germany, remember, is in far better shape than Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Bulgaria -- the East Germans have help from their bigger brother. Still, their standard of living will decrease. It has already decreased

in Poland by one-third." American socialist Bogdan Denitch foresees that women in particular will be considered expendable in the new, shrunken work force of the East.

Eastern Europe merely inspires fear; the disintegrating Soviet Union inspires terror. Members of European parliaments with particular responsibility for the East turned again and again to such questions as who will control the Soviet missiles when the USSR disintegrates (likely the KGB -- but who will control the KGB?), and the rise in street crime in Moscow ("far worse than New York," said one foreign-ministry offi-

cial). The problem is, the political space opened by communism's collapse is being filled chiefly by a range of right-wing and nationalist parties. Objectively, as Leninists used to say, communism turns out to have been the transition to tribalism and neo-fascism.

"Socialists emerge from the inequities of capitalism," said one governmental official. "It will be awhile before there are large numbers of Eastern European socialists." Such socialists as already exist, moreover, aren't clustered in socialist parties, but tend to be spread across the hodgepodge of parties that partook in communism's fall. "In Hungary," said one member of a Western parliament, "there are social democrats in the Free Democrats, in Fidesz [the youth group party], in the Socialists [the new name for the reformed communists] and the Social Democrats. But there are Friedmanite conservatives and nationalists in each of those parties, too. The multiparty

"A Pressing Matter . . .

We Must Not Confuse Capitalism with Democracy."

Communism has collapsed and the whole world looks toward America as a model for future societies. But, what will our friends from abroad see if they truly look at our nation?

Growing inequality, over five million children living in poverty, increasing homelessness, the collapse of our public education system. Families -- working families -- who can't bring themselves out of the cycle of poverty, the growing assault on the public sector, the raiding of workers' pension funds, tens of thousands of workers thrown out on the street because of faulty management and greedy leveraged buy-outs.

We must not confuse capitalism with democracy. Democracy is a precious inalienable right that ensures social and economic equality to all, but only if everyone enjoys social and economic equality.

Our vision of America is of a democratic nation which is, as yet, unfulfilled in its dream. Present social and economic trends threaten the very democratic values which we as a nation profess to hold dear.

Let's keep in mind -- the revolutions we say take place in Eastern Europe were revolutions for democracy. Workers, joined by students and intellectuals, marched through the streets shouting "freedom and democracy."

The embrace of the market will not bring forth true democracy. Democracy means empowerment; democracy means

dignity; and dignity can't be bought and sold on the open market.

Everyday in this land, workers rise up and demand dignity on the job. They demand fairness, even though they must struggle against the most oppressive corporate and governmental onslaught known to any workers in the industrialized world.

I have stood beside textile workers in the South who work in near-sweatshop conditions for minimum wage salaries, with no health coverage. I have watched them vote for union representation and then, after they have won union recognition, wait more than three years for the company to comply with the law.

I have met single mothers who, because of their union activity, have been fired from their jobs and must travel more than fifty miles each way to work for \$3.80 an hour in another town so they can feed their children. This is not happening in predepression America; this is happening today.

In today's world economy, finding ways to raise the wages of workers in the third world is now an imperative for workers in the first world. International solidarity has always been a matter of human decency and social justice -- today, it is a pressing matter of the welfare, peace and freedom for us all.

Excerpted from ACTWU President Jack Sheinkman's presentation to the public forum on October 9, 1990.

Resolutions

The formal business of Socialist International Women Bureau and Socialist International Council meetings is to adopt official positions on the issues and themes addressed during the sessions. At the October meetings in New York City, the S.I.W. and S.I. passed resolutions on such issues as the plight of indigenous peoples around the world, capital punishment, a program to bridge the north-south divide, and a new common security approach to east-west relations. The S.I. Council also passed resolutions on the situation in countries including Haiti, Guyana and South Africa, and adopted a resolution in support of U.N. coordinated actions in the current Gulf Crisis. Space limitations prevent the publication of all these resolutions, but you can obtain copies of resolutions adopted at the S.I. and S.I.W. meetings by sending \$3.00 to cover photocopying and shipping costs to DSA, 15 Dutch Street, Suite 500, New York, NY 10038. For another \$2.00 you can also receive an issue of the official S.I. journal, *Socialist Affairs*.

systems haven't really sorted out the political differences yet."

IMF as Comecon

The other international dimension of the socialist project is that cluster of issues known as "North-South" -- how to create a political counterweight to a world market in which the poor nations grow poorer. George Fernandes, the leader of the rail unions of India, noted that the bill for one room for one night at the Waldorf (the site of the Council meeting) exceeds the annual per capita income in his nation and throughout South Asia.

Bringing the claims of the South to the North has become central to the S.I. "Last year, while we were all excited about Eastern Europe, we completely forgot about the South," said Jean-Pierre Cot. "But the South didn't forget about us. Saddam Hussein, in a way, is an expression of the revolt of the South against the North. It's an ugly revolt, and I have no sympathy for Saddam Hussein and his aggression, but the South will continue to pop up in one way or another if we don't do something about it."

"What we need," said Leonel Brizola, the newly elected socialist governor of the province of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, "is an equivalent to the peaceful, democratic revolution in Eastern Europe. The International Monetary Fund is our COMECON [communist Eastern Europe's common market] -- an economic system that takes money from poor countries to help capitalize the rich."

The S.I. fleshed out Brizola's vision with some incremental proposals. The average level of foreign aid from the indus-

trial West to the nations of the South is .37 percent of the Western nations' gross domestic product, ranging from a high of 1.1 percent in Norway to a low of .21 percent in -- you guessed it -- the USA. By the calculations of Bettino Craxi, leader of the Italian socialists, a 5 percent cut in military expenditures could enable the West to double its aid to developing nations.

Those social democrats who discussed socialism in terms of national agendas came from two kinds of countries: those sufficiently backward in economics or politics that they were playing catch-up with the European community, or those where socialism has become inextricably intertwined with national identity -- that is, Sweden. Sten Andersson, formerly the general secretary of the Swedish social democrats and currently Sweden's foreign minister, fore-

sees a challenge to social-democratic egalitarianism when Swedish society moves more completely to its post-industrial phase.

"What happens when technology demands more and more education, so that 15 to 20 percent of the people will be left outside the new work force?" Andersson wonders. "But we must adhere to our position that every human being has the chance to be 'inside' the society. In the old days, we could tell the majority, 'Vote for us and you'll have a better life.' Today, we have to tell them, 'Vote for us and you'll help the others to have a better life -- and that will also constitute a better life for you, by keeping the gaps inside the society from widening.' And politically, that's a more difficult task. Still, we have to take the risk. Our next election will be an ideological one, but that's good for us. We will have to preach

"Democratic Socialism Must Prevail in the South and North"

Winning and losing is a law of democracy. The fact that some of our brother parties who took over the reins of government in the last few years lost them later does not mean a rejection of democratic socialism. Democracy is characterized by a balance of powers. When they are not in power, the socialists are the majority party in the opposition and in the labor and peasant movement in Latin America.

