

PUBLISHED BY THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA

DEMOCRATIC Left



September/October 1993
Volume XXI Number 5

A New Era for Labor



. . .but what kind?

LABOR DAY 1993

INSIDE DEMOCRATIC LEFT

A New Day for Labor?
by William E. Spriggs. . .3

**National Health Care:
The Next Steps**
by Susan Cowell. . .8

Asian-Americans and Labor
by Dominic Chan. . .13

Reinventing OSHA
by George J. Kourpias. . .18

DSAction. . .20

DSA Youth as Organizers
by Tom Ellett. . .24

On the Left. . .26

DSA Raises the Red Flag
by John Mason. . .28

Global Thinking, Global Action
by Kurt Stand. . .29

Remembering César Chávez
by Duane Campbell. . .33

Women and Unions
book review by Jo-Ann Mort. .34

Janie Higgins Reports. . .40

cover photos:

*Robert Reich by Rick Reinhard/Impact
Visuals; welder by Piet van Lier/
Impact Visuals*

EDITORIAL

CLINTON AND LABOR

BY MARK LEVINSON

Bill Clinton was elected president because he articulated an alternative vision to Reaganism. While Republicans adhered to a hokey version of "free enterprise," Clinton stressed that government had to take responsibility for the economy; while Republicans emphasized deficit reduction, Clinton insisted that the most important issue was creating good jobs and raising living standards; while the right spoke about how we couldn't afford health care, Clinton promised a national health insurance program.

Clinton's election has made a difference. His tax program was progressive, and the expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit is the largest anti-poverty program in over twenty years. But Clinton's alternative vision has begun to fade. The investment program gave way to deficit reduction, the promise of creating good jobs is being sacrificed in a foolish attempt to pass NAFTA, and the jury is still out on health care.

Clinton should take a cue from Ronald Reagan, who did more to transform the social climate in this country than any president since Franklin Roosevelt. Reagan -- reac-

tionary, simple-minded, and disengaged -- was nonetheless the most ideological president since the New Deal. People believed he stood for something.

Clinton and his advisors act as if they don't need people and their institutions in order to change society; that politics is simply a technical question of crafting policy.

For example, two leading members of the Clinton administration recently questioned the importance of unions. "The jury is still out," according to Labor Secretary Robert Reich, "on whether the traditional union is necessary for the new workplace." And in case anyone missed the point, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown added, "Unions are okay where they are. And where they are not, it is not yet clear what sort of organization should represent workers."

The problem with this is that weak unions will hamper efforts to improve the economy, and will hurt the administration politically.

Unions not only raise living standards for workers, but research has consistently shown that organized plants are more productive than non-union worksites because they have lower turnover and have more experienced and loyal workers. As Richard Rothstein has recently pointed out, 20 years ago the United States, West Germany and Canada had nearly identical unionization rates. By the late 1980s unionization had increased in Germany and Canada and decreased in the United States.

Yet during the same period the Canadian and German economies grew faster than the United States'. In the U.S. the decline of unions has contributed to slower growth.

In addition, polls demonstrate that union members vote in significantly higher percentages for Democrats than do non-union members. The coalition that Clinton put together in 1992 cannot survive without greater unionization.

To reshape American politics Clinton must realize that workers and their unions are a crucial force for social action and should be strengthened.

Mark Levinson is an economist with AFSCME District Council 37, and a member of the DSA National Political Committee.

DEMOCRATIC LEFT

Managing Editor
Michael Lighty

Production
David Glenn

Editorial Committee

**Joanne Barkan, Dorothee Benz,
Howard Croft, Mitch Horowitz,
Sherri Levine, Maxine Phillips**

Interns

Theresa Gorman, Lars Rensmann

Founding Editor

Michael Harrington (1928-1989)

Democratic Left (ISSN 016403207) is published bimonthly at 15 Dutch St., # 500, NY, NY 10038. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY (Publication No. 0701-9602). Subscriptions: \$8 regular; \$15 institutional. Postmaster: Send address changes to 15 Dutch St., # 500, NY, NY 10038. Democratic Left is published by the Democratic Socialists of America, 15 Dutch St., #500, NY, NY 10038 (212) 962-0390. Signed articles express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily those of the organization.

A New Day for Labor?

Confronting Old Questions and New Challenges

BY WILLIAM E. SPRIGGS

The United States first celebrated Labor Day in 1882 in New York. One hundred eleven years later, the U.S. labor movement finds itself in an uncomfortable position. Many crucial questions remain unresolved and new questions are emerging. What exactly is workers' role in making workplace decisions? How will changes in international trade patterns affect workers' rights? And, most centrally, in the wake of the Reagan/Bush-era attacks on labor, how meaningful does the "right to organize" remain in the United States?

The Right to Organize, the Right to Strike

Most Americans had considered this issue settled with the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA, also known as the Wagner Act) by Congress in 1935. Section 7 of that Act clearly states:

Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.

In recent years, however, the practice of permanently replacing -- in effect, firing -- workers who go out on strike has grown to the point of poisoning labor-management relations in America. This comes just when labor-management cooperation in the workplace is proving essential to boosting the productivity and competitiveness of the American economy. (At a recent conference sponsored by the Clinton administration, 400 representatives from business, labor, and government watched three presentations on high-performance workplaces. All three case studies involved unionized companies.)

Before the Wagner Act, state governments often attempted to regulate labor relations through arbitration -- with stringent restrictions on the right to strike. This was a bleak period of human suffering and social division, symbolized by infamous bloody battles at such work sites as the Carnegie Steel Mills in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892 and the railroad yards of Chicago in 1894. The use of police, state militia, and private armies to enforce court injunction orders to end strikes or stop violence over the use of replacement workers required a legislative response.

Strikes were more violent then because at



1993 auto industry contract negotiations begin. UAW President Owen Bieber (left) and GM's Jerry Knechtel shake hands.

their core -- regardless of the economic issues at hand -- was the question: Should workers be allowed to bargain collectively with management? On the issue of employees' right to organize and bargain collectively with their employer there can be no compromise position: either they have such a right or they do not. The refusal of management to recognize this right set up conflicts that could not be resolved through negotiations. The NLRA brought collective bargaining within the law by establishing the right to strike. This freed workers to organize by making management reprisals illegal. Under the NLRA, work stoppages are meant to be over economic issues, not over the right of employees to bargain collectively.

But the framework for worker rights in the NLRA is loose. The act mandates little in the way of specific behavior. It presumes the good-

tions helped to create a climate in which permanently replacing strikers (a practice that had been permitted by a 1938 Supreme Court ruling, but rarely carried out) became the order of the day.

A critical event was the Reagan administration's 1981 decision to replace permanently twelve thousand striking air traffic controllers. Although the NLRA did not protect the controllers, since they were federal employees, the administration nonetheless sent a signal that the federal government could end a collective bargaining relationship.

The Supreme Court also sent a message of shifting bias toward management. In *TWA v. IFFA* (1989), the Court extended the striker-replacement doctrine to cover crossover workers (strikers who return to work before a dispute is settled) covered under the Railway Labor Act. In *Balknap v. Hale* (1983), the Court gave employers the option of keeping replacement workers or retaining striking workers: however, if the company offers replacement workers permanent jobs, the replacements can sue if the company decides to reinstate the striking workers. Companies can now say that they have a legal obligation to retain replacement workers rather than retain their striking employees.

The cumulative result of these decisions has been to create an ominous growth in labor-management friction. The number of unfair labor practice charges has more than doubled, from below 10,000 each year in the 1960s to more

Do we really have a meaningful right to organize?

will of both parties because management and labor have an interdependent relationship; when one party acts in a predatory manner, the law can be rendered useless.

During the last fifteen years, however, management has effectively been *encouraged* to engage in predatory behavior by a series of anti-union court decisions and regulatory patterns. In particular, the Reagan and Bush administra-

than 20,000 annually by the end of the 1980s. The number of workers who win reinstatement to remedy being fired by unfair labor practices has gone from a few thousand annually in the 1950s to the tens of thousands. These increases have overwhelmed the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). According to a recent General Accounting Office report, the median length of time required to resolve unfair labor practice cases increased from just over 500 days in 1980 to over 770 days in 1990. This long waiting period, combined with the paltry size of the penalties assigned for most violations, reduces the costs to employers of violating the NLRA and makes a mockery of justice.

Weaker Unions, Growing Inequality

Largely because of these attacks by American firms on collective bargaining, the U.S. has the lowest union density of any democratic industrialized nation. The U.S. also had one of the greatest declines in union density during the 1980s. That trend is not without consequences.

Many labor economists have documented the declining fortunes of America's workers. Recent research has highlighted the failure of the policies of the 1980s to reduce poverty or reverse new declines in earnings for African American males relative to white males, high-school-educated workers relative to college-educated workers, and high-school-educated private sector workers relative to high-school-educated public sector workers. The general theme is clear: There was a large increase in wage inequality in the U.S. during the 1980s.

This pattern represented a reversal. The trend among industrialized nations during the 1970s had been toward wage equality. In the 1980s, the large increase in wage differentials in the U.S. set it apart from most other industrialized nations. Only England, which had pursued some policies similar to those in the U.S., also had a large increase in inequality. But the U.S. was unique in that wages fell so dramatically

for the lower end of wage earners. In explaining why the U.S. pattern was unique, researchers Lawrence Katz and Richard Freeman concluded that the decline of unionization, in combination with differences with wage-setting institutions and in training and education systems, contributed to rising wage inequality in the U.S.

Hope for Change

A new day may be possible for American labor in the 1990s. The Clinton administration has appointed a commission to review America's labor laws. John Dunlop, who served as

After years of hostility, there may now be a chance for a more constructive era.

Secretary of Labor during the Ford administration, heads the commission. Commission members include another former Secretary of Labor, Ray Marshall, and leading academics -- Richard Freeman, Paula Voos, Thomas Kochan, and William Gould. Gould, a professor of law at Stanford, is Clinton's pick to chair the NLRB, and would be the first African-American to

Members of the Allied Industrial Workers picket an A.E. Staley plant in Decatur, Illinois.



Jim West/Impact Visuals

serve as chair.

During the first session of the 103rd Congress, the House passed the César Chávez Workplace Fairness Act to make the use of permanent replacements for striking workers illegal. The measure did not come before the Senate prior to Congress's summer break. President Clinton has pledged to sign the legislation if it passes.

That legislation, along with the nomination of Gould to head the NLRB, the signing of the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the promise of the Dunlop Commission, presents reason to hope that American labor may rebound from its present low point. After twelve years of hostility from Washington toward organized labor, there is now a chance for a more constructive era in labor-management relations.

The NAFTA Challenge

But amidst these positive signs sits a new challenge for workers worldwide: the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other potential new trade agreements. NAFTA has, of course, raised serious fears among progressives; as Walter Russell Mead wrote last year, NAFTA-style trade agreements will bring us toward "a global corporate utopia in which local citizens are toothless, workers' unions are tame or broken, environmentalists and consumer advocates outflanked." Now, with NAFTA about to be introduced to Congress, fears are stronger than ever.

A May Day rally against NAFTA in Seattle.



Dana Schuerholz/Impact Visuals

The Clinton administration failed in its pledge to devise an effective side agreement to NAFTA that would protect workers' rights. Indeed, the side agreements on labor are even weaker than those for the environment -- union rights are excluded from the proposed enforcement process that would lead to fines or trade sanctions.

U.S. trade policy has almost entirely ignored worker rights. While some preferential trade agreements, like the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), protect internationally recognized labor rights in principle, these have proven difficult to enforce. NAFTA, as originally drafted, represents a step backward from even these minimal protections. Entire chapters of NAFTA are devoted to smoothing the differences in intellectual property rights and government procurement rules among the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, but NAFTA does not even address the much vaster -- and more fundamental -- differences among the three countries' approaches to workers' rights.

Most international trade economists and policy makers avoid discussing the connection between labor rights and international trade. In trade economists' theoretical world, the wages of workers reflect their productivity and countries operate at full employment. That world view sees the wages of workers -- labor costs -- as independent of national institutions. So these economists view a discussion of workers' rights only within the context of a social agenda.

The claim, however, that the wages of workers reflect their productivity lacks empirical basis. New research clearly challenges this faith with data that shows low wages do not necessarily mean low productivity.

