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A New Solidarity



Rebuilding the Left
at Home and Around the World

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EDITORIAL

YES, BREAK THE CYCLE OF DEPENDENCY

BY RON BAIMAN

We all know that reducing dependency is not the real goal, nor is it going to be the real outcome, of the attack on welfare. The real political impetus has more to do with targeting a weak and vulnerable class (and, implicitly, race) of scapegoats for the real problems of the middle class. The politics of scapegoating leaves no room for appeals to reason and compassion. Evidence showing that the supposed welfare "reforms" will only increase pervasive homelessness, despair, and poverty for poor children and their parents doesn't seem to work. These proposals are not about facts and reason; they are based on political victimization—on blaming the victims, pure and simple.

Therefore I propose that instead of trying to stop the politics of victimization, we offer the correct substitute victims—people whom we can easily help, and increase public revenue at the same time. Instead of scapegoating the poor and vulnerable, we need to break the intergenerational cycle of psychologically and socially destructive dependency of the very rich. The generations of rich (Rockefellers, Du Ponts, Heinzes, Morgans, and so forth) clearly suffer from rampant drug addiction (mostly to alcohol) and moral breakdown, as is evident in the merry-go-round of affairs, abortions, spousal abuse, and business power

plays depicted in *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* and the O.J. Simpson trial. We need to end welfare for the rich as we know it. This includes what Secretary of Labor Robert Reich has called "corporate welfare," but it's much more than that. The moral degeneration displayed by the very rich is a clear threat to the social fabric of our society, particularly as it is watched so closely by so many.

A fundamental feature of capitalism is that most of the social surplus goes to a tiny minority of households, who get more than three-fourths of their income from property entitlements for which they don't have to lift a finger. According to a 1990 Federal Reserve study, in 1986 (the last year for which data is available), the top 0.5 percent of households by income held almost half of all corporate stock (48.4 percent) in the U.S., averaging \$1,456,000 worth per household. The top 1 percent of households also owned a little over a third of real estate, and the distribution of capital held by non-publicly-traded businesses was almost as concentrated as the distribution of corporate stock.

From their massive property-based entitlements, according to 1988 data, the upper 1 percent of household income earners made an average of almost three-fourths of their income: 26 percent from profits and dividends, 12.2 percent from interest, 34.3 percent from capital gains, 1 percent from other non-labor income, including rents and royalties. Only 26 percent of their income was remuneration for labor—and we can safely presume that much of this was in the form of top executive salaries, which are implicitly shares of profits as well.

We're talking real money here—not the crumbs that gutting welfare will generate. An initial proposal might be to redirect all property-based income back to the treasury, to be used for public child care, health care, job creation, and so forth. The former rich in return could be issued \$300-a-month "transition to independence" checks—but only for a two-year period, and only for those who are legally married and in recovery from alcoholism and spousal abuse. This might sound like socialism, but it's really just "tough love" for the people in our society who need it most. **DL**

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A New Solidarity

Strategies for the Gingrich Era

BY JOSEPH M. SCHWARTZ

When Bill Clinton won office in 1992, many people on the left felt hopeful—and not just because the Reagan nightmare seemed to have lifted. Some of us hoped that even a centrist presidency might revitalize liberalism, and that a robust liberalism would in turn create openings for the left. What we have learned since 1992, among many other painful lessons, is just how hollow traditional postwar liberalism has become. As Harold Meyerson argued in the last issue of *Democratic Left*, the globalization of the economy and public perceptions of the federal deficit mean that there is no longer a credible liberal strategy for delivering national prosperity. The mainstream, Keynesian-based liberalism with which the democratic left has had a love/hate relationship for forty years is dead and buried.

On a certain level, this is good news: since mainstream liberals no longer have any coherent or compelling strategies to put forward, the entire playing field to the left of Gingrich is wide open for radical ideas. But we also face an enormous challenge. Although we have dozens of ideas about protecting the environment and democratizing the workplace and the home, the political glue that has always held these ideas together, and made them into a potentially majoritarian program, is . . . the same national

Keynesianism whose collapse has crippled mainstream liberalism. And as we struggle to build a post-Keynesian paradigm grounded in international social movements, it's a safe bet that the vacuum left by liberalism won't be filled by socialism, but by narrow nationalists and demagogues with names like Buchanan, Farrakhan, and Perot.

To work its way out of this bind, the democratic left must do three things: 1) embed its ideas and energy in alliance with the various student, labor, feminist, and community mobilizations that will arise in opposition to the dismantling of the welfare state; 2) promote the issues of wage stagnation and workplace democracy as major themes in public life; and 3) begin in earnest the long-term task of *internationalizing* the environmentalist, labor, feminist, and anti-racist movements. Only with worldwide networks will democratic forces ever have enough muscle to challenge the power of transnational capital. This essay will discuss the first two of these points; the third is argued by Kurt Stand and Joanne Barkan elsewhere in this issue.