To understand the dimension of the Socialist International's solidarity and activism through its chairman, its general secretary, and its Latin American committee, it is enough simply to cite the meetings held in the last two years in major Latin American capitals and the frequent missions sent to support member parties, particularly when they are involved in electoral struggles.

The International offered its critical support to the Sandinista National Liberation Front and is to be congratulated on the fact that, partly in response to approaches from high-level social democratic leaders but also as a result of a change in its thinking, the Sandinista Front held an exemplary election, permitted the free organization of parties, accepted electoral defeat, carried out an orderly transition of power, and has cooperated in the demilitarization of the country.

The fact that we were able to count on the presence of the new social democratic parties of Eastern Europe, as well as representatives of the highest level of the reformed communist party of the Soviet Union, at the most recent meetings of the Socialist International is the best possible proof that Mikhail Gorbachev and the people who finally destroyed the communist leviathan consider themselves identified with the principles of democratic socialism.

It is for that reason that Moscow University recently conferred the degree of Doctor Honoris Causa (Honorary Doctor) on our Chairman Willy Brandt, and the President of the Soviet Union paid tribute to him by saying that Gorbachev was a believer in Brandt's great moral and political leadership.

Having completed the political democratization of the continent, the current task of the socialists is to prevent the debt crisis from destroying the democratic process already underway. Secondly, the Socialist International, in solidarity with labor, must help complete the political liberation of those countries still governed by limited democracies, as is the case with some Central American nations and Haiti.

The fight for the economic independence of our countries and for the equitable international cooperation which will enable us to overcome the grave obstacles that foreign debt poses to our development must be the fundamental concern of the Latin American social democrats. If we cannot resolve the economic crisis, the political democratization which has cost so much in effort, sacrifices, and blood will be a fruitless task.

The Berlin Wall has fallen -- demolished by the irresistible battering ram of democratic socialism and the people's struggle. We have now demolished the wall of privilege which prevented political democracy from completing its mission of assuring for our people the blessings of prosperity.

Democratic socialism must prevail in both the South and the North. Neo-liberalism, with its unjust privatizations, will be a passing storm that will not fertilize the thirsty Latin American soil with abundant water and the benefits of economic and social justice. Only democratic socialism, working for the welfare of the people, can finally liberate us from the exploitation of man by man.

Excerpted from Jose Francisco Pena-Gomez' speech to the Socialist International Council, October 8, 1990.

Interestingly enough, Lane Kirkland, President of the AFL-CIO, delivered one of the most militant speeches at the New York Council meeting. He spoke of "the myth that the collapse of communism is the victory of capitalism and the final vindication of raw market theory. . . . Millions upon millions have found out, in the hardest way and in grueling detail, exactly what is wrong with the jungle of the unregulated marketplace."

Kirkland continued, "Both [communism and capitalism] have something elemental in common. Both can atomize society by reducing humans to the level of isolated survivors. Both can be lethal to the institutions of civil society that make life tolerable to ordinary people. They are not so much opposites as mirror images."

that without solidarity in society, there is ultimately no survival."

At the other end of the spectrum of political development are the North American social democrats -- but even here, Canada went into fast-forward last month with the victory of the NDP in the Ontario elections. The social-democratic agenda that party leader Audrey McLaughlin outlines for Canada is notable for how far it goes beyond the agenda, say, of the U.S. Democratic congressional leadership. "We'd begin with fair and progressive taxation," says McLaughlin, who represents the Yukon in the Canadian parliament, "then implement labor-market policies" -- a series of federally funded job retraining and relocation programs modeled after Swedish employment policies, which are currently holding unemployment levels to roughly 1 percent. Should the NDP enter the next federal elections with a strong chance of winning, McLaughlin adds, she anticipates "considerable unrest from the United States. I mean, in your last election, the word 'liberal' -- a pretty benign word in the Canadian vocabulary -- came in for great disavowals."

Uniquely among the industrialized democracies, of course, the USA has never had a major socialist movement. It's an issue of no small concern to the S.I., which sees the USA's adherence to market priorities as a major stumbling block to the creation of a more egalitarian world. Talk to Leonel Brizola and he'll tell you that what the world needs is an American Gorbachev who will disenthral the USA from its romance with markets. Talk to Jean-Pierre Cot and he'll tell you that one goal of a unified Europe will be to create a social-democratic counterweight to the USA, in turn creating "a less-lopsided world."

The failings of American socialism were much on my mind as I walked toward the back of the hall, through the rows of new parties from around the world that were

applying for membership: from West African states, the Philippines, Korea, Mongolia . . .

Mongolia? I sat down beside the young man seated behind the "Mongolian Social Democratic Party" placard and asked him, with all the tact I could muster, how a social-democratic party had emerged in Mongolia. Badarchiin Dorjgotov told me about the demonstrations in March which had toppled the old Communist regime, about how the reform Communist government had set multiparty elections in August, about how the Mongolian Social Democrats had formed in the spring on a platform of democracy, a market economy and social protections, and about how they had placed third in August's parliamentary elections, pulling down 10 percent of the vote. Badarchiin spoke more than passable English, which he learned during the early Gorbachev years at Moscow's International Relations Institute, where he informally studied radical reform.

But, I persisted, who in Mongolia knew from social democracy? The party, he answered, was rooted in intellectuals and workers, with some limited support from the herdsmen. (Herdsmen and farmers compose 60

percent of the Mongolian work force, and the form that Stalinization took in Mongolia, not surprisingly when you think about it, was the forced collectivization of the herds.) Badarchiin himself is the son of herdsmen, and he went home during the campaign to explain his party's platform.

"They understood when I told them we opposed force in politics," he said. "But I must tell you, all the radio and TV they've ever heard has been communist ideology. It has been hard to make the herdsmen understand what social democracy is."

In an instant, I was home. "Ah," I said, "they're like Americans."

Harold Meyerson, Executive Editor of LA Weekly where this article first appeared, is a member of the DSA National Political Committee.



DSA Delegates Cornel West and Pat Belcon.

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Socialist International Women Meet in New York City

by Chris Riddiough

For the first time in history, Socialist International Women met in the United States -- on October 5th and 6th in New York City (just before the meeting of the Socialist International). Formed in 1907 by women from fifty-eight countries -- including Clara Zetkin -- S.I. Women has emerged in the last decade as a group representing the intersection of socialist and feminist thinking. The meeting in New York included some sixty representatives of forty socialist parties worldwide. Among the delegates were ministers of national governments, party leaders, and members of parliaments.