The corporate domestic agenda of the last twelve years has seriously weakened U.S. worker rights. If these rights are not emphasized more in trade policy, then given current trends, workers will face harsher and harsher restrictions on their right to organize. Domestic labor policy debates will continue to be dominated by concerns that American worker rights will make American companies less competitive. Just as market forces will tend to level international wage differences, bringing those with higher wages down, so will political forces act to lower worker rights standards. But such a direction is not in the interest of world democracy; and the resulting low wages will not -- to say the least -- support sustained economic growth. **DL**

William E. Spriggs is an economist at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C.



LABOR DAY, 1993

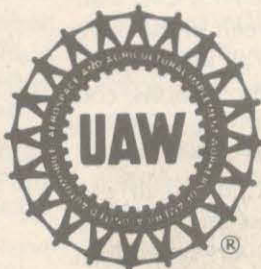
On this Labor Day, we honor over 16,000 Caterpillar workers who are continuing their fight for a fair contract.

We salute the miners on strike in America's coal fields and workers everywhere who have been forced by their employers' greed onto the picketlines.

We express our solidarity with the half-million auto workers and their families currently engaged in bargaining for a secure future.

And we extend our hand to workers in Mexico and other developing countries as they struggle for economic and political justice.

Let us all resolve on this workers' holiday to renew our faith, refortify our movement, and redouble our efforts until all men and women can reap the harvest of their efforts and enjoy the fruits of their labor in a world of freedom and peace.



INTERNATIONAL UNION, UAW

Owen Bieber, President Bill Casstevens, Secretary-Treasurer
Vice Presidents: Carolyn Forrest, Ernest Lofton, Stan Marshall, Stephen P. Yokich

National Health Care: The Next Steps

An Inside/Outside Strategy

BY SUSAN COWELL

Editor's Note: With this article by long-time single-payer activist Susan Cowell, Democratic Left continues an ongoing debate within DSA and the health care reform movement about strategies to win single-payer reform. DSA's organizational position will be decided at DSA's National Convention in November. We look forward to your responses to this article.

On the eve of the expected release of President Clinton's health care plan, the movement for single-payer health care can look back on some surprising successes. Since the AFL-CIO leadership split, in early 1991, between single payer and the Democratic leadership's "pay or play" proposal, an informal coalition of unions, consumer, senior, and other groups has kept the issue alive with minimal resources.

National and local coalitions have persuaded 88 members of the House and five senators to co-sponsor single-payer legislation. Even the media has belatedly acknowledged the power of single-payer advocates to influence the health care debate.

Single-payer supporters made an effective transition to the Clinton era by pursuing a dual strategy of gaining new sponsors of HR 1200, the single-payer bill introduced in the House by

U.S. Representatives Jim McDermott and John Conyers, and using single-payer principles to influence the Clinton Health Care Task Force. Advocates lobbied the Task Force, privately and publicly, delivering a million postcards asking President Clinton to incorporate single-payer principles into his plan.

Perhaps the greatest success of the single-payer movement was convincing the White House that health care reform will not solve our crisis unless it ensures comprehensive benefits to everyone, regardless of employment, health status, or income. The core of the anticipated White House plan is universal entitlement to a comprehensive health care package, with financing based on ability to pay. Except for some very large employers, employers will no longer be involved in designing and running health care plans for their employees.

Based on what we know, this is a real social insurance plan, one that would bring the United States into the civilized world. Not as good as Canada, but on a par with many other industrial countries. Only a few years ago, in the Reagan-Bush era, how many progressives thought that a national plan to make health care a right guaranteed by government, not just for the poor but for everyone, was this close to possible enactment?

Yet, waiting for the unveiling provokes more anxiety than congratulations. The White House proposal is still far from our model. It leaves the insurance industry with a reduced but important role. It has a managed competition structure that could lead to a two-tier system. Worst of all, as we saw during the budget debate, Republican and business opposition will exert enormous pressure to weaken the plan further.

In this period of uncertainty, the single-payer movement may fracture, with some opposing the Clinton plan as not good enough, and others supporting the plan as the best we can get. Either option risks abandoning our significant bargaining power -- and losing the historic opportunity to get national health care in the best form possible.

Given our current knowledge of the Clinton plan, critical support, which both defends and attempts to strengthen the plan, may be the most effective response. This approach would build on the success of our current strategy of trying to influence the Clinton plan based on single-payer

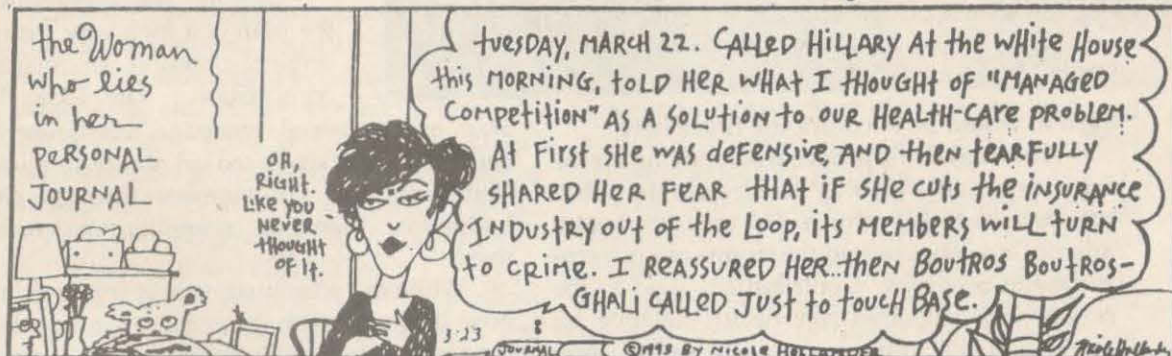
group stays reasonably united, it can make demands and influence the final plan. But if a significant number of congressional single-payer supporters reject the Clinton framework even as a basis for negotiations, then the president is likely to retreat to market reforms, such as community rating or efforts to make insurance affordable to small businesses, which can get support from conservative Democrats and moderate Republicans.

Health care reform will not solve our crisis unless it ensures comprehensive benefits to everyone.

The Clinton Task Force recommendations represent an effort to attain such single-payer goals as universality, comprehensiveness, cost containment, and fair financing, while accommodating the realities of Congress and the country. The political obstacles to fundamental reform include a widespread cynicism about government, a politically powerful popular opposi-

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



principles, and it could make it possible for organizations which endorse the plan to work with those that do not.

What we cannot afford to do is divide the forces for health care reform in a fight between single payer and the Clinton plan, which would certainly result in the defeat of real health care reform.

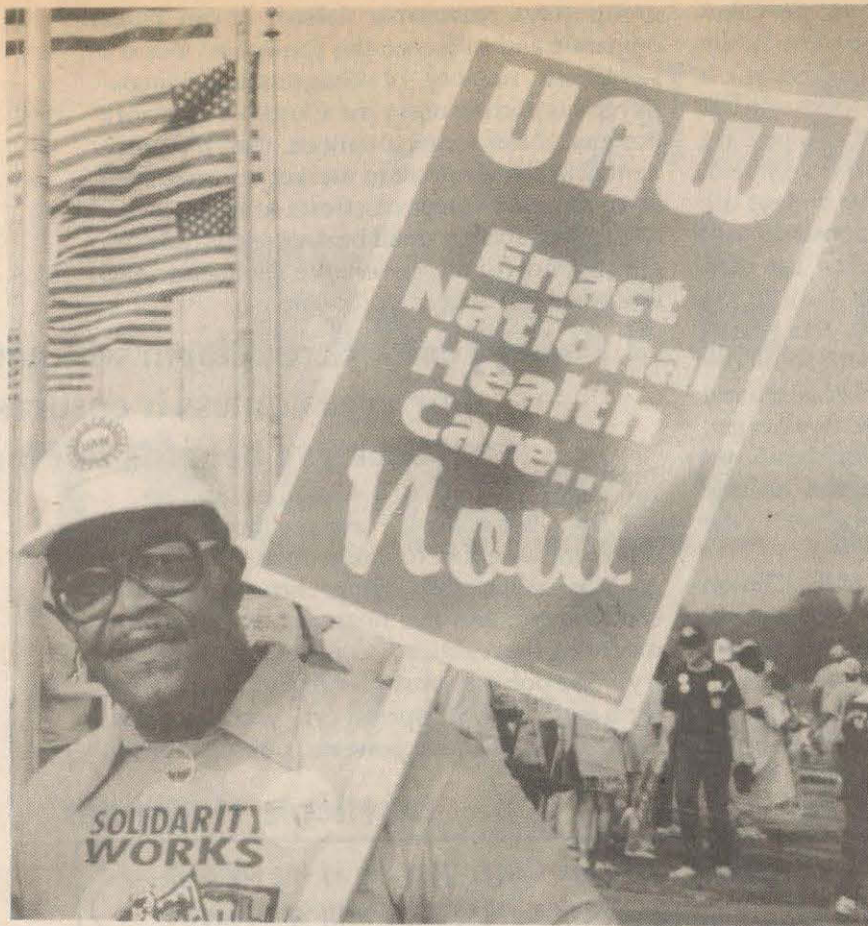
The political math is clear. The Republicans are likely to present a united front against any plan that is universal and comprehensive. Already 41 of the 44 Republican senators have written to President Clinton opposing any mandatory participation by employers, whether through a premium or payroll tax.

On the other hand, there is simply no majority for single payer in Congress. Single-payer co-sponsors have the numbers to defeat health care reform, but not to pass a single-payer plan. If the

tion to taxes, and a large insurance industry with both political clout and hundreds of thousands of jobs.

The Clinton approach is based on a proposal advanced by Paul Starr and like-minded reformers who played a prominent role on the Task Force. The approach has been called "single sponsor," based on Starr's suggestion that the purchasing cooperative mechanism of managed competition (renamed "health alliance" by the Clinton Task Force) could function as a single payer if all health care financing in a region were funnelled through the health alliance and if individuals (not employers) chose among plans offered by the health alliance.

What has attracted single-payer advocates to this approach is that it largely breaks the link with employment. For the vast majority of employers, their only role in the health care



A marcher at Solidarity Day 1991.

system would be to contribute financially.

What makes the proposal compelling for the administration is the way it addresses the political obstacles facing reform. The use of the health alliance is a way to avoid the stigma of a government-run program. Contributions paid to the non-profit, consumer-run health alliance by employers and individuals can be called "premiums," not taxes -- dedicated payments to fund health insurance, protected from politi-

We must not neglect the broader political fight to make health care a right, not a commodity.

cians and the inevitable federal and state budget crises. The White House seems to have adopted a "capped premium" -- that is, a premium capped at a percentage of payroll for both employers and workers, in effect a payroll tax for most workers.

Both Starr and the White House agree that the plan works best with no employer-run plans. However, in an attempt to get some business support, the Task Force has recommended a limited opt-out. Companies with over 5,000 employees could opt out, by offering the man-

dated benefit package to all employees and their families and contributing an additional payment into the health alliance to help cover the unemployed.

The other major political compromise is to divide the insurance industry -- providing a regulated role for large insurance companies which can run managed care plans, but eliminating small companies which cater to healthy people.

Single-payer advocates are reluctant to allow any role for insurance companies. However, insurance companies do not get their clout solely from the influence of their political contributions. The waste in the system is not just profits and excessive management salaries, but also jobs of clerical workers. The elimination of large numbers of jobs will face real opposition.

Despite the compromises, the plan is a long way from the original version of managed competition. The Task Force

plan has universal coverage, comprehensive benefits, financing based on ability to pay and significant cost containment through global budgeting. Managed competition has none of these.

While the administration is trying to minimize the break with the existing system, the reality is that the premiums are a form of tax and the health alliance is an arm of government. That's what makes the plan a social insurance system, and worth defending.

The next stage of the fight, in Congress, will be an extension of the program developed during the early months of the Clinton administration. Advocates have already developed a set of demands which would enable the Clinton plan to meet single-payer principles. These demands include financing based on a percentage of payroll, no employer opt-out, comprehensive benefits (particularly long-term care and a good prescription benefit for seniors), no additional premium for fee-for-service plans within the health alliance, public accountability of health alliances and the option for states to enact single-payer plans. Some, but clearly not all, of these demands are likely to be included in the Clinton plan.

It is certain that the plan will change during

congressional deliberations. An effective single-payer caucus in Congress, working with mobilized coalitions around the country around specific demands, can not only prevent the plan from moving right, but even move it in our direction. But only potential supporters will be able to exercise this kind of bargaining power.