I. Fighting the Gingrich Agenda

The 1994 Congressional election should not be read as a rejection of a "left-wing" Clinton agenda and the triumph of the right's monetarist



Robert Fox/Impact Visuals

A demonstration against increases in tuition at the City University of New York.

model. In 1993, Clinton's cautious instincts led him to placate Wall Street bondholders rather than risk angering corporate elites by advancing a populist economic program. Since there was no real growth in wages between 1992 and 1994, congressional Democrats did not dare run on the "success" of Clinton's economic program. Instead, Clinton tried to build the congressional campaign by sounding pale echoes of the Republicans' line on crime and welfare reform. As moderate Democrats should have learned long ago, running on these racially-tinged issues only

The mainstream, Keynesian-based liberalism with which the democratic left has had a love/hate relationship for forty years is dead and buried.

pushes the political debate—and large numbers of white voters—to the right. Many of the most reliably progressive portions of the Democratic electorate saw no reason to go to the polls; the voting rate was down among African Americans, Jews, and union members. So the stage was set for a Republican landslide.

But did 1994 represent a classic "realigning

election"—the kind that leads to a new long-term governing majority? I would argue not. The conservative model of governance is in almost as much crisis as the mainstream liberal model. The bond market and the electorate won't allow the same kind of trickery—a boom fueled by tax cuts, deficits, and massive military spending—that kept Reaganism afloat after 1983. In order to fulfill their principles, Gingrich-era Republicans will need to go straight to some of the most foolish and unpopular cutbacks on the menu: in educational loans, in Medicare, and before long in Social Security.

So instead of right-wing consolidation based on a viable economic program, the left confronts a political stalemate in

which supply-side may be dead, but the right nonetheless remains dominant ideologically. The Republicans' anti-tax, anti-government vision is more coherent and compelling to many voters than anything the left has been able to get across—although this may change as more middle-class Americans get a taste of what a low-government world will mean. The Gingrich vision is a mean-spirited dystopia, espoused in a racist, sexist discourse of the "undeserving" poor. Thus, the wars of ideas around the "free market," welfare, and affirmative action remain crucial, unavoidable terrain for the progressive community.

In fighting the new wave of punitive cutbacks, we need to advance a two-track strategy, which poses a tension between a short-term defense of imperfect, means-tested programs (AFDC, Medicaid, and so forth) and a long-term struggle to relegitimize the public sector as a mechanism for guaranteeing prosperity and justice to the middle class as well as the poor. As much as we may criticize the current welfare system—it's stingy, it's bureaucratic, it doesn't guarantee serious job training—we have an obvious duty to join community organizations in defending AFDC against crude cutbacks.

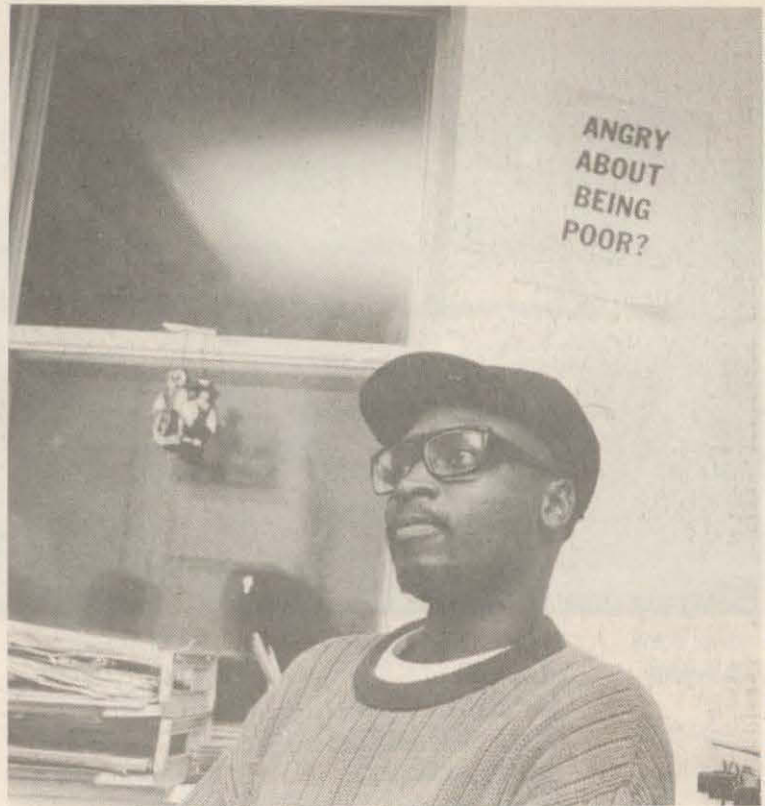
We can begin this defense by aggressively

exposing the most common myths about welfare. Despite the pervasive view that transfer payments take from the hard-working and reward the indolent, the reality remains that 52 percent of Americans benefit from transfer payments. Eighty percent of such payments are for Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment insurance—politically untouchable programs, at least until now. Only 20 percent of government social welfare expenditure is means-tested, and only one quarter of that money is for AFDC (that is, AFDC represents a minuscule 1 percent of the federal budget and only 2 percent of total state budgets).