The focus of the meeting was on women and foreign debt. Opening speakers from Venezuela, Senegal, and the United States (both DSA and the Social Democrats USA had representatives) framed the debate. Saskia Sassen, a DSA member in New York, addressed the impact of debt on women. She outlined the dynamics of foreign debt, noting that it is not a natural disaster, but rather *manmade*. Lenders, she added, are primarily concerned with interest since that's where they make their money. [See following article.]

Debate at the S.I. Women meeting was very different from political discussion in U.S. left activist organizations. Delegates gave prepared remarks focusing on debt impacts in their own countries. This was in part due to the multilingual nature of the meeting. Simultaneous translation in English, French, and Spanish made it difficult to have spontaneous discussions. Further, many of the delegates represented ruling or opposition parties and their statements were in the nature of semi-official speeches.

"Real" debate took place to a greater extent during the resolutions session on the last day of the meeting. Three resolutions were discussed: foreign debt, capital punishment, and indigenous people. The first of these was a call for reduction of debt and service payments by 50 percent, cancellation of the debt for the poorest countries, and other

actions. The resolution on capital punishment demanded an end to this inhumane penalty, while that on indigenous people sought to focus the 1992 Columbus anniversary celebrations on the plight of Native Americans throughout the western hemisphere.

In debate on each of these, adding some spark to the dialogue were the expressed differences between the American delegations, DSA and SDUSA. In each case, SDUSA sought amendments to weaken the resolutions' criticisms of US policies, while DSA, with the majority of S.I. Women, supported a strong critique.

For many of us, this was our first experience with S.I. Women. It was an energizing experience to meet with women from every continent and from many countries where socialism is not just a good idea, but a real part of the political agenda. U p c o m i n g meetings of S.I. Women will focus on reproductive rights and environmentalism.

U.S. socialist--feminists have an opportunity in future meetings to participate actively in the international debate on issues of contemporary importance. In doing so, we may be able to make our own contributions to the debate and we may also learn much to help us put our ideas into a broader context.

Chris Riddiough, DSA Vice-Chair, chaired the DSA delegation at the Socialist International Women meeting.

WOMEN AND THE DEBT

by Saskia Sassen

There are two characteristics about the debt we need to be clear about if we are going to address the question of women and the debt with a view towards action.

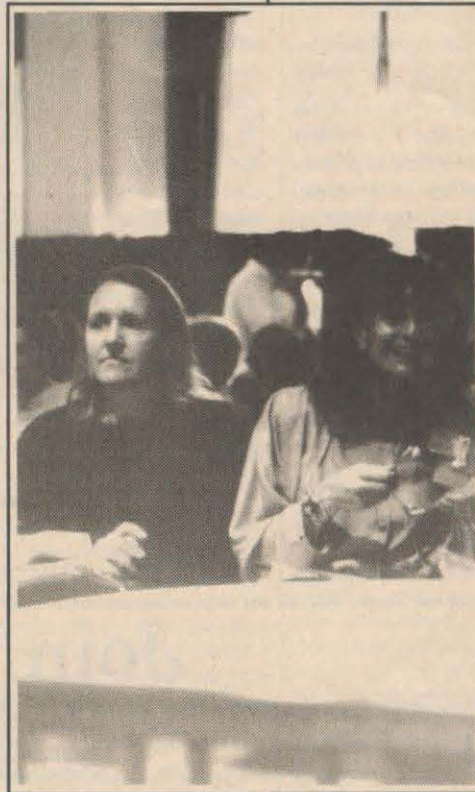
Dinah Leventhal

One is that debt is not a natural disaster, but is made, mostly manmade. The other is that from the perspective of lenders what matters is *not* the loans as such, but interest payments on those loans. Lenders want *operating* loans, that is how profit is made.

If debts are produced then we need to identify the mechanisms through which this production of debt has occurred. Furthermore, in the case of the so-called Third World debt crisis we are dealing with a mechanism that is clearly systematic insofar as its found in countries with different types of leadership and economic organization.

Saskia Sassen, left, and Joanne Barkan.

The available evidence shows strongly that a certain type of development model is at the heart of the economies of countries that have been plunged into debt. This model, the model dominant in the literature on



how countries can modernize and in IMF and World Bank circles, has several features:

- an emphasis on exports and integration into world markets

- state financing of the costly infrastructure required for an export economy (dams and irrigation systems for agriculture, but only for large scale commercial agriculture; import of basic goods and inputs for large scale industrialization projects, etc.);

- continuing support by the state and foreign lenders of a private sector that is to manage, own, and profit from such large scale projects. The consequences over time of the implementation of such a development model have become quite evident; debt is a built-in feature of such development models;

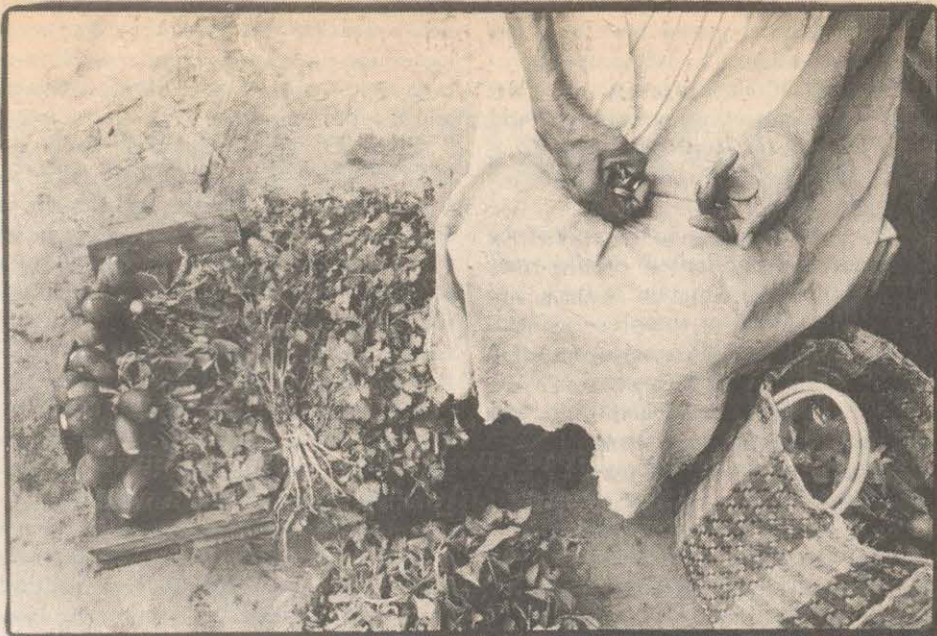
- export orientation has carried with it, inevitably perhaps, a neglect of the internal market and local consumption needs;

- the nature of export sectors that could get foreign financing was typical, such that small-holder agriculture, small factories producing with local inputs for local markets, and indigenous practices for raising the productivity of land, ... were all neglected and driven out of business;

- the profits of the development model for private sectors associated with export were often significant, and hence a good reason to continue supporting the model even as signs of national disaster grow;

- the costs of export development are largely carried by the state and by workers whose wages are gradually reduced to starvation levels in order to "compete" in the world markets; the state cuts services and other expenditures to meet debts, and eventually resorts to extreme measures such as sharp increases in the prices of food, the last step in a long series of steps geared towards extracting the last drop of revenue out of the population, while the wealthy export ever larger amounts of their profits and wealth, either clandestinely or openly, to safe foreign banks abroad.