As we lobby Congress around specific demands to improve the plan, we must not neglect the broader political fight -- to build popular support for a social insurance system that will make health care a right, not a commodity. Despite favorable polling data, we cannot simply assume that most people are with us on this issue. The opponents of national health care can tap into deep reserves of popular distrust of government and opposition to taxes.

Tax-based financing will be the heart of the struggle in Congress. Business and the right are gearing up to oppose any financing plan. If they are successful, there can be no national health care plan. Even if they do not succeed outright, opposition to the financing could lead Congress to try to reduce the cost of the plan by cutting the benefit package or increasing co-payments and deductibles.

While the number of uninsured is a national disgrace and nearly all Americans have reason to fear the possible loss of benefits, the majority of Americans still have very comprehensive health coverage. Most countries enacted national health care plans before the development of widespread private insurance, ensuring that most people would gain substantial new protections through national health care.

In this country, national health care means that the majority of working Americans will replace the plan they get at work with one that is similar, but more secure. The current anxiety of losing their employer-provided insurance (or having their benefits cut) must be balanced against the fear of trading the benefits they have for a new public plan. While union members, through collective bargaining and strikes, are more likely to be conscious of the wage increases that have been traded off to maintain health benefits, they also have the most to lose in giving up the good benefits they have fought to keep.

Unions and single-payer advocates have persuaded the Administration that the benefit package must be comprehensive to get broad support from union members and other insured people. But the struggle for national health care cannot be a narrow consumerist one. Our goal is to make health care a right for everyone, not to buy a better insurance plan.

Unions must fight not just for the immediate

interests of their own members, but for the broad interests of the working class, including non-union members and the unemployed. Union leaders and activists have to explain to our own members that their benefits can never be secure if we do not make health care a right for everyone.

In every other industrial country, health care is a public responsibility. Not all those systems are as efficient, comprehensive or egalitarian as we would like. None were created overnight. All are the subject of continuous political struggle.

Single-payer proponents must maintain a delicate balance; we must be insiders and outsiders simultaneously.

When Canada implemented its national health care plan in the 1960s, there were few insurance companies in the health business besides Blue Cross, health insurance was less widespread, and costs were under control. Even without well-entrenched opponents, Canada achieved its exemplary plan step by step, and province by province -- and then only after breaking a doctors' strike!

The toughest task for this country, with its deep distrust of politics, will be to create a social insurance system. That will only be the first step, but once benefits are in place as a right, the political pressure to defend and strengthen the system will be strong. And if the federal government can establish mandatory financing, then it will be much easier to enact single payer at the state level.

In the coming fight, the single-payer forces must maintain a delicate balance. We must be insiders and outsiders simultaneously. We must maintain a pole to move the Clinton plan to the left, without abandoning the administration and ensuring the defeat of significant health care reform. And we must be prepared for the long haul, to ensure that implementation includes public accountability and quality guarantees, to strengthen the plan over time, and to enact single-payer systems state by state, ultimately reaching a national single-payer system. **DL**

Susan Cowell is a Vice President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

*Working together for
peace, freedom, and
social justice.*



**New England Regional Joint Board
ACTWU**

Edward W. Clark, Jr., Manager
International Vice President



**Congratulations to my friends in
the struggle for economic justice!
I urge you to work on another in-
justice, the tyranny of "taxation
without representation" in the
District of Columbia.**

Support statehood!

Hilda Howland M. Mason
District of Columbia City Council

Labor Day Greetings



from

**Breeden-Schmidt
Foundation**



**San Diego,
California**

We are honored to
participate in the struggle for
equality and greater social
justice with our friends at
DSA and *Democratic Left*.

Philo, Atkinson, Steinberg,
White, Stephens, and
Whitaker
2920 East Jefferson Avenue
Detroit, MI 48207

I Ain't Your Model Minority (Nor Your Yellow Peril)

Asians and the Labor Movement

BY DOMINIC CHAN

Debates around race usually center on the bipolar categories of black and white. When Asians are mentioned, we are often used as a wedge to point out that minorities who pull by their bootstraps can achieve the American dream. Both liberal and conservatives are guilty of these false assumptions about the work ethic and the social mobility of Asians. Just like any other stereotype, these notions collapse upon close examination.

Particularly with new immigrants, we find that many Asian-Americans work under sweatshop conditions in the garment or restaurant industries. Not aware of their rights, workers often toil under conditions where minimum wage and overtime laws are routinely broken. In my work with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU), I have encountered workers who make as little as ten dollars a day while working ten hours.

These conditions contribute to another set of stereotypes: Asian-Americans are said to be passive, eager to work long hours, apolitical, and -- of deepest concern to trade unionists -- unorganizable.

Labor unions and Asians have had a checkered history together. It was with labor's active

support that the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was passed. This effectively ended Chinese immigration until the mid-1960s. American Federation of Labor founder Samuel Gompers once wrote that "Every incoming coolie means much vice and immorality injected into our social life."

In fact, many unions up until World War II had by-laws that specifically excluded Chinese from membership. It was only after the bombing of Pearl Harbor that labor was eager to show that it was not against all Asians, just the Japanese kind. Organized labor raised no sustained opposition to the internment of Japanese-Americans during the war.

It should be no surprise, then, that throughout U.S. labor history, Asian immigrants have been used by employers to break strikes. Given organized labor's early policies, it was easy to divide workers based on race.

Despite all this, Asian-American workers have acted in solidarity on many occasions. A milestone was the National Dollar Strike, which resulted in the first chartered Chinese local in the history of the ILGWU -- indeed, in the history of the United States. After thirteen weeks of striking, the 125 Chinese-American women garment workers involved in this struggle won

struggle won higher wages, a closed shop, and time-and-a-half pay for overtime. One worker involved in this strike was quoted as saying, "Not even if you come to us with your machine guns and rifles would we give up our union!" So much for passive! There are many other examples where Asian-Americans have demonstrated their courage and their strength in numbers, such as in the sugar fields of Hawaii and at the railroad camps of California.

Why, then, has it been so difficult for trade unions to organize Asians? For part of the answer, we need to just look in the mirror. If the labor movement doesn't have staff members and organizers who speak the language of the workers, then it should be no surprise when the workers ignore organizers. As of this moment, there are slightly over two dozen Asian-American labor organizers in the entire country! The fact that Asian-American workers are a diverse group of Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians means that there is quite an organizing task at hand.

Asian workers work long hours under horrible conditions for the same reasons that workers did at the beginning of the century. They do it because there is fear of an oppressive boss who has virtually absolute control over themselves and their families.

If organized labor is to be revitalized, it must

touch the newly emerging workforce of immigrants and people of color. The population of Asian Pacific Americans more than doubled from 1980 to 1990. The U.S. Census estimates that by the year 2000, Asian Pacific Americans will number ten million, or 4 percent of the population. Just as many unions were built on the energy of European immigrants, any serious attempt to resuscitate the labor movement must be centered on the newly-arrived immigrants who constitute a major part of the workforce.

A backlash against Asians is underway. The L.A. riots may have had their origins as a response toward the white power structure, but much of their destruction was channeled toward Korean-Americans. The economic woes of the country are blamed on the Japanese, and thus on all Asians.

In 1992, Yoshihiro Hattori, a Japanese exchange student on his way to a Halloween party, was killed because he rang the wrong doorbell. The accused killer testified that Hattori seemed threatening because he was laughing and waving his arms in greeting his mistaken host. Hattori's white friend, who actually rang the doorbell, was untouched. The subsequent acquittal, despite the accused's admitting his deed, brings back memories of Vincent Chin, a Chinese-American man murdered several years ago by two unemployed autoworkers who thought he

APALA Vice President May Chen addresses demonstrators in New York City.



D. Benz/LCWU

was Japanese. They blamed him for the loss of their jobs. Like Hattori's killer, these defendants were acquitted of murder charges.

These cases show that images of the Yellow Peril still exist in the minds of many. Recent media hysteria regarding boatloads of undocumented Chinese have only contributed to these negative images. The code words are back: America is, we're implicitly told, being overrun by a horde from Asia.

Unfortunately, many political leaders have been subject to the current anti-immigrant hysteria. President Clinton has promised a new crackdown. Pete Wilson, the Republican governor of California has proposed changing the constitution to disallow citizenship to American-born children of undocumented immigrants, and denying them schooling and health access. Various Democratic legislators have proposed such outrageous legislation as taking away the civil rights of asylum seekers, creating a "national identification card" system, and allowing the National Guard to assist the Border Patrol.

In tough economic times, immigrants make easy targets. Immigrants are blamed for every social woe even though they pay more in taxes than they receive in social services, and even though they work in minimum wage jobs for which few Anglos compete. All of this shunts the blame away from where it really should fall, in the laps of corporate capital. Declining social services, deindustrialization, urban decay, and unemployment are not caused by immigrants but by elites and their influence over the halls of government. It's a formula that seems to work; blame the brown and yellow people for our nation's misery, while the top 1 percent increase their wealth and power.

As trade unionists and progressives, we have a responsibility to confront and dispel these negative images that are perpetuated by the government, the media, and yes, among our fellow brothers and sisters in the movement as well.

To address these and other issues, Asian



D. Benz/ILGWU

The fourth annual Asian Labor Festival, Brooklyn, 1992.

trade unionists with the help of the AFL-CIO have formed the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA). Five hundred Asian-American trade unionists attended the founding convention last year. Since then, APALA has worked with the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute to hold two trainings aimed specifically at Asian workers and recruiting Asian organizers. Future trainings are planned. At APALA's second convention, held in August, delegates showed their progressive colors by militantly marching with Latino/a janitors and passing a resolution in favor of single-payer health care.

In my organizing work, I hear the same fears and frustrations from newly-arrived Chinese immigrants that non-Asian workers relate to my sister and brother organizers. The fear of being fired, of being blacklisted, the hardships of working long hours for low wages, the intimidation of bosses and supervisors, are familiar stories to any union organizer. Helping workers overcome these fears is part of the job of an organizer. And when this fear is overcome, they will fight hard, regardless of their cultural background or the color of their skin. **DL**

Dominic Chan, a DSA member, is an organizer for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union in San Francisco's Chinatown.



Coalition of Black Trade Unionists

Salutes

Democratic Socialists of America

in recognition of your work as a steadfast ally in
the continuing struggle for social change

Wil Duncan

Special Assistant to the President

William Lucy

President

In Unity, Strength



**SERVICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL
UNION**
AFL-CIO, CLC

John J. Sweeney
International President

Richard W. Cordtz
International Secretary-Treasurer



We salute the Democratic Socialists of America

For their support of the labor movement.
For their commitment to justice.



Local 23-25
ILGWU

Edgar Romney
Manager

Harris Zinn
Associate Manager

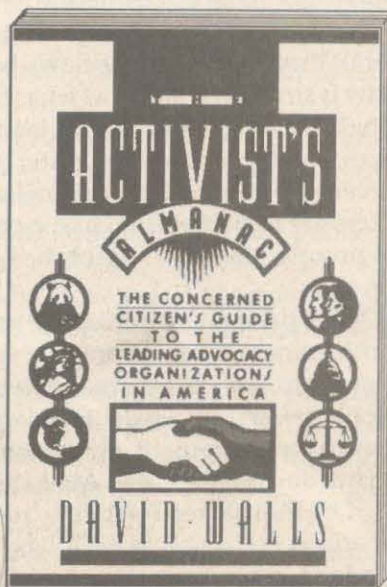
Communications Workers of America
Salutes the DSA
for Progressive Leadership



Making the American Dream Possible
for Future Generations

Morton Bahr, President
Barbara Easterling, Secretary-Treasurer
M.E. Nichols, Executive Vice President

In Solidarity



**David
Walls
&
The
Activist's
Almanac**

F A FIRESIDE BOOK
A Division of Simon & Schuster
A Paramount Communication Company

AT BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1993

Reinventing OSHA

Reform Requires New, Not Less, Government Oversight

BY GEORGE J. KOURPIAS

Not much has changed in the twenty-two years since the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) was first enacted to stop slaughter in the workplace. In recent data compiled by the AFL-CIO, it was estimated that ten thousand workers are killed on the job and that six million workers are injured every year.

Today it is crucial to reinvigorate safety and health laws and to re-establish this nation's commitment to its workers. House Resolution 1280 goes a long way toward achieving these very important goals of OSHA reform.

There are many problems with OSHA. In general, they reflect serious flaws both in how the law is structured and how it has been implemented. Among other things, inadequate resources are devoted to administering the law, enforcement mechanisms are ineffective, and workers are excluded from participating in the very process that was established to protect them.

OSHA has never received the resources or the institutional commitment that is necessary for the Act to carry out the mandate established by Congress. While we devoted large sums of money to the clean-up of environmental health concerns, such as the Clean Air Act and Superfund, OSHA has received tiny resources by comparison.

Indeed, the lack of resources for workplace safety and health has proven to be more costly than anyone could imagine. Many people believe that had Hamlet, North Carolina's Imperial Food Products facility been inspected even

once in its eleven-year history, twenty-five men and women would be alive today.

Clearly, a new approach must be taken to correct OSHA's inadequate inspection system.

One approach would be to require employers to establish joint safety and health committees. By forcing employers to utilize union involvement when it comes to safety and health, workers who have unique knowledge and experiences about the way work is actually performed can help to prevent the needless illnesses, injuries, and events that occur every year.

In order for such committees to work, however, they will have to be the result of true and legitimate employee involvement. This means that, among other things, the union must at a minimum share equal representation and have equal power with the company at every level of the program.

At the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), we have been working with the Boeing Corporation through collective bargaining to establish a pilot health and safety program which would make worker safety and health a priority. The program is encompassed in the labor agreement which establishes the Joint Health and Safety Institute, funded by Boeing at four cents per hour per employee, with a four million dollar yearly minimum contribution.

The Institute consists of numerous committees made up equally of union and management representatives. Some of the tasks assigned to the Institute include: developing and delivering

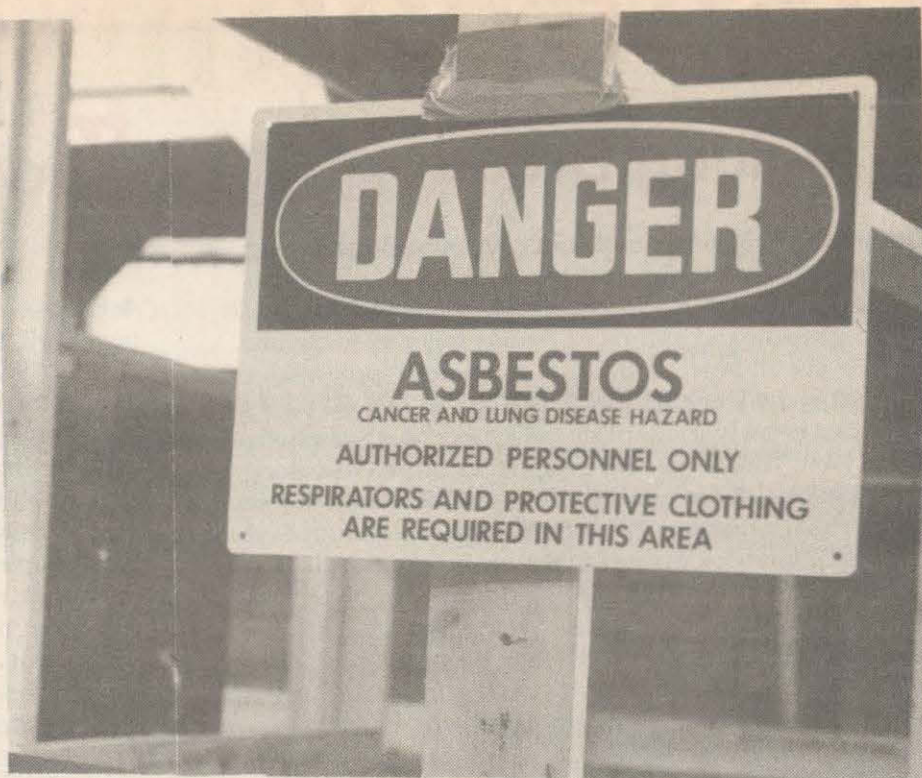
health and safety training programs, conducting statistical analysis, developing a system for tracking and evaluating exposure to potentially hazardous materials, evaluating protective clothing and devices, sponsoring health and safety research as needed, retaining independent experts overseeing joint health and safety committees, and performing other related functions.

H.R. 1280 would require that employees establish health and safety programs that are similar in nature to the IAM's program at Boeing. Like the IAM/Boeing program, programs mandated by H.R. 1280 would seek to reduce or eliminate hazards and to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. It also creates the requirement that employers establish safety and health committees to promote safety and health at each worksite. Given the overwhelming lack of inspectors, it is imperative that this common-sense approach of self-policing be utilized.

In addition, reporting of accidents must be done on a timely basis, so that OSHA examinations of the worksites in question can prevent more accidents from occurring. Moreover, once citations are issued, employees, union representatives, and families of victims must be allowed full participation. Far too often these groups are excluded from settlement meetings or are not given any real opportunity for input.

The lack of opportunities for participation in the enforcement process has placed a real toll on real people. Last year, just three days after Christmas, an IAM-represented worker at U.S. Sugar Corporation in Florida was fatally injured when a piece of equipment he was working close to went out of control, spilling boiling liquid on him. He suffered serious burns all over his body, barely living long enough to see the new year.

It took more than six months to get OSHA to issue citations against the company. Even then, once the citations were issued, OSHA conducted an informal conference with the employer and its representatives to work out a settlement. Although an IAM representative -- the worker's workplace representative -- was present at the conference, he was not really allowed to fully participate. Sadly, although the victim's wife wanted very much to attend the



Jim West/Impact Visual

conference, she was not even invited. H.R. 1280 would correct many of these terrible problems.

For example, employees and their representatives would be permitted to participate in proceedings and would also be permitted to seek review of any settlement agreement to determine if the agreement complies with the law.

OSHA reform must contain other features which include:

- » guaranteeing workers the right to refuse unsafe work
- » updating the standard-setting process
- » enhancing the ability to prosecute violators on criminal charges
- » expanding coverage to include public sector employees
- » including private sector employees, like those covered under the Federal Railway Administration

We must recommit ourselves to eliminating death and injury on the job, and H.R. 1280 and its companion bill in the Senate, S. 575, take a giant step in that direction. DL

George J. Kourpias, a DSA member, is International President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. This article is adapted from testimony he gave before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor on July 29.

Asbestos warning signs used in a safety training program in Michigan.

DSA Action

Breaking Bread

◆ The first two major events of DSA's Breaking Bread Project will take place during the next two months. The Project is designed to bring DSA Honorary Chair Cornel West and other progressive and anti-racist leaders together for public dialogues about how to build a multiracial progressive movement in the United States.

The first event will take place on October 14 at Symphony Space in New York City. This event will feature West along with bell hooks, the feminist theorist with whom he wrote *Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life* (South End Press, 1991), the book for which the project is named. The New York City event, which is being prepared by New York City DSA, the Community Services Society, and other organizations, is designed especially to reach young people.

The second event will be held in Los Angeles during the evening of November 12, in conjunction with the DSA National Convention. This event, sponsored by Los Angeles DSA, will feature Cornel West along with several progressive leaders from communities of color in Southern California. Confirmed speakers include Gloria Romero, Professor of Chicano Studies at California State University at Long Beach, and Joe Hicks, President of the Southern California branch of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Breaking Bread events are tentatively planned for several other cities during the next two years.

A Rendezvous in Mexico



On June 24 in Mexico City, DSA Latino Commission leaders Dolores Delgado Campbell (left) and Duane Campbell (right) met with Cuahémoc Cardenas, PRD candidate for President of Mexico in 1994. They planned a conference to be called "NAFTA and Human Rights in Mexico," which will be held at California State University at Sacramento on October 20 and 21. For more information contact the Campbells at 916/361-9072.

Youth Section Conference

◆ Fifty young DSA activists gathered in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania during the weekend of August 19-22 for the annual Summer Conference of the DSA Youth Section.

The conference participants spent the weekend electing a new Youth Section leadership, setting political and organizational priorities for the coming year, and, in their spare time, throwing a couple of parties. The Youth Section will devote its resources during the next year to defeating the North American Free Trade Agreement, supporting labor law reform, defending reproductive freedom, and fighting to make education accessible to all.

Speakers at the conference included Jack Clark, Mark Levinson, and Joe Schwartz of the DSA National Political Committee; Rafael Pizarro of the Committees of Correspondence; Julia Fitzgerald of New York DSA; Terri Burgess of Cleveland DSA; Hugh Cleland of Suffolk DSA; and Carmen Mitchell of Oberlin DSA.

The conference included workshops and discussions on diverse topics including alternative media, the status of political refugees in Guatemala, lesbian and gay politics in the Clinton age, and exposing the far right on campus.

New Literature

◆ A slew of new DSA literature pieces have been published during the last few months. If you haven't seen them yet, write the national office for a batch. The new pieces include a pamphlet on NAFTA by Noam Chomsky; a pamphlet on military spending by U.S. Representative Ronald Dellums, a DSA Vice Chair who was recently appointed to chair the House Armed Services Committee; and a pamphlet on Clintonomics by Mark Levinson.

Also just out is a new version of one of the classic introductory DSA pamphlets, featuring a short profile of our organizational credo and photographs and statements from DSA notables, including Cornel West, Barbara Ehrenreich, Ed Asner, José LaLuz, and Gloria Steinem.

◆ DSA National Convention ◆

November 11 - 14, 1993

Los Angeles

THE DSA NATIONAL CONVENTION meets every two years, and is the highest decision-making body of the organization. This year's convention will be held at the Radisson Plaza Hotel/Manhattan Beach in Los Angeles. The convention will elect the 1993-1994 National Political Committee and set organizational and political priorities for the next two years. In particular, this year a discussion will be held to determine DSA's organizational response to the Clinton health care reform proposals.

Special events:

◆ THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11: The DSA Organizing Institute. An afternoon of intensive organizing training based on the renowned methods of the Midwest Academy.

◆ FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 12: A Breaking Bread forum featuring DSA Honorary Chair *Cornel West*, Professor of Chicano Studies *Gloria Romero*, *Joe Hicks*, President of the Southern California branch of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and other progressive leaders.

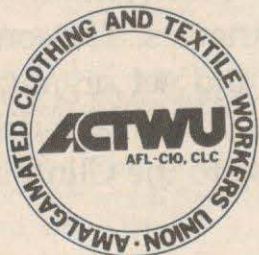
◆ SATURDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 13: The Los Angeles DSA Debs/Sinclair dinner, honoring women in politics, including *Maria Elena Durazo*, President of Local 11 of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees union, and Los Angeles City Council member *Jackie Goldberg*. Speaking at this event will be DSA Honorary Chair *Barbara Ehrenreich* and DSA National Political Committee member *José LaLuz*.

Who may attend?

ANY DSA MEMBER in good standing may attend as an observer. In addition, most DSA locals will be holding elections to choose their allotted number of delegates to the convention during the month of September. (To run as a delegate, contact the local coordinator in your area; see the list on page 27.) Very inexpensive rooms are available at the Radisson Plaza for participants in the convention. Attendance at the convention involves a fee of approximately \$100 in addition to room charges, to help us cover the meals and other costs associated with the event. If you have questions, contact the national office at 212/962-0390.

ACTWU salutes DSA

for its activism
and commitment
to organized labor



Jack Sheinkman, President
Arthur Loevy, Secretary-Treasurer
Bruce Raynor, Executive Vice President

Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union

BEST WISHES FROM LOCAL 1180
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
AFL - CIO



Arthur Cheliotis
President
Linda Jenkins
First Vice President
William F. Henning, Jr.
Second Vice President
Elaine Allman
Secretary-Treasurer
Susan Calise
Recording Secretary

Members-at-Large
Barbara Bailey
Gerald Brown
Naomi Carpenter
Charles Garcia
Alan Goldblatt
Margo Nikitas
Lyne Sealey Payne
Gwen Richardson
Doris Searcy

**Making Government
Work For You**

TUNE IN TO "THE COMMUNIQUE"
LOCAL 1180's OWN RADIO SHOW
FOR DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT EVENTS & ISSUES FROM A LABOR PERSPECTIVE
EVERY TUESDAY FROM 8:00 TO 9:00 p.m.
on WNYE 91.5 FM

LOCAL 1180

6 Harrison St.
New York, NY 10013-2898
(212) 226-6565

IN SOLIDARITY

New York Democratic Socialists of America

executive committee

Julia Fitzgerald	Chair
Jeff Gold	Vice Chair
Frank Llewellyn	Political Action Chair
M.J. Van Loon	Organizational Secretary
Marsha Borenstein	Treasurer
Bob Ambaras	Education Secretary
Amy Bachrach	Membership Secretary
Steve Oliver	Publications Secretary
Tony Yarborough	Recording Secretary
Juanita Webster	Religion and Socialism Branch
Kenny Schaeffer	Housing Task Force
Linnea Capps	Health Care Task Force
David Belkin	Economics Branch

For a democratic left slant on the Jewish question, Jewish life in the ex-USSR, Israel, Jewish affairs, Jewish culture, and Black-Jewish relations, subscribe to:

Jewish Currents

Morris U. Schappes, Editor

22 East 17 Street, Suite 601
Dept. DS
New York, NY 10003
212/924-5740

**Best wishes from William H.
Nuchow, Secretary-Treasurer,
Local 840 Teamsters**

Labor Day 1993

BALTIMORE DSA

1443 Gorsuch Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218
410/467-9424

IN SOLIDARITY

LAW OFFICES

OF

ALVIN DORFMAN .