The overall effect for a growing number of countries, especially in Africa and Latin America, has been untenable levels of national debt, rapid increases of poverty, rapid declines of the middle class, and rapid increases in capital flight. It has become evident that the development model sold around the world by development specialists, the IMF, the World Bank, and their various associates, has failed and led to a fatal neglect of local initiatives. These neglected local programs are the institutional arrangements that involve the majority of the



Cindy Reiman / Impact Visuals

Indigenous Peoples of the Americas SI Women Emergency Resolution

No discussion of global poverty can be complete without examining the plight of indigenous peoples around the world. In country after country, whether in the industrialized North or the developing South, it is the indigenous people of those lands that suffer most. On them a double burden of poverty falls. Globally, we see a trail of unresolved land claims and entitlements, destruction of culture and language, displacement and abject poverty especially for children, whether their country is rich or poor.

Canada is a case in point. This summer Canada has faced a major crisis with their won native peoples. The blockade at Oka, Quebec to save a piece of sacred land has only focussed attention on the problems for indigenous peoples, it has not even begun to solve them. Words will not work any more -- now there can only be action to begin to address aboriginal concerns.

In the United States, the federal government has a long history of broken treaties with native Americans. Native lands, even sacred lands, have been appropriated by private industry and government for use in mining, manufacturing, and waste disposal. Inadequate services have resulted in high infant mortality rates, shortened life spans, high unemployment and extreme impoverishment in

Native American communities.

Another example worth mentioning are Latin American indigenous ethnics who suffer the worst injustices and exploitation, being constantly denied the most elementary of human rights.

There are many countries with a similar history. As we approach 1992, we will be commemorating the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to America. There are many different perspectives on this commemoration since some indigenous peoples are still, after 500 years, the victims of dislocation, disease, poverty, suffering the destruction of their lands used as toxic waste dumps and the destruction of rain forests.

Socialist International Women calls on all member parties to ensure that indigenous peoples are able to tell their story and tragedy by providing equal funding and support to these groups during the 1992 commemorations. We call on governments around the world to take action on the outstanding issues of land claim settlements, human rights, political rights and personal safety of indigenous peoples. We call on our member parties in Socialist International to become advocates for these issues. Socialist International Women urges the United Nations to focus attention on the plight of indigenous peoples in 1992.

population.

What these countries have been left with is massive debt. The debt and the paralyzation of refinancing are now the key mechanisms connecting many Third World countries to the leading banks and international institutions, and mostly, to the so-called First World.

The place of women in the saga of the failure of export-oriented development models and the production of debt, has many facets. Some of these are evident, others are veiled by the categories used to understand how economies work.

We need to separate, analytically, several aspects of the place of women in order to gain a better understanding of women and the debt.

-- women have traditionally controlled the means of production for food and the food itself; when cash becomes the main resource of households (related to the formation of a rural proletariat, the necessary workforce for commercial agriculture), men tend to control the cash and hence the allocation of resources in the household (the evidence shows that typically less goes for nutrition and basic needs);

-- the neglect of local markets and locally oriented production associated with the export-oriented development typical in the last two decades, brought with it great devastation in an economic-social sphere that was geared principally to the local population and one in which women had key functions as producers and distributors;

-- the development of export zones in many Third World countries drew disproportionately on young women who emerged as a key input in the profit-making machinery represented by off-shore factories and offices -- the low wage branches of large U.S., European, and Japanese multinational firms;

-- professional women saw fewer chances for careers and jobs influencing policy (and conceivably making it more sensitive to women's needs);

-- women in the upper class represent a variety of outcomes: some became high-level government officials (mostly, it seems, supporting overall government strategies), many simply participated in the class dynamic of profit appropriation and the growing distancing of the elites from the masses of poor people. There are instances (I, at least, know of a few cases) where women (and men) of the upper classes became deeply involved in struggles for social justice and equity; but this was not a majority trend over the last two decades.

For the vast majority of women in the Third World, the consequence was the dev-

astation of those spheres where they had held a measure of control over resource allocation in the household and over elementary means of production (food, weaving, and kindred activities).

From the perspective of the debt, this has meant that women have been recruited to contribute to pay for the debt. That is to say, from an historical perspective, when women were independent producers for the most basic needs they could, to some extent, escape the pressure to transfer part of their earnings to the state in the form of higher prices for food or higher taxes. In the case of urban households (increasingly the majority in many countries), even as late as the early 1970s, many heads of household (men and women) were employed in local sectors and generally functioned in a context where their consumption capacity mattered to the economy and their political support mattered to the government (certainly in many of the Latin American countries up to the wave of military takeovers of the early 1970s). A large segment of the workforce were unionized and pressure was put on governments to provide various social services. Thus also in the working class and middle class women, although increasingly subjected to gender distinctions, had ways of participation in the national economy and in politics through their husbands,



Dinah Leventhal

Delegate Tessa Hebb spoke at a NYCDSA Feminist Branch brunch about the NDP victory.

children and household generally. I don't want to suggest that everything was wonderful in those days, but rather that conditions of continuing empowerment existed in a way they do not exist today.

A second important aspect about the debt and women is the withdrawal of more and more state support for various social programs and subsidies. In the extreme, this has caused massive hopelessness and starvation in several of the poorest Third World countries. While poverty and starvation have long been present in many of these countries, the order of magnitude they have reached today signifies a new phase. Large numbers of women and children, and men, have been pushed out of any possibility of a reasonably productive life. The extraction of money even from the poorest through increases in the prices of essentials and through taxation has finally pushed masses of the poor over the brink. This is not a natural disaster. This is a produced outcome. It may be difficult to see the connection between the build-up of debt and the dramatic rise in absolute poverty evident throughout much of the Third World today. But when we introduce the characteristics of development and state financing and neglect of local development we can see that these conditions could push conditions in this direction.

When we consider these outcomes, we inevitably are confronted with questions about the nature of poverty and hopelessness in the United States and increasingly in the U.K. and other highly developed countries. In the United States we can see the double effect of the state withdrawing from social support and extracting more and more money from those who can least afford it. This extraction of money in the case of a country such as the United States, happens through the decline in real income either directly or through inflation, and the withdrawal of state support through a series of measures curtailing expenditures on social programs, shrinking coverage, privatization of services, etc. Could it be that we are beginning to see the same set of processes put in motion in a country such as the U.S. that we have seen in Third World countries?