**72 Guy Lombardo Avenue
Freeport, NY 11520
516/379-0500**

Solidarity Forever!

SEIU Local 585



***237 Sixth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/828-5100***

Rosemary Trump, President

Workers Defense League, Inc.



Defending the defenseless since 1936

Leon Lynch, *President*

Harry Fleischman, *Chair*

Jon Bloom, *Executive Director*

218 West 40 Street

New York, NY 10018

212/730-7412

**In Solidarity
Local 259 UAW**

Sam Meyers, *President*

Ralph Diamond, *Vice President*

Frank LoCascio, *Financial Secretary*

Israel Horizons

◆ **For Zionism, Socialism, and the Kinship of all Peoples** ◆

volume 41, number 3 of 4, Summer/Fall 1993:

Anti-Semitism and the Left: Four Views

A Maparnik Views Marx

Israel Debates: Health Policy, Gays in Military

Interview with Yael Dayan

\$4.00; subscription rate \$15.00 per year. Send your check to: API-HH, 224 West 35 Street, Suite 403, New York, NY 10001

Commitment, Vision, Spirit

DSA Youth Graduate to the Labor Movement

BY TOM ELLETT

The DSA Youth Section's labor-support work is part of what defines its identity on college campuses. In labor's major recent struggles, Youth Section activists have been among the first at the barricades. During the Eastern Airlines, Greyhound, Pittston, and A.E. Staley strikes, young DSAers were there, handing out leaflets, walking picket lines, and staffing information tables. The Youth Section also pursues broader educational activities; each year, it sponsors at least one Campus-Labor Institute, a weekend designed to bring together campus and labor activists to develop strategies to defeat common enemies. And earlier this year, DSA helped to coordinate a student visit to the *maquiladora* zone in Mexico, with extensive assistance from the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, and support from the United Auto Workers and the United Food and Commercial Workers.

It should be no great surprise, then, that in recent years a remarkable number of Youth Section activists have pursued careers in labor organizing. By the end of the term of the 1992-93 Youth Section Coordinating Committee, fully one-third of the committee members were employed by the labor movement.

Youth Section activists are being hired by unions because of, not despite, their membership in DSA. Chapter activists develop the kinds of skills -- communication, strategy, coalition-building, and so forth -- sought after by unions. The long hours, intense demands, and periods of disappointment require a perspective that sees labor work as more than just a job. As socialists, we have the vision and the sense of responsibility to nurture this level of commitment.

Many union leaders recognize that the future of the labor movement lies with a return of the kind of broad vision of a new society that

built the Congress of Industrial Organizations. Youth Section Co-Chair Karen Marie Gibson works for the Service Employees International Union District 1199, the health care workers union. "Because I'm in DSA, they knew I had good politics, so they hired me," she says. Gibson, who was active in the chapter at the State University of New York at Geneseo, had no previous experience with unions, but became interested in the labor movement through DSA, just as some of her forebearers in the CIO were introduced to unions through socialist organizations.

Internships are often the first

Karen Marie Gibson ♦ SEIU 1199



DSA's analysis prepared me for the seriousness and intensity of the struggles that U.S. workers are facing. In my work I've seen first-hand how elites make life extremely difficult for average Americans.

introduction to the labor movement for YS activists. Susannah Davis, a field organizer for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE), was placed in internships with the ACTWU and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees through DSA. Davis, who graduated from Oberlin College, is currently involved in a protracted struggle with the Ohio State Employees Relations Board over the right of part-time toll booth collectors to bargain collectively.

Karen Bahow, who is also a UE field organizer and an Oberlin alumna, grew up in a union household. She has used her experience as a chapter activist in organizing student support for cafeteria workers at Wright State University in their fight with Marriott for a decent contract. "In many ways, organizing against the boss and organizing against the university are similar," she says.

The kinds of personal relationships developed in the Youth Section often make the desire to work in the labor movement a reality. Jeff Lacher, an organizer for the Virginia Alliance of State Employees (Communications Workers of America), got his start in the labor movement with the Graduate Student Employees Union (CWA) of the State University of New York. Lacher won his present job on the recommendation of DSAer Dom Chan, who was then the president of GSEU.

One thing that Youth Section labor organizers find in DSA that they find nowhere else is the sense of "one big union." Among DSAers, experiences from many different unions are exchanged. "In DSA, we can put away all the BS about what union is better," says Ron Ruggiero, an organizer apprentice with SEIU 1199. "We get down to the heart of the matter, which is how best to organize the unorganized." **DL**

Tom Ellett, a former DSA Youth Organizer, is an organizer for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE).

Jeff Lacher ♦ Virginia Alliance of State Employees

Organizing activities with the DSA chapter on my campus taught me to think strategically and to *plan* strategically, both within our group and in coalition with others. Those skills are essential to the work I do today.



Ginny Coughlin

Karen Bahow ♦ United Electrical Workers



It's essential for the labor movement to survive and to be vibrant. It's the one surviving force that can bring diverse groups of Americans together for the very serious battles we have ahead of us.

D. Wallick

Ron Ruggiero ♦ SEIU 1199

A socialist perspective, combined with my own personal experience and background, gives me tremendous motivation to do organizing. The socialist perspective gives you the ability to see how things are interconnected.



Ginny Coughlin

ON THE LEFT



by Harry Fleischman

ARKANSAS

Arkansas DSA held a retreat at Meadow Creek the weekend of August 28 and 29. The seventeen participants helped to plan the local's work for the coming months, which will include single-payer advocacy and support for an AFL-CIO campaign to reform the state's worker-compensation system.

CALIFORNIA

On August 7 fifty activists gathered in Los Angeles for the annual statewide DSA convention. Among the topics discussed were how to oppose the scapegoating of immigrant workers and how to defeat an upcoming state ballot initiative that would create a school voucher system in California and undercut universal public education. The delegates also discussed potential future California political candidates and issues.

San Diego DSA hosted an August 20 lecture on Clinton's economic program by Ray Boddy, Professor of Economics at San Diego State University. The local is also becoming active in the fight to defeat the school voucher initiative.

Los Angeles DSA is devoting most of its energies to the upcoming DSA National Convention (see page 21). On September 18, Peter Olney of the Service Employees International Union Local 399 will address the local's fall membership meeting. He will discuss the issue of defending immigrant workers.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

In early September DC/MD/NoVA DSA sponsored two events - a women's brunch and a book party -- in support of DSA member Marty Langelan's new book *Back Off: How to Stop Sexual Harassment and Harassers*.

ILLINOIS

Chicago DSA mailed out 900 postcards to help promote a demonstration in support of the Allied Electrical Workers Strike at the Staley plant in Decatur.

Twelve members of the West Suburban branch of Chicago DSA recently participated in an anti-NAFTA demonstration at the home office of U.S. Representative Harris Fawell, a Republican. The local will tie in its anti-NAFTA work with that of the University of Chicago Youth Section chapter.

James Madigan hosted a meeting in Evanston on August 29 to explore the formation of a North Cook County branch of Chicago DSA.

NEW YORK

Ithaca DSA continues to push very hard for single-payer health care. They have tabled at several locations in Ithaca throughout the summer, and have generated hundreds of letters to Senator Daniel Moynihan and U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey. On August 1, the public television program *'Round About Ithaca* presented the anti-NAFTA video produced by DSA Youth Section members during their trip to the border area in January. And, of course, the local is working to support the re-election campaign of Ithaca's mayor, DSAer Ben Nichols.

New York City DSA is work-

ing in support of the re-election campaign of David Dinkins, and is also devoting energy to several City Council elections, in the hope of boosting progressives' strength on that body. The Housing Task Force of NYDSA, which promotes discussion and activism on homelessness and related issues, will be revived this fall. The local is also working to build the October 14 New York Breaking Bread event, which will feature bell hooks and Cornel West (see page 20).

OHIO

Central Ohio DSA has resumed holding monthly meetings. At their September meeting, they elected new officers and chose delegates to the national convention. They are organizing a major anti-NAFTA forum, to be held in Columbus later in the fall.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia DSA continues to work in support of agricultural mushroom workers in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, as they seek recognition of their independent union. Members of the local are also active in the Philadelphia Health Care for All Coalition, which fights for single-payer health reform both nationally and at the state level.

WISCONSIN

Dane County DSA drew 30 people to a July 10 public forum in Madison featuring Bob Fittrakis, who ran for Congress in central Ohio as an openly socialist candidate in 1992. The group plans to strengthen its ties with Iowa DSAers, and will hold a meeting October 3 to plan its activities for the fall.

DSA Locals and Organizing Committees

Northeast

ALBANY Local, Mark Schaeffer, 518-463-5611
399 State Street, Albany NY 12210

BALTIMORE Local, Laila Atallah, 301-467-9424
1443 Gorsuch Avenue, Baltimore MD 21218

BOSTON Local, Glenn Kulbako, staff, 617-354-5078
11 Garden Street, Cambridge MA 02138

CENTRAL NJ Local, William Volonte, 201-642-0885
PO Box 2029, Princeton NJ 08543

CENTRAL PA Local, Curt Sanders, 717-328-5124
115 Loudon Road, Mercersburg PA 17236

CONNECTICUT Local, Mike Phelan, 203-397-5412
194 Alden Avenue, New Haven CT 06515

DC/MD/NORTHERN VA Local, Bill Mosley, 202-483-3299
P.O. Box 33345, Washington DC 20033

HOWARD COUNTY MD Local, Bob Feldman, 410-381-0727
7205 Talisman Lane, Columbia MD 21045

ITHACA Local, Kevin Heubusch, 607-277-8277
108 Terrace Place #3, Ithaca NY 14850

NASSAU COUNTY NY Local, Mark Finkel, 516-538-8246
662 Howard Avenue, West Hempstead NY 11552

NEW YORK CITY Local, Julia Fitzgerald, 212-962-1079
15 Dutch Street #500, New York NY 10038

PHILADELPHIA Local, Bruce Haskin, 215-729-2429
920 South 48th Street, Philadelphia PA 19143

PITTSBURGH Local, Bill Wekselman
P.O. Box 5122, Pittsburgh PA 15206

READING-BERKS PA Local, Bob Millar, 215-944-0991
RD4, Box 4482A, Fleetwood PA 19522

ROCHESTER, John Roberts, 716-442-0751
109 Linden Street, Rochester NY 14620

SUFFOLK COUNTY NY Local, Hugh Cleland, 516-751-0340
528 Pond Path, Setauket NY 11733

Midwest

ANN ARBOR Local, Eric Ebel, 313-662-4497
P.O. Box 7211, Ann Arbor MI 48107

CARBONDALE IL O.C., E.G. Hughes, 618-549-1409
P.O. Box 2201, Carbondale IL 67902

CENTRAL INDIANA Local, Stacy Fromholz, 317-322-8918
23 North Colorado Avenue, Indianapolis IN 46201

CENTRAL OHIO Local, Bob Fittrakis, 614-227-2482
44 Brunson Avenue, Columbus OH 43203

CHICAGO Local, Maggie Shreve, 312-384-0327
1608 N. Milwaukee Ave., 4th floor, Chicago IL 60647

CLEVELAND Local, Terri Burgess, 216-476-8560
11316 Dale Avenue, Cleveland OH 44111

DANE COUNTY WI O.C., Todd Anderson, 608-271-4793
P.O. Box 9038, Madison WI 53715

DANVILLE IL O.C., Brian Mitchell, 217-431-8251
208 Brentwood, Tilton IL 61833

DETROIT Local, Roger Robinson, 313-822-4639
653 Pemberton, Grosse Pointe Park MI 48230

IOWA CITY Local, Jeff Cox, 319-338-4551
112 S. Dodge, Iowa City IA 52242

KENT OH O.C., Eric Hensal, 216-677-9789
134 East Oak Street, Kent OH 44240

MAHONING VALLEY OH O.C., Allan Curry, 216-534-9327
117 Caroline Avenue, Hubbard OH 44425

MILWAUKEE O.C., Tom Sobottke, 414-367-5893
162 Hill Court, Hartland WI 53029

ST. LOUIS Local, Dave Rathke, 314-773-0605
3323 Magnolia, St. Louis MO 63118

TWIN CITIES Local, Dan Frankot, 612-224-8262
695 Ottawa Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55107

WICHITA O.C., Jim Phillips, 316-681-1469
2330 North Oliver Street #219, Wichita KS 67220

South

ATLANTA O.C., Cleveland Sasser, 404-982-9680
1184 Argonne Way NE, Atlanta GA 30324

ARKANSAS O.C., Jason Murphy, 501-374-5464
318 1/2 South Barton, Little Rock AR 72205

AUSTIN Local, Dick Fralin, 512-820-0257
2409 West Eighth Street, Austin TX 78703

CENTRAL KENTUCKY Local, Ann Patterson, 606-268-2983
P.O. Box 1190, Lexington KY 40589

HOUSTON Local, John Peirce, 713-922-5893
11619 Gullwood, Houston TX 77089

West

ALBUQUERQUE Local, Gerry Bradley, 505-881-4687
6008 Ponderosa NE, Albuquerque NM 87110

EAST BAY CA Local, Dean Ferguson, 510-763-8054
150 17th Street #404, Oakland CA 94612

FRONT RANGE CO Local, Harris Gruman, 303-444-9049
3075 Broadway #D, Boulder CO 80304

ALASKA Local, John Dunker, 907-465-3400
592 Seatter Street, Juneau AK 99801

LOS ANGELES Local, Steve Tarzynski, 310-451-8934
1102 North Brand Blvd. #20, Glendale CA 91202

MARIN COUNTY CA Local, Mark Wittenberg, 415-388-6396
215 Throckmorton Avenue #2, Mill Valley CA 94941

PALO ALTO Local, Carolyn Curtis, 415-364-6124
69 Lloyd Drive, Atherton CA 94027

SACRAMENTO Local, Duane Campbell, 916-361-9072
PO Box 162394, Sacramento CA 95816

SAN DIEGO Local, Virginia Franco, 619-276-6023
5122 Gardena Avenue, San Diego CA 92110

SAN FRANCISCO Local, Michael Pincus, 415-695-0111
1095 Hampshire, San Francisco CA 94110

SEATTLE Local, Craig Salins, 206-784-9695
6221 Greenwood Avenue North, Seattle WA 98103

SONOMA COUNTY CA Local, David Walls, 707-823-7403
943 McFarlane Avenue, Sebastopol CA 95472

DSA Raises the Red Flag in Paris

BY JOHN MASON

This June four DSA members met in Paris with their French comrades and a politically diverse group of U.S. and French economists to discuss the difficult transition from Reaganomics to Clintonomics. The DSA delegation from New York included David Gordon, Professor of Economics at the New School; Victor Sidel, Professor of Public Health Medicine at Mount Sinai; Jo-Ann Mort, Communications Director for the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; and myself. In Paris, we were joined by Penny Schantz, a former DSA Youth Organizer.

The conference itself -- formally entitled "Today's Changing American Economy" -- was the first Franco-American meeting sponsored by La Fondation Jean Jaures, a "public interest corporation" set up by the French Socialist Party. Under the leadership of Pierre Mauroy, the former French prime minister and current president of the Socialist International, the Foundation has initiated an ambitious series of international exchanges among socialists, democrats and progressives from around the world.

Most of the participants in the June meeting shared a common interest in comparing French and U.S. views of the end of the Reagan era and of Bill Clinton's election. But in the end the conference was polarized between conflicting liberal economic and socialist political agendas. The French Socialist Party speakers, who included leading party personalities such as Gerard Collomb, the director of the Jaures Foundation, and Mauroy, all emphasized the poor record and high

social costs of the Reagan experiment in order to underscore the failures of the conservative market paradigm. In a reversal of the usual flow of trans-Atlantic political fashions, these speakers optimistically welcomed Clinton's election as a "social democratic" turn in American politics, which they hoped would signal a recovery of state intervention in Europe as well.

Many of the other panel participants were U.S. and French economists, who were mainly interested in pursuing debates with each other the modernization of labor relations within industrial firms. This discussion took on a distinctly anti-union and pro-market coloration during the first day's proceedings.

The fundamentally liberal, pro-market orientation of many of the participants was underscored by the remarks of two French economists, Elie Cohen and Monique Osuf. In their view, Clinton's rapid retreat from the idea of "public investment" he had promoted during the campaign simply confirmed the futility of any macro-economic policy that would resist international market trends. This was seen as reinforcing the lesson learned by the French Socialists in 1983, when they bowed to international market pressures and jettisoned their early program of state-led economic growth.

Into this rather rarefied discussion of economic strategy, the DSA participants entered like a group of outside agitators. While sharing some of the skepticism of other conference participants concerning the Clinton administration's capacity to translate its reform agenda into government policy, the DSA speakers underlined the need for real action to

repair the economic divisions and social decay brought on twelve years of regressive social and economic policies. They sharply contested in their presentations the conference's dominant tone of "economic realism." David Gordon demonstrated in his remarks that the falling incomes of the U.S. working class have been a major factor in the poor performance of the economy, and that it is time to reexamine the role that unions might play in restoring consumer purchasing power and confidence. In a dramatic slide presentation, Victor Sidel used comparative health statistics to demonstrate the widening social gap between rich and poor in terms of their vulnerability to major illness and early death. Jo-Ann Mort testified about her experiences in union organizing campaigns in southern textile mills to illustrate the extent to which the "new" labor regimes in modern U.S. firms are still rooted in old-fashioned economic coercion and intimidation. I discussed the emerging Green critique of conventional methods of economic accounting, which measure national growth in dollar terms but ignore hidden environmental and social costs.

By highlighting the social as well as economic costs of conventional capitalist policies, the DSA presentations reminded some of the conference participants not only of the dangers of neo-liberal economic policy but of the ongoing moral claims of popular needs for justice and democracy, which socialists must address today no less than in the past.

John Mason is an Assistant Professor of Politics at William Paterson College.

Global Thinking, Global Action

The New Labor Internationalism

BY KURT STAND

It is an oft-repeated truism that we live in an age of global capital. More than ever, the world economy is dominated by transnational companies with little loyalty to their home countries. National markets no longer suffice, as even the largest economies seek regional and global agreements to facilitate the flow of investments and goods.

Yet parallel to these globalizing trends, we see a tragic explosion in popular xenophobic nationalism worldwide -- in the Balkans, Germany, and elsewhere. And economic nationalism has re-emerged in the United States, in movements associated with Pat Buchanan and Ross Perot.

These two oddly matched trends -- toward an integrated world economy and toward bigotry and narrow nationalism -- are not unrelated. Global capital puts workers in every part of the world in competition with one another, undermining local and national standards that were the products of years of struggle. Perhaps even more important, international agreements such as NAFTA and the European Single Market seem to make governments even less accountable to their citizens, adding to the perception that globalism and democracy are incompatible. This, too, contributes to a localism that is exclusionary and chauvinistic.

Globalism has also been accompanied by a worldwide attack on labor. In 1992 over 250 unionists were murdered worldwide; 2,500 were arrested and 40,000 were fired for exercising their rights to demand better wages and

working conditions.

In the face of these disheartening worldwide trends, many of the world's labor movements have worked to nurture a renewed spirit of internationalist activism. With cold-war-era differences rapidly fading and with the world's economic conditions becoming more dismal, unions have turned to mutual self-help across borders that relies on the kind of unified activity that built the trade union movement in the first place. Without exaggerating the immediate impact of the actions that constitute this growing internationalism, and without overlooking the difficulties that will lie ahead, there are nonetheless reasons for optimism.

◆ Pacific Rim Dockers Conference

The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), along with the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia and the National Council of Dockworker Unions in Japan, held a conference of Pacific Rim dockers unions in April. Attending were union delegates from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Fiji, Honduras, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Singapore, Tahiti, and the United States. The conference focused on the problems faced by all Pacific dockworkers, including job loss from technology, privatization, government-inspired anti-labor practices, and safety issues. All were concerned with how to find new ways to combat their common enemy -- the multinational shipping companies. The conference's final resolution

pledges cooperation among the participating unions in defense of human and trade union rights.

◆ Women's Rights

The International Conference of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) Women's Committee met in October 1992 and noted that women in all regions of the world face threats from the global recession and economic restructuring; from attacks on maternity leave and other social benefits; and from an increase in violence and sexual harassment. This conclusion was reaffirmed at a meeting of women from 22 African countries held under the auspices of the ICFTU/African Regional Organization. Women bear the brunt of Africa's economic crisis, often forced to accept low wages in export-processing zones or to take jobs in the informal sector where there is no social protection.

◆ Peace and Democracy

The end of the cold war means the shutdown of many defense plants in European countries as well as the United States. While this is a welcome change, the brunt of the change is felt by workers laid off without hope for the future. In response, several International Trade Secretariats (ITS) and the ICFTU have initiated PeaceWork, an organization that will serve as both a clearinghouse for information on existing conversion plans and as a source of information on new ones. PeaceWork will provide technical specifications for conversion schemes, contacts with experts and funding sources, and texts of collective agreements covering conversion and diversification.

◆ Solidarity Campaigns

Meetings are important, but critical to the new international solidarity is the ability to act in unison. Recently a delegation from two ITS's and the ICFTU toured the U.S. as part of an international solidarity effort in support of the 14,000 United Mine Workers members on strike. Diamond Walnut strikers and workers locked out by Tate and Lyle have also received international support for their struggles. A major international campaign is being conducted on behalf of Pakistani workers employed by the Korean-based transnational Daewoo. International action has helped win the release of imprisoned Malawi trade union leader Chakufwa Chihana and achieve victory for striking construction workers in Lesotho.

◆ Global Labor

In 1989 a group of ITS's held a meeting on strategies for international labor action. A number of suggestions were raised at that meeting on the need for better information exchange within international labor and between labor and differing social movements. Coming out of this conference, and joining with other initiatives, the journal *Global Labor* was launched in May 1993. *Global Labor*, produced jointly in London and Washington, D.C., will analyze corporate strategies; provide information on the differing perspectives of unionists around the world; build labor solidarity and serve as a bridge between international labor and the peace and justice, women's human rights and environmental movements.

All these actions seem like a drop in the bucket when compared to the enormity of the tasks confronting labor. With child labor growing, repression in countries like Haiti and Colombia running rampant, the movement of unionized shops to *maquiladora* and free enterprise zones continuing unabated, the difficulties facing united labor action seem daunting. Yet each small step contributes to the recognition that solidarity is possible and can be effective -- that through united action democracy both political and economic can be built. In this alone can there be hope that the global economy will one day mean a new world in which the diversity of the world's peoples will no longer fear each other but see one another as brothers and sisters sharing a common world. DL

Kurt Stand is a co-editor of Global Labor and a member of the DSA National Political Committee.

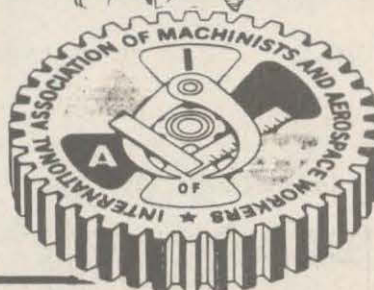
GLOBAL LABOR
NEW! ISSUE 1
Marginal Workers: Improves to Organize
Beyond Borders: Labor in a Global Economy
Latin America's Women: the Emerging Force
South Africa's Mines: Safety Second
French Labor: Divided We Stand

PLUS: Sheila Davidson: Homeworkers Worldwide. Thee Lee on NAFTA. Roger Lyons on Euro-Unionism.