For more information on women and development, please see the author's book *The Mobility of Labor and Capital* (Capital University Press, 1988) on finance in the 1980s see her forthcoming book *The Global City; New York London Tokyo* (Princeton University Press, 1991).

Sweden in Transition

Joanne Barkan
Interviews
Anita Gradin



If all twenty-nine vice presidents of the Socialist International posed for a group photo, Anita Gradin would be one of just two women in the picture. S.I. Veep Gradin is also Sweden's Minister for Foreign Trade and President of the Socialist International Women. She has previously served as Sweden's Minister for Immigration and Women's Equality (1982-86) and as the Swedish delegate to the Council of Europe (1978-82). She doesn't have much time to babysit for her two-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter.

Joanne Barkan: When I was in Sweden in 1988, the economy was booming. Since then, there have been serious dislocations. What's happening?

Anita Gradin: The economy is still booming. It's doing too well. We have an unemployment rate of 1.2 percent and labor shortages in industry. We've had to close day-care

centers because we don't have enough personnel. Employers compete for workers, so on the local level we've had wage increases that are much higher than what was decided on at the central level. This is inflationary.

We're trying to convince the unions and employers' organizations to restrict wage increases. This has been going on for more than a year. We haven't been successful so far. It's difficult to get the message across that if you get a wage increase of 3 percent with an inflation rate of 2.5 percent, then you have real money. People think a 10 percent increase is a real increase even with high inflation.

This is *the* question, and the Social Democrats, being a minority government, haven't been able to get their proposals through Parliament.

As a consequence, we've had higher

interest rates, and this effects housing prices and so on. So we're trying to work out agreements in Parliament with other parties-- for example, the Liberals [a centrist party]. But there will be no money for new social reforms. For instance, we have to postpone the increase in parental leave because this would add fuel to inflation. Being minister for foreign trade, I know how it will effect our competitiveness on the international market if our prices are too high. If we're unable to compete, that will lower our exports and raise unemployment.

Then there's a new trend in the philosophy of the wage system. The employers will no longer agree to centralized bargaining. The

Swedish trade union council, the LO, still advocates centralized bargaining because it's a solidaristic policy. With more decentralized negotiations over the last few years, the wage gap between women and men in Sweden is widening for the first time in many, many years.

JB: The solidaristic wage policy -- equal pay for equal work nationwide -- has been fundamental to the Swedish social democratic system, along with the labor market policies. It made the distribution of income more equal and promoted both a high level of efficiency throughout the economy and an acceptance of restructuring. So if the wage policy isn't functioning, it seems that a main pillar of the system is crumbling.

AG: It's a serious threat. But there's still agreement that you must always restructure an export economy like the Swedish one. The opening of markets in Eastern Europe will mean restructuring in Sweden and the involvement of government.

JB: Will another system replace the solidaristic wage policy?

AG: You can't say yet. But the symptoms aren't good, particularly from the point of view of women.

JB: What are the prospects for Sweden's competitive position in Europe's single market?

AG: One third of our GNP depends on exports, and Western Europe is our main market. We're negotiating now with the other EFTA countries [the eighteen countries of the European Free Trade Association] and the Common Market [the twelve countries of the European Economic Community or EEC]. We're negotiating on the freedom of movement of goods, capital, services, and people. Prospects are good that Sweden and other EFTA countries will be part of the single market from

January 1, 1993. This will be a big help because Sweden is so dependent on foreign trade. If there are restrictions or discrimination against Sweden, our industries will move to other European countries.

JB: This brings up the flight of capital. I understand it's become a serious problem in Sweden in the last few years. I heard that the head of the Swedish metalworkers' union has said, "We need Swedish companies, but they don't need us."

AG: I wouldn't say it's a flight of capital because Swedish companies -- the important export companies -- have been international for decades. The model has been for them to have a base in Sweden and also invest and compete in the world market. They are leading competitors in some areas. This system creates employment abroad and in Sweden. Many of these companies have their research centers in Sweden. Their investments in Sweden are increasing all the time. And as I told you before, we have a labor shortage. So I'd say that it's healthy for the Swedish economy to have investments abroad as long as the companies bring something home and have their research and development centers in Sweden.

JB: Your party, the Swedish Social Democratic Labor party (SAP) had a congress this past September. Can you describe the debate and outcome?

AG: It was a very good congress. We adopted a program for the 1990s and had a broad discussion about what human beings face today. First, researchers have pointed out that Swedes are moving from a more collective perspective to a more individualistic view. As a consequence, many young people aren't interested in joining a political party. Instead they join something like Greenpeace or Amnesty International or another single issue movement because then they feel they can do something. The complex world where you have to face all the different questions doesn't seem to attract them. This is something we have to face in the old political parties. How can we deal with questions like the environment so that young people feel that the Social Democrats are an environmental party but also a party that deals with other issues?

We also discussed international questions. The world is getting smaller and smaller. It's a myth that we have national sovereignty in all areas. A lot of Swedes think we're going to have Swedish solutions to problems, but we can't. If we're going to clean up the Baltic Sea, we'll have to work with other governments. Informally we've given up sovereignty, but are we willing to do it formally as well? Can we be in an organization that operates on majority rule in order to force through difficult decisions?

A third topic of discussion was the fact that Swedish society has changed a lot. Many of us come from industrial areas and live in cities. Industrial areas used to be much smaller. Communities once had more social control, more cohesion, more popular movements. Now we have a lot of alienation among people. How do we prevent social problems? This affects all our policies -- education, social welfare, family policy. Now it's very common for people to have two partners in life. You have "my children"

and "your children." And what about local environmental questions? How many cars should a family have? How much should you pollute a local area? How do we face these questions?

JB: The SAP's standing in the polls is quite low relative to what it has been. Why?

AG: That's true. And now the biggest "opposition party" in Sweden are the people who don't know how they would vote. They account for 18 percent of the electorate. This is unusual for us. I think people are uncertain because of all the changes I've mentioned. They wonder, "Are the parties telling the truth about what's going on?" or "How will the new tax reform affect me?" Some people feel insecure because we don't have enough workers in old age care. Young couples criticize local authorities because they close day-care centers, not because of money but because there's not enough personnel. They are furious--and rightly so. One solution is to increase immigration, but so far there's no agreement on that.

Bob Simonello/Impact Visuals

JB: The Social Democrats seem to be in a bind. As a minority governing party, the SAP has to compromise with parties that don't share its perspective. The programs passed aren't necessarily as strong or coherent as they might be. But if they don't function well, it's the SAP, as the government party, that pays the price.