SUBSCRIBE NOW FOR FREE FIRST ISSUE Annual subscription (6 issues): \$35 individuals; \$45 (50% discounting sub); \$70 libraries; \$120 businesses; Kurt Stand, Global Labor, P.O. Box 33363, Washington, DC 20036, USA; tel 202 529 6520. UK office: tel 0207 233 8827.

*International Association
of Machinists
and Aerospace Workers,
AFL-CIO*

Labor Day, 1993. . .
continuing the bonds
of friendship, trust and
understanding with
DSA and *Democratic
Left* for dignity, justice
and equality for all
Americans.



George J. Kourpias
International President

Tom Ducey
General Secretary-Treasurer

**GENERAL VICE
PRESIDENTS**

Roe Spencer
Dallas, TX

John Peterpaul
Washington, DC

Justin Ostro
Oakland, CA

George Poulin
Stamford, CT

Merle E. Pryor, Jr.
Des Plaines, IL

Val Bourgeois
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Don Wharton
Cleveland, OH

Larry Downing
Washington, DC

Ed House
Washington, DC



**HEALTH CARE
FOR ALL**

77 Huyshope Ave., Hartford, CT
1201 Elmwood Ave., Providence, RI

**Southern
Labor and
Black Civil
Rights**

Organizing
Memphis Workers
Michael K. Honey

This major study provides a new context for understanding Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1968 campaign in support of poor people and black labor organizing in Memphis. Telling his story through vivid personal portraits of those directly involved, Michael Honey analyzes the economic basis of segregation and the denial of fundamental human rights and civil liberties it entailed. Illus.

Ct: \$49.95; Pb: \$17.95

Order toll free 800/545-4703

University of Illinois Press

54 East Gregory Drive • Champaign, IL 61820

dollars & Sense
the economics
magazine for
non-economists

Dollars & Sense demystifies economics and provides left analysis of a variety of trends including free trade, unemployment, the deficit, consumer debt, taxes, the environment, and more.

"Dollars & Sense is a reliable parachute into the mysteries of the world economy. I never leave home without it."

To subscribe, send \$16.95 to *Dollars & Sense*, One Summer Street, Somerville, MA 02143.

The DSA Labor Commission

interim contact:

Tom Ellett

5152 North Ashland Avenue #2F
Chicago, IL 60640

LABOR DAY 1993

IUE

Joins with the

**DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS
OF AMERICA**

Striving in Solidarity as Part of a
Broad Progressive Effort
For Social Change



William H. Bywater
William H. Bywater
International President

Ed Fire
Ed Fire
Secretary-Treasurer

GREETINGS

LABOR DAY 1993



Bernard and Henrietta Backer Bruce and Helen Brown Leo Edbril
 The Gray Panthers Los Angeles DSA Maxine Phillips and Tom Roderick
 Sara and Max Siegel Joseph J. Swartz Steve Tarzynski and Kathy Sheldon
 Jim Young Alaska DSA Tona Cornette Estelle Epstein Lottie and Joe Friedman
 Irving Gold Sherri Levine Arthur Meadow Bill Mosley and Lisa Dowden
 Carl H. Schwartz and Wilda Nuttermoser Eleanor Simmonds
 Dorothy and Sam Tolmach Philip H. Van Gelder Marje and Mel Willbach
 Roger S. Wilson Larry Wittner

<p>Greetings from the peasant/academic soviet land of socialist victory gardening!</p> <p><i>Joseph M. Schwartz, Marilyn Migiel, Michael Benjamin Migiel-Schwartz</i></p>	<p>Greetings from DC/MD/NOVA DSA</p> <p>United for universal health care and D.C. statehood!</p>	<p>Happy Labor Day -- and Happy Election Day -- to all who work for social justice.</p> <p><i>Ruth Messinger</i></p>	<p>Ben Again!</p> <p><i>Re-electing our socialist mayor</i></p> <p>Ithaca DSA 206 Eddy Street Ithaca, NY 14850 607/273-3009</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

in memory of Michael Harrington
 -- Lucille Sydnor

Labor Day Greetings
 from Westchester DSA

<p>KICKIN' ASS FOR THE WORKING CLASS!</p> <p>DSA Youth Section</p>	<p>Would like to contact former Libertarian Socialist comrades</p> <p><i>Jim Dinsmoor</i> 1511 East Maxwell Lane Bloomington, IN 47401</p>	<p>SOLIDARITY WITHOUT BORDERS! <i>U.S./Guatemala Labor Education Project</i></p> <p>c/o ACTWU 333 South Ashland Avenue Chicago, IL 60607 312/262-6502</p>
<p><i>from the birthplace of May Day</i></p> <p>Chicago DSA 1608 North Milwaukee, Room 403 Chicago, IL 60647</p>		<p>Labor Day Greetings from Nassau County DSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Working for progressive politics on Long Island! ❖ Carrying on the vision of Michael Harrington to keep the dream of democratic socialism alive! <p>Mark Finkel, <i>chair</i> Lottie Friedman, <i>treasurer</i></p>

César Chávez: "Presente"

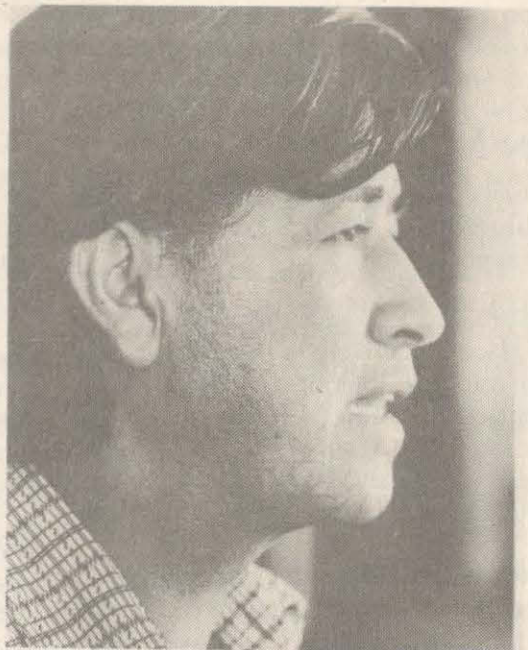
BY DUANE CAMPBELL

The spirit of César Chávez lives on in the struggle for union rights and justice in the fields of California. Along with Dolores Huerta, Philip Vera Cruz, and others, César created the United Farmworkers (UFW). There had been more than ten previous attempts to build a farmworkers union, often with the active participation of the left. Each was destroyed by racism and corporate power. The successful creation of the UFW changed the nature of organized labor and participated in the birth of Chicano politics.

Chávez chose to build a union that incorporated the strategies of social movements. His teachings returned to labor's roots. Today over 20,000 farmworkers enjoy benefits on the job. They are incorporated into California's educational, health, and civic communities. When the current Republican strangulation of the Agricultural Labor Relations Board ends, the UFW should quickly return to its 100,000 membership size of the early 1980s.

César deliberately created a multiracial organization; Mexican, Filipino, African-American, Dominican, Puerto Rican, and Arab workers have been part of the UFW. This diversity was necessary in order to combat the prior divisions and exploitation of workers based upon race and language that left the large corporate growers always the winner.

Chávez became the pre-eminent civil rights leader for Mexican and Chicano workers, helping in local struggles throughout the nation. The 30,000 people who attended César's funeral in Delano knew that César Chávez and the UFW are as important to the Chicano/Mexicano struggle for justice as Martin Luther King, Jr. was to the African-American community.



For myself, for Al Rojas, Dolores Delgado Campbell and others in the Latino Commission of DSA, the UFW was a school for organizing. Like hundreds of activists in labor and community organizations today, we were trained in the union. This cadre of organizers is the UFW's second legacy.

César taught us that all organizations have problems, that all organizations are imperfect. If you wait around for the perfect organization, nothing gets done. But we also learned that only building organizations builds popular power. César Chávez taught us how to build people's organizations.

His legacy for popular struggles, to Chicano-Mexicano self-determination, and to union struggles is beyond measure. Already the UCLA Chicano Studies Center has renamed itself in his honor. He is present in all of our work. ■

Duane Campbell is a member of the DSA National Political Committee and Secretary of the DSA Latino Commission.

A Broader Vision of the Social Good:

Trade Unions and Women Workers

BY JO-ANN MORT

Women and Unions: Forging a Partnership. Dorothy Sue Cobble, editor (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 1993). 464 pages, \$19.95, paper.

The summer of 1993 saw a revolution in the workplace. U.S. women began their long climb into the interiors of the civilized workplace by being rewarded with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). Now, women (and men, too, if they choose) are free to take 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a child or sick relative.

Never mind that the European Community (EC) just voted to regularize standards, giving each member of the EC fourteen weeks of paid leave -- way below the standards for most Western European countries, where leaves range from nineteen months to three years. Never mind -- it's a beginning as the U.S. tries to raise itself out of the undeveloped world, where it sits in an embarrassing comparison to other industrialized countries when it comes to social regulations and national work standards.

The labor movement can and should claim a lot of credit for this new legislation. For over a decade, advocates of women and children within organized labor have been arguing for this type of family-friendly policy. The FMLA is critical because it sets a new precedent in mandatory workplace legislation, but it's already become known as the "yuppie law" since only well-paid professionals can afford to take advantage of it. The goal, of course, will be to push the policy further so that all women can, in fact, afford to make use of it.

As this recent book, *Women and Unions: Forging a Partnership*, edited by Rutgers professor Dorothy Sue Cobble, shows, the opportunities are vast for women and unions in the workplace of the future. Models exist throughout the world on how to bring equity into

the workplace. This collection is usefully organized into issues areas, to give the full range of options available to today's U.S. labor movement, indeed, to the entire country.

Once upon a time -- particularly during the New Deal era -- the labor movement spoke on behalf of America. Their vision was the nation's vision, an alternative from the status quo. By emphasizing issues of gender equality, labor could once again put forward a vision for a nation sorely in need of one.

Many remedies cited by authors in this book are obvious. All they require is political will. For example, Margaret Halleck, of the University of Oregon and formerly of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), argues for labor to make wage equality a goal. She cites examples from Sweden and new laws in Ontario and British Columbia whose goals are to equalize incomes.

But, most germane to today's "pro-family" agenda is her argument for a re-adjustment of the "family wage." It's painfully obvious that men no longer need to earn more than women to support a family. It's time that myth be debunked through a hard-nosed political campaign for wage equality which would, in the end, raise wages for all workers and begin to lift thousands of women and children out of poverty.

Several articles discuss strategies around pay equity struggles. Jean Ross and Ronnie Steinberg, both of whom have been active in DSA, describe their own experiences with pay equity battles. Ross traces the history of collective bargaining and equity issues; Steinberg cites a 1985 New York State comparable worth study to begin to re-evaluate what defines "valuable" work.

Yet, as Gloria Johnson -- a vice president of the International Union of Electronic Workers, the new president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and

a newly elected member of the AFL-CIO executive council -- argues, women labor activists need to develop "strategy packages," combining various options for closing the wage gap, from litigation to legislation. Where pay equity battles have been successful in the public sector, waged by SEIU and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, these fights must be brought into the private sector, too.

As critical as increasing wages for women is the need to change the concept of work and the workplace. U.S. women desperately need some of the social legislation offered to women in most developed nations. Again, precisely because unions have been in the forefront on these family-oriented issues, unions could offer an agenda for change in our nation that would increase labor's overall public image and support among unorganized workers.

As Susan Cowell, an International Ladies Garment Workers Union vice president and DSA activist, writes: "The labor movement offers a distinct approach to family policy. . . [F]ederal government policies to ensure adequate income, family and medical leave, and high-quality affordable support services, including child care, elder care, and health care."

Cowell stresses that labor's ability to negotiate this agenda into the public debate was hindered by the Reagan/Bush era. Now, she supposes, labor may have an easier time. The trick, of course, is for labor to develop a strategy to stretch the available political space more to the left so that these issues can be cast from labor's -- not corporate America's -- point of view. Federal child care policies and a reorganization of the eight-hour work day are tops on the list. As Cowell concludes, "Labor's ability to articulate and implement its own family policy will determine the answers to these questions for all Americans."

Several authors investigate the issue of part-time work and the evolving position of unions toward this phenomenon. Historically, part-time work has been used to undermine a stable, unionized workforce. That is still the case in many instances, as employers attempt to circumvent any responsibility to pay full-time workers their benefits.

However, both single-paycheck earners and two-wage earner families increasingly will depend on workplace flexibility to enable them to take care of family responsibilities. It's therefore imperative that unions be open to part-time work as an option; but it's increasingly important to either federalize social standards and benefits for all workers or to extend organized labor's numbers into the part-time workforce.