AG: That's right. And it's something new in Swedish politics. Many trade unionists are not happy with this situation. They say, "We should have Social Democratic policies." But the answer is we don't have enough buttons to press in Parliament. The Communist party used to support us, but not anymore. So we have to deal with parties to the right. This is frustrating and also produces suspicion. People say, "You've given up important Social Democratic ideas." But it's something we'll have to live with. We might even have a coalition government in the future. We'll have to make the best of it or give up power -- but that's not what people want either. ●

Joanne Barkan is a freelance writer in New York City and a member of the DSA National Political Committee.



During a time of political transition, Swedes still give health care programs strong support.



Bogdan Denitch, DSA's Permanent Representative to Socialist International.

From the October S.I. Meeting:

ist International
-9, 1990



Audrey MacLaughlin [second from right] of Canada's NDP with other dignitaries at the opening ceremony...

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...DSA National Director Michael Lighty with NPC member Juanita Webster.

The NDP, Socialism, and Canada

An Interview with Audrey McLaughlin

Audrey McLaughlin, head of the New Democratic Party of Canada, spoke with Barbara Fedders, corresponding secretary of the DSA Youth Section, at the Socialist International council meeting in New York City, Oct. 5-10. Special thanks are due to DSAer Neil McLaughlin for his assistance.

Barbara Fedders: What does the Sept. 6 victory of the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Ontario mean for the prospects of the party in the rest of Canada?

Audrey McLaughlin: The victory in Ontario will give the NDP a chance to demonstrate what a social democratic government can do. There's an NDP government in the least populous province, the Yukon, and now we have one in the most populous. People really are prepared to look at an alternative to the two traditional parties. The fact that it's happening in the richest, most industrialized province represents a real shift in the way Canadians are thinking politically.

BF: To what extent was the NDP victory the result of negative voting? Does the NDP really have a popular mandate to enact social democratic reforms?

AMcL: Well, whenever a member of a minority group -- a woman, a Native American, or a black -- wins anything, it's always perceived as negative voting, a fluke. Actually, there probably was an element of protest voting in the sense that people are saying "no" to old-style politics and want something new and different. But we in the NDP have been pointing out that the victory was a decisive one, with the NDP ending up with 38 percent of the vote.

BF: What are the challenges facing the NDP right now in Ontario?

AMcL: Basically three -- the economy, the environment, and equality. Because of the US-Canada Free-Trade Agreement, people in Ontario are facing the prospect of massive unemployment in manufacturing. There is an increasing disparity between rich and poor. 40 percent of those using food banks are children. There will be a good deal of pressure put on the NDP to do something about the environment. Given its large manufacturing sector, there is a growing "environmental deficit."

The primary issues of equality we're going to be dealing with are the demands for equal pay for work of equal value, and for a comprehensive plan for dealing with the more than 530 land claims in Canada by aboriginal peoples. The province can play a fairly large role in developing this plan.

BF: Although the NDP is the only party with a pro-choice platform, it hasn't traditionally fared all that well among women. Why is that?

AMcL: In Canada, one can't assume a connection between a pro-choice stance and women's votes. There's always been a gender gap in the NDP -- women have been powerless, so why would they vote for a party that was, until recently, powerless?

But people are becoming more politically sophisticated, and as they do, that gender gap will close even more. Television informs issues more than ever. In Ontario, people may have been reacting to the gap they saw between how the [Liberal] party presents itself in the media and how it actually functions.

BF: What are some of the key issues in the constitutional crisis, and where does the NDP stand on them?

AMcL: Obviously Quebec nationalism is important. The NDP supports a United Federal Canada and wants to see Quebec in Canada. This will be a challenge, given that the Bloc Quebecois currently has much support. Also, a major issue for us is the abolition of the unelected Senate. We've initiated an action group to investigate possibilities for parliamentary reform.

BF: What kind of opposition movement to the Canada-U.S. Free-Trade Pact is there?

AMcL: The NDP and the Canadian Labor Congress are working on general plans right now. Our ties with organized labor are quite strong, and I'd say that we have a good, reciprocal relationship. Their support was a large part of our success, and, through the "third party" federally, we have been able to serve them well.

BF: We in the U.S. are suffering from the popular perception that the collapse of communism means the failure of socialism. How have the changes in Eastern Europe affected the NDP?

AMcL: "Liberal" is a benign label in Canada as compared to the U.S., so it should be no surprise that being called a socialist here isn't as harmful to one's political chances in Canada as it is in the U.S. The label certainly didn't seem to matter in Ontario.

BF: What is the importance of the Socialist International?

AMcL: It is very important to be part of an international movement with the same goal and vision, to have links with other countries, both where we are in power and where we are not. We in the SI are able to look for ways to forge a common environmental and economic security. Internationalism is part of a social democratic ideology.

Review

Still Tory, Still Whig

by Neil McLaughlin

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE: THE VALUES AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA by Seymour Martin Lipset, New York: Routledge, 1990.

The relative weakness of the socialist movement in the United States has meant that the American left has alternated between a preoccupation with foreign models and a parochial isolation from the rest of the world movement. Far too many U.S. leftists have looked to radical experiments in third world countries as models, partly as a substitute for our inability to build a viable movement at home. At the same time, the American left has largely ignored the example of the mass based social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP) of Canada -- the country most relevant to the U.S. experience.

Although the recent constitutional crisis over Quebec has given Canada unusual press coverage, Americans know little about their northern neighbor. The best source for Americans on the Canadian experience is Seymour Martin Lipset's *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*.

Similarities & Differences

Canada and the United States are, according to Lipset, more similar to each other than any two countries in the world. Both nations are wealthy federal democracies that span a shared continent. Both have similar economic conditions and are "new nations" populated by heterogeneous ethnic groups with largely immigrant origins. Canadians and American watch the same television shows and professional sports teams. With the important exceptions of the French in Canada and the growing Spanish speaking population in the United States, most Americans and Canadians speak the same language and share a common history. As Lipset begins his book, "Americans do not know but Canadians cannot forget that two nations, not one, came out of the American revolution."

Yet there are also significant differences between the two nations. Lipset argues that Canada is both more radical and more traditionalist than the United States. Canada's labor movement is proportionately twice the size, and their welfare state is more comprehensive than is the United States'. There is more government ownership of industry in Canada, and there are electorally viable social democratic parties in both English and French Canada. Despite the continuing conflict over French Quebec and the recent tragic fighting between government troops and Native Americans at Oka, Quebec, Canadians have been more successful in building a multi-ethnic nation than have Americans. The image of a diverse cultural "Mosaic" shapes at least the ideal of Canadian race relations, while the "Melting Pot" is a profoundly American idea.

It is important, however, not to romanticize Canada. Lipset reminds us that Canada is also a more hierarchical and elitist society, with fewer protections for individual rights and propor-

tionally more millionaires than is true in the United States. Canada's legal tradition does not put the same stress on the separation of Church and state, and their educational system is more elitist and culturally conservative.

Divergent Histories

Lipset argues that these differences are rooted in the divergent historical origins of the two nations. The United States is the country of revolution against the British Crown, Canada the nation of counterrevolution. While the United States was formed from a revolt against the British monarchy, Canada was where the defeated loyalist opponents of the American Declaration of Independence fled. The early history of French speaking Canada was dominated by conservative Catholic clerics who rejected the anti-clerical and egalitarian ideas of the French revolution. And a unified Canadian nation was formed in 1867 by conservative elites who feared the democratic influence of the victorious Union after the American Civil War.

This different history has shaped the divergent organizing principles of each nation. The United States, for Lipset, celebrates "the overthrow of an oppressive state, the triumph of the people, a successful effort to create a type of government never seen before." Government is feared in the United States because of the liberal "Whig" traditions that "emphasize distrust of the state, egalitarianism, and populism," and "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," argues Lipset. "Peace, Order, and Good Government," Lipset claims, were the values of the founders of the Canadian Dominion. Consequently, the Canadian nation was organized around European and English conservative "Tory" principles. This has meant a fear of uninhibited popular sovereignty, greater respect for authority, the acceptance of a strong state, hierarchically organized state religions, and less concern with individual liberties and rights.

The United States has, since the New Deal and its postwar rise to global superpower status, come to value the importance of state involvement in the economy and foreign affairs. In addition, the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s brought group demands into the center of American politics, thereby forcing the nation to modify its individualistic creed.

Canada is now a modern parliamentary democracy no longer dominated by monarchists and church elites. Canada's 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms brought the country even closer to the American focus on individual rights and judicial supremacy. Nonetheless, Lipset makes a compelling argument that the United States and Canada continue to differ in significant and consistent ways. They are moving in the same direction but, Lipset argues, marching to different drummers.

While Lipset has written several seminal works in political sociology, *Continental Divide* is his best. As a young radical, Lipset wrote *Agrarian Socialism* in the 1940s, a classic work on the Canadian socialist movement in Saskatchewan. Lipset's politics have changed significantly since then. While it would be a mistake to dismiss Lipset as a neoconservative, he is no longer unambigu-

ously part of the socialist left. He is now a Senior Fellow at the right wing Hoover Institute at Stanford University and is a right wing social democrat. Yet Lipset's brilliance as a social scientist allows him to shed light on issues even for people with whom he disagrees.

Analytical Weaknesses

There are bound to be weaknesses in an analysis of this scope. Lipset's discussion of literature and myths is suggestive, especially when he draws upon the Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood. Yet Lipset's use of orthodox Freudian and Jungian speculations is unconvincing. And while Lipset has written elsewhere about the importance of slavery in shaping American culture, comparative work on the U.S. and Canada must place Southern slavery at the center of its analysis -- something Lipset does not do in *Continental Divide*. Finally, while Lipset's emphasis on cultural values as an explanation for the weakness of trade unionism and socialism in the United States is compelling, he downplays the influence of such structural barriers as the American electoral and legal systems. Lipset himself was the pioneer of this analysis over thirty years ago, yet his present emphasis on culture underestimates the importance of the distinctive American political system and state repression. [For a useful look at the role of state repression in undermining the U.S. labor movement, see DSAer Pat Sexton's new book *The War on Labor*.]

Anyone serious about American politics should read Lipset's

Continental Divide. Canadians already know quite a lot about the United States, but Americans can learn much about their own society by looking at Canada. American conservatives could learn that the social stability they value requires the kind of welfare state Canadians enjoy. A dialogue about the Canadian experience could help American liberals move away from the "legalistic liberalism" that *Dissent's* Fred Siegal says resulted in the Dukakis fiasco. As sociologist Robert Bellah has argued, Americans must develop a more communitarian liberalism. The NDP has succeeded in bringing a social democratic vision into the mainstream of Canadian politics. The recent victory of the Ontario NDP suggests that things may be turning around for the North American democratic left. The recently negotiated Canada-U.S. Free-Trade Pact means that the economies of the two countries will be more closely integrated than ever before. The American left must respond to this new situation by initiating more joint work and dialogue with the New Democratic Party, particularly around the issue of national health care. While Seymour Martin Lipset's *Continental Divide* is largely an historical work, it provides the U.S. left with a valuable resource and analytical framework for confronting contemporary issues facing Canadians and Americans.

Neil McLaughlin, a member of the Democratic Left editorial Committee, teaches at Queens college and grew up in Canada.



Dinah Leventhal

In Parting:

Delegates and friends enjoy a lighter moment at the reception for the Socialist International held at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Labor Center.

on strike and obtained, among other things, a rare concession from the government: that the criteria for all future layoffs be negotiated between the unions and the port management. Cumulatively, the series of individual strikes played an important role in the undoing of Collor's economic policies.

Sliding Popularity

In addition to worker militancy, the Collor plan has been unravelling for other reasons. Most of the major business interests have succeeded in convincing Economic Minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello to liberate their bank accounts in order to make payroll and other expenses. This has meant that almost all of the major businesses managed to convert their frozen cruzados into usable cruzeiros. Almost 80 percent of the liquidity which Collor succeeded in removing from the economy returned. Moreover, fraternal and charitable organizations were declared exempt from the freeze. Many businesses established questionable "charitable" ventures in order to free up their account.

By June, Collor and Zelia Cardoso realized that they did not have the political wherewithal to enforce their system of price and wage controls. Most of the major business accounts had been fully liberated, and merchants were rapidly hiking prices. Even though the Brazilian Congress supported Collor initially, it certainly was not going to back a program that was becoming increasingly unpopular. Zelia announced an end to the "prefixing" policy and declared that wages would be subject to "free negotiation." For the month of July, inflation increased another 13.5 percent.

The unravelling of the economic plan wreaked havoc on Collor's popularity. Data Folha, the polling service of a leading Brazilian newspaper, reported in June that the President's approval rating had dropped from 71 to 38 percent. Folha predicted that by the end of 1990, Collor's popularity would actually be lower than that of former President Jose Sarney's popularity in 1989.

Collor's plummeting popularity also revitalized congressional and judicial opposition. Congress rejected a presidential measure ordering the Supreme Labor Court to suspend all judicially-mandated wage hikes for 150 days. A second, almost identical executive measure was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Federal Court. In July, Congress went on the offensive by passing a bill pegging monthly wage increases to the consumer price index for the lowest income brackets. Although a predictable veto by Collor was finally upheld, the Brazilian Congress demonstrated more fortitude than it had in April.