Part-time work is becoming a world-wide phenomenon. Virginia duRivage and David C. Jacobs reveal in their essay that part-time work now accounts for over 40 percent of the jobs held by women in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands, and

the vast majority of women's jobs in the U.K. Ninety percent of part-time workers are women in West Germany [sic], 88 percent in Austria, 87 percent in Belgium, 85 percent in Sweden and 83 percent in France. As in the U.S., most of these women work in the low-end service and retail jobs. Except for the U.K., most of these workers enjoy a wide range of benefits unavailable to most U.S. workers, through national legislation and increasingly through an expansion of the social clause in the European Community. duRivage and Jacobs conclude by arguing for U.S. unions to expand their fight for women's rights beyond the collective bargaining table to push for legislative remedies.

As Leslie Nulty of the UFCW points out in her comments, many of these part-time workers in Europe are immigrants. The debate raging in post-Cold War Europe about immigration policy will no doubt have an impact on the future of this part-time workforce. Immigrants, too, comprise a large portion of the part-time, non-union workforce in the U.S. Women of all ages -- including too many who work underage -- are left with almost no legal protection or social benefits.

The U.S. labor movement, as it did in the much-heralded days of the great CIO organizing drives, must develop a sophisticated campaign which combines the best of collective bargaining with political organizing in the streets, statehouses, and halls of Congress. But organizing by itself is not enough. DSA activist Roberta Lynch points out in one of the concluding essays that "Labor will need a broader vision of its role, and a more compelling and credible vision of what society should be."

There is no way, finally, to enhance the position of women in the workforce without strengthening the U.S. labor movement. So, labor law reforms which would allow workers the right to organize without fear of job loss or recrimination may be number one on the list of fighting for women's equality. Indeed, inventive campaigns have successfully swelled women's ranks in the labor movement in the traditional blue collar sector and in the clerical, service and professional sectors.

However, even that is not enough. Labor can only increase its numbers if the majority of non-union Americans think that a strengthened labor movement is good for the country. One of the most effective ways to convince a skeptical America is to fight for the kind of social agenda which mixes economic necessity with the social good.

That's the essence of women and unions. This volume is a helpful tool in organizing the debate among trade unionists and others. DL

Jo-Ann Mort is director of communications of ACTWU, and a member of the DSA National Political Committee and of the editorial board of Dissent.

**DSA IS A FRIEND
AND ALLY OF WORKING
WOMEN AND MEN AND
THEIR UNIONS. THANKS FOR YOUR
FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT.**



**JAN D. PIERCE, Vice President
COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
District One**

**City University
New York DSA**

announces the twelfth annual
**Socialist Scholars
Conference**

April 1, 2, 3, 1994

**Write: Socialist Scholars Conference
Borough of Manhattan Community College
199 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007**

**The ILGWU
Southwest District Council**

Salutes

DSA & Democratic Left

**Steve Nutter
VP Regional Director**



**Antonio Orea
Manager**

**Cristina R. Vazquez
Political & Educational Director**

ILR Press

Women and Unions: Forging a Partnership
Dorothy Sue Cobble, editor

This milestone book explores the facets of a crucial new relationship emerging between working women and organized labor.
464 pages Paper \$19.95

Gender and Race Inequality at Work: The Sources and Consequences of Employment Segregation
Donald Tomaskovic-Devey

The author uses data from the first general population survey to estimate the impact of job segregation on inequalities in pay, power, and decision-making authority.
232 pages Paper \$16.95

Available at local bookstores or call
ILR Press at 607/255-2264.



**Congratulations
to
DEMOCRATIC LEFT
from
Dissent**

**Agree with or dissent
from *Dissent* --
but don't be without it!**

-
- Single copy: \$6
 - Subscription rates: \$22/year; \$40/two years
 - Students: \$15/year
 - Institutions: \$30/year; \$50/two years

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE/ZIP _____

Make check payable to Dissent, 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Books, Videos, Etc. Available From DSA!

Essential Reading for the Clinton Era

New! Race Matters

by Cornel West

The bestselling collection of essays by DSA Honorary Chair Cornel West. Broad, insightful, prophetic thinking.
Beacon Press, 1993, hardcover, \$12.00.

New! After the Flood: World Politics and Democracy in the Wake of Communism

by Bogdan Denitch

DSA Vice Chair Bogdan Denitch reflects on the historical implications of the demise of Leninism. Thoughtful and timely.

Wesleyan University Press, Softcover, \$17.00.

Breaking Bread: Insurgent Black Intellectual Life

by bell hooks and Cornel West

This provocative and captivating dialogue discusses issues ranging from theology and the left to contemporary music, film and fashion.

South End Press, 1991, 271 pages, \$12.00.

Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s

by Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, and Steve Max

An incomparable handbook.

Seven Locks Press, 1991, 271 pages, softcover, \$20.00.

New! The Activist's Almanac: The Concerned Citizen's Guide to the Leading Advocacy Organizations in America

by David Walls

A stunningly thorough and useful directory.

Simon and Schuster, 1993, 432 pages, softcover, \$18.00.

Reclaiming Our Future: An Agenda for American Labor

by William Winpisinger

A radical vision for the U.S. labor movement.

Westview Press, 1989, 268 pages, softcover, \$9.00.

The Worst Years of Our Lives: Irreverent Notes From a Decade of Greed

by Barbara Ehrenreich

A collection of shorter pieces by DSA Honorary Chair Barbara Ehrenreich. Serious but fun.

Harper-Collins, 275 pages, 1991, softcover, \$10.00

The End of the Cold War: European Unity, Socialism and the Shift in Global Power

by Bogdan Denitch

An excellent, thoughtful analysis of recent history.

University of Minnesota Press, 1990, 123 pages, softcover, \$12.00.

Autobiography

Dorothy Healey Remembers: A Life in the Communist Party

by Dorothy Healey and Maurice Isserman

Oxford, 1990, Hardcover, 263 pages, \$20.00

A Margin of Hope by Irving Howe

HBJ, 1982, Softcover, 252 pages, \$7.00

Youth/Campus Politics

"Organizing for Reproductive Freedom"

Published by DSA, 1990, 46 pages.

special price: \$1.00

"Youth Section Organizing Manual"

Published by DSA, 1990, 72 pages, \$3.00

National Health Care

"Health Care For a Nation In Need"

by Victor W. Sidel, MD

Find out more about health care reform and the prospects for national health care in this compelling booklet.

Published by IDS, 1991, 36 pages, \$5.00

"Health Care For People, Not For Profit"

Published by DSA, 1990, pamphlet, FREE

Button: **"Health Care For People, Not For Profit!"**

DSA, \$1.00

DSA buttons! \$1.00 each



Books by DSA Honorary Chairs

New! *The Ethical Dimensions of Marxist Thought* by Cornel West

A searching look at Marxism by one of America's liveliest thinkers.

Monthly Review Press, 1991, \$18.00

Socialism and America by Irving Howe

Thoughts on the history of socialism in America from the time of Eugene Debs to the present.

HBJ, 1977, Softcover, 218 pages, \$7.00.

New! *Prophetic Thought in Postmodern Times* by Cornel West

Reflections on the preservation of "non-market" values.

Common Courage Press, 1993, 210 pages, \$15.00

New! *Prophetic Reflections: Notes on Race and Power in America*

by Cornel West

Recent speeches and interviews. As always, challenging and enlightening.

Common Courage Press, 1993, 244 pages, \$15.00.

Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class by Barbara Ehrenreich

Ehrenreich dissects the middle class and examines how its anxieties shape its political and cultural outlook.

Pantheon Books, 1989, softcover, \$11.00

The Mean Season: The Attack on the Welfare State by Fred Block, Richard A. Cloward, Barbara Ehrenreich, and Frances Fox Piven

A healthy antidote to neoconservative rhetoric.

Pantheon Books, 1987, softcover, 205 pages, \$9.00

New socialist outerwear!

DSA T-shirts \$10.00

___ M ___ L ___ XL

DSA bicycle caps \$6.00

one size fits all

NOW ON VIDEO!

Billy Bragg ☆ Pete Seeger ☆ Gretchen Reed

☆ **THE CONCERT FOR JOBS, PEACE & FREEDOM** ☆
Produced by IDS, \$20.00

THE OTHER SIDE OF FREE TRADE

A 10-MINUTE VIDEO DOCUMENTING THE DSA YOUTH SECTION'S JANUARY 1993 INVESTIGATIVE VISIT TO MEXICAN MAQUILADORA ZONES -- A GREAT ORGANIZING TOOL! \$10.00

Michael Harrington Classics

Socialism: Past and Future

by Michael Harrington

In his last book, the late Michael Harrington, a DSA founder and longtime co-chair, traces two centuries of socialist history.

Penguin USA, 1989, softcover, \$10.00

The Long-Distance Runner

by Michael Harrington

Fascinating autobiographical account of one of America's most provocative thinkers and committed activists.

Henry Holt, 1988, hardcover, 260 pages.

Special price, now just \$9.00!

The Next Left by Michael Harrington

A still-relevant analysis and prescription for building a vibrant, effective democratic left.

Henry Holt, 1986, hardcover, 194 pages.

Special Price, now just \$7.00!

"Socialism Informs the Best of Our Politics" by Michael Harrington

Published by DSA, 1988, 4 pages, \$1.00

The New American Poverty

by Michael Harrington

A challenging analysis of poverty in the context of new economic patterns.

Penguin Books, 1984, 270 pages, softcover, \$9.00.

◆ ORDER FORM ◆

Please check off items you wish to order. If you are ordering more than one of a particular item, fill in amount ordered in box. Then, fill out below.

POSTAGE AND HANDLING

For orders \$2.00 and under add \$.50

For orders from \$2.01 to \$5.00 add \$1.00

For orders from \$5.01 to \$10.00 add \$2.00

For orders over \$10.00 add \$3.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

TOTAL AMOUNT OF ORDER \$ _____

Payment enclosed

Charge my credit card

If paying by Visa or Mastercard please fill in credit card number, expiration date, and sign below.

VISA

MASTERCARD

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature X _____

Please return this form with payment to DSA,
15 Dutch St., #500, NY, NY 10038 (212) 962-0390.

Janie Higgins Reports



FLYING LIKE GEESE

We're all too familiar with the unsubstantiated right-wing scare story that thousands of Canadians allegedly flee their health care system by coming to the United States for treatment. Now comes news of a very different phenomenon: The province of Ontario estimates that over *half a million* foreigners, mostly U.S. citizens, come to Ontario with false Canadian health-care ID's. The province estimates that this sort of fraud costs Canadian taxpayers \$760 million (U.S.) annually. Now we know which health-care system people are *really* desperate to flee. Memo to future health care policy wonks: If we've gotta have national health care cards, make them with photo ID's, okay?

GRIM "CHOICES"

A new reminder of how life in a job-scarce, wage-based society perverts human priorities and possibilities: A just-released study by the Families and Work In-

stitute reveals that when work and family demands clash, a worker's family is more than three times as likely to suffer than his or her job performance. Rather than refuse overtime, cut their work productivity, or risk their bosses' wrath, workers will give up leisure time with their families, neglect housework, or experience bad moods.

WIMPY INFILTRATES CAPITAL'S INNER LAIR

Unions are increasingly winning representation on the boards of airline companies. The Pilots Association and the Teamsters, who represent flight attendants, each have one seat on the board of Northwest Airlines. And unions have a total of *four* seats on the board of TWA, where their representatives include DSA Honorary Chair William ("Wimpy") Winpisinger, the retired president of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). When asked by a journalist whether Winpisinger's selection means that an old socialist will be joining the board, an IAM official replied, "He's not so old."

Democratic Socialists of America

Join us!

Members of the Democratic Socialists of America work in immediate struggles for justice -- as we build a movement for long-term social change.

We bring to our work a strategy for building alliances among social movements and a vision of a more just and equitable society.

Join DSA and become a card-carrying member of the largest and most exciting democratic socialist organization in the U.S.!

Send me more information about DSA.

Enclosed are my dues!

\$50 sustainer \$35 regular

\$15 low-income/student

Enclosed is \$8 for a subscription to *Democratic Left*

Enclosed is a contribution of \$_____ to help DSA's activism.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____

Make checks payable to DSA, and return to DSA:
15 Dutch St., #500, NY, NY 10038. (212) 962-0390