Evidently sensing that organized labor had done much to undermine his economic designs, Collor recently struck back in a manner which surprised the leftist trade

contribucao sindical, or trade union tax. In March of each year, all workers, regardless of actual union membership, pay a tax equivalent to one day's salary to support the Labor Ministry and the official, corporatist trade union system. (The employers automatically check off the contribution, depositing it in a state bank called Caixa Economica Federal). The CUT has always advocated abolishing the tax, saying that it perpetuates state paternalism and control over the labor movement. Nonetheless, nearly all of the official national confederations and state federations, as well as over half of the local sindicatos, depend on it since they fail to collect voluntary dues.

Ironically, the more conservative CGT President Antonio Magri is the current Labor Minister. CUT President Jair Meneguelli

announced that his central certainly agreed with the outcome, but objected to the means used -- namely, a unilateral presidential edict without consultation, debate, or discussion.

Even though Collor has proven himself to be a master of surprises, he also knows that cooperating with business and labor may be the only chance he has to save his economic policy. On June 18, he invited the CUT and Brazil's major business leaders to Brasilia for the purpose of negotiating a social pact on wages, inflation, and employment. Although the negotiations ended when the government presented the dismissal of 10,000 government workers as a fait accompli, the very act of inviting the CUT was an indication of Collor's desperation. On September 20, Collor spoke directly with Jair Meneguelli, inviting the CUT to new social pact negotiations without "limits or preconditions." The CUT accepted the invitation on September 21.

Although the threats of growing unemployment, higher inflation, and deepening recession continue as serious challenges to Brazilian unions, the labor movement is far from paralyzed. Without question, a luta continua (the struggle continues). ●

Stanley Gacek, a member of DSA, is a labor attorney and Assistant Director of the International Affairs Department, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union.

Election Update

October 3rd election results indicate that the PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Mobilization Party) and the PFL (Liberal Front Party) will constitute the new majority in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, giving the Brazilian Congress a center-right tilt. Given the continued inflation, a vacillating economic policy, and falling approval ratings for the President, Collor's National Reconstruction Party did surprisingly well, gaining nearly forty seats in the Chamber.

Nonetheless, the left did not fare all that badly and will constitute a formidable opposition. Although the PSDB (Brazilian Social Democratic Party) dropped from sixty to forty federal deputies, the PDT (Democratic Labor Party) of Leonel Brizola captured four more seats, increasing its number in the Chamber to forty-two. The PDT became the fourth largest party in the Congress. Moreover, Brizola enjoyed a sweeping victory in Rio de Janeiro's gubernatorial race.

The PT almost doubled its representation in the Chamber, winning over thirty seats. It also captured a berth in the mid-November gubernatorial run-off elections in Amapa and Acre. Jorge Viana, the PT candidate in Acre, defeated Ruvem Branquinho, a rancher with ties to the reactionary UDR (Democratic Ruralist Union). Only weeks prior to his murder, Chico Mendes accused Branquinho of participating in the assassination conspiracy.

In late September, Collor issued an "amended" provisional measure, effectively abolishing the contribucao sindical. Once again, Congress must approve the proposal in thirty days or the measure will automatically expire. The opposition from the official labor confederations only grows.

SG

unions and raised the ire of more conservative labor leaders. On August 30, Collor issued a provisional measure abolishing the



DSA National Political Committee Draft Resolution

U.S. in the Gulf

T September 16, 1990

The Iraqi invasion and annexation of Kuwait and the massive U.S. military build up in the Gulf have brought the Middle East to the brink of armed conflict which threatens to escalate into a war waged using chemical and nuclear weapons with catastrophic consequences.

The present conflict, while immediately precipitated by the aggression of the Iraqi military dictatorship, is the result of long simmering tensions in the region which would persist even if Iraq were to withdraw from Kuwait and the United States were to desist from carrying out its threat to topple the Iraqi regime through external pressure and military force.

We note with dismay, again, that the absence of the a genuine opposition party in the United States leads to disastrous and short sighted bi-partisan consensus supporting an imperial presidency in foreign policy. Any military "solution" to the Gulf crisis will be a disaster. We reject the notion that the United States should be a world police force. It has repeatedly turned to the direct and indirect use of armed force to project what its governments have claimed to be its legitimate interests. This has been shown by the US record in the Middle East, in Panama, Grenada, the Dominican Republic and Central America. We reject the claim that this represents the defense of the genuine interests of the people of the United States. On the contrary, legitimate interests of the United States can only be assured within a just economic world order and through the pursuit of a non-interventionist democratic foreign policy. The United States can break its dependence on imported oil. It must break its alliances with repressive and undemocratic regimes.

The Gulf Crisis is the result of the legacy of imperialism and colonialism in the Middle East. The crisis is the consequence of the decades long infusion of massive quantities of armaments and the deliberate fostering of tensions in the region by the United States and by the Soviet Union. Both have supported and armed undemocratic, oppressive, and aggressive regimes at war with their neighbors and their own populations. Both alliances have readily changed their regional clients. The United States now accepts military aid from the murderous Syrian dictatorship in confronting the Iraqi regime, yet the United States favored this regime during Iraq's armed attack on Iran, an attack supported by a massive U.S. naval build up in the Gulf. The Soviet Union, in turn, has been a major military supplier of both the Syrian and Iraqi regimes, among others.

Tensions in the Middle East are exacerbated by the failure to find a democratic and just solution for the Palestinian people that would guarantee security to all the parties to the dispute. Therefore we favor a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on Israel's recognition of the right of the Palestinians to an independent state and the Palestinian recognition of the right of Israel to exist within secure borders.

There will be no long range stability in the region so long as there is a grotesquely unjust distribution of wealth and resources, the repression of national self-determination of whole peoples, and an absence of democratic institutions and egalitarian economic development. Further exacerbating the Gulf crisis, an increasingly unjust global economic order stymies democratic development where it is desperately needed and encourages a wasteful, environmentally destructive way of life which is neither just nor sustainable.

We Call For:

1. A declaration by the United States that no permanent bases will be established in the Middle East and that U.S. armed forces will not remain in the region. We call for the withdrawal of all U.S. ground troops from the Gulf. Whatever U.S. naval or air forces remain must be under direct control of U.N. sponsored forces.
2. We call for an immediate withdrawal of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait to be followed by U.N. supervised election. We call for the immediate and unconditional release of all civilians and the granting of free passage out of Iraq and Kuwait.
3. The Iraqi-Kuwaiti territorial dispute, including the claims against Kuwait for misappropriation of oil should be settled by the World Court.
4. We support continued U.N. sanctions against Iraq, with the exception of food and medical supplies, if Iraq does not withdraw its military forces from Kuwait. Any forces used to enforce the sanctions must be under direct U.N. control.
5. Our long range proposals include a non-nuclear and ecologically sound U.S. energy policy to break dependence on fossil fuels, a continued scaling down of U.S. military forces appropriate to a non-interventionist foreign policy and a post Cold War world, and support for the Brandt-Manley-Palme proposal for a new North-South economic order.