And then there's the myth of lifetime welfare "dependency." In fact, over 75 percent of current AFDC recipients will join the formal work force within two years; but many will return to AFDC because their jobs will not pay sufficient wages and benefits to make up for lost Medicaid and to pay for child care. Studies demonstrate that the majority of welfare mothers already work off-the-books for wages (mostly as day care providers for low-wage workers in their communities). The money provided by these jobs can be crucial, because the typical urban AFDC recipient must spend between 50 and 70 percent of her benefits on housing.

But as we defend existing welfare programs, in public arguments and in public demonstrations, we must also find ways to make the debate forward-looking. This is the time to raise fundamental questions about how our society organizes and finances work, education, health care, and child care. Do we as a society believe that the rearing of pre-school-aged children is meaningful work? (If not, then why don't the welfare cutters propose mandatory workfare—or a special tax—for the millions of affluent women who choose to stay home with their children?) Should providing child care be solely the responsibility of women? If we're going to force men on welfare into the labor market, then why not also coerce them into their fair share of child care work? And why are so many full-time workers earning a less-than-poverty wage? The "poverty trap" blamed by conservatives upon liberals is, in reality, a structural phenomenon of modern capitalism.

We must do a similar balancing act as we address the renewed controversy over affirmative action. This issue has already served as a powerful solvent for breaking down the



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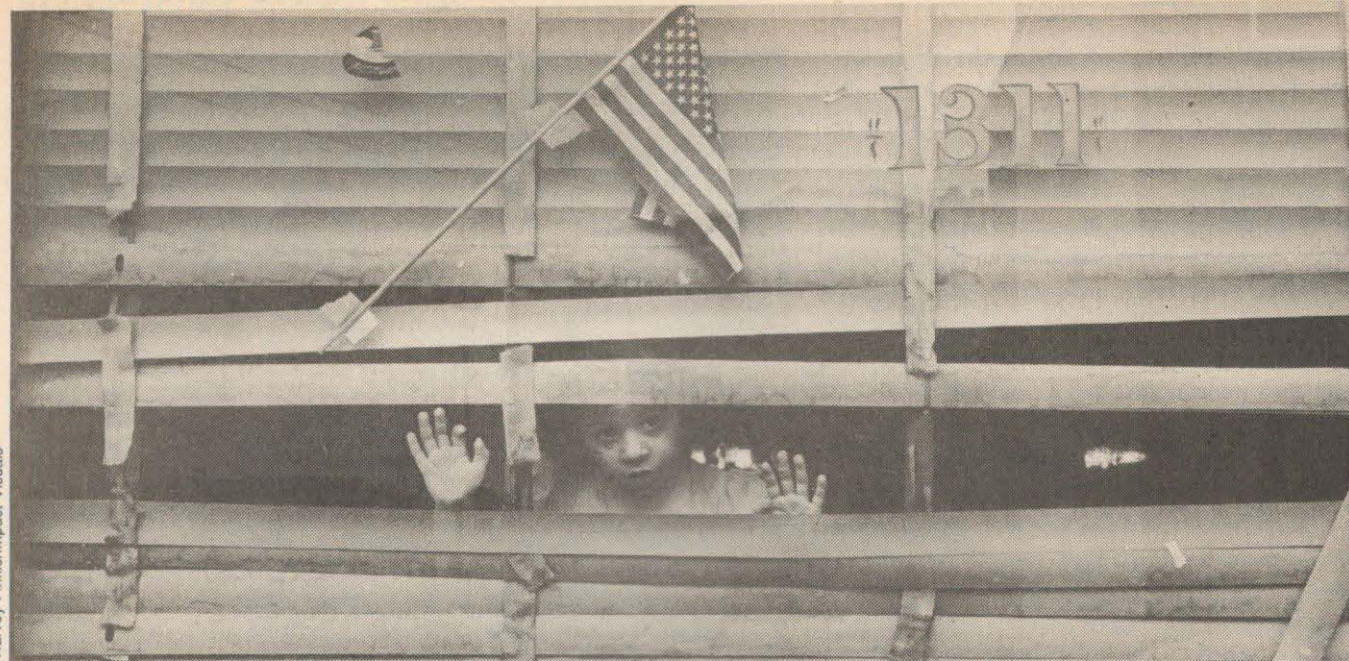
multiracial working-class base of the Great Society coalition. Conservative and neoliberal critics misrepresent affirmative action programs in several ways: First, they describe them as hard-and-fast quotas rather than efforts to identify qualified applicants overlooked by biased recruitment procedures. Second, they promote the myth that most beneficiaries are professionals or college graduates and thus disproportionately

An activist in Philadelphia's Kensington Welfare Rights Union.

Even as we defend existing welfare programs, we need to find ways to make the debate forward-looking—to raise fundamental questions about the future of work.

already from middle-class backgrounds. In fact, affirmative action has served mostly to open up civil service, construction trades, the uniformed services, and clerical jobs in banking and insurance firms to non-white and female employees.

But as with most ideological reactions, the grievances of white working- and middle-class males against affirmative action embody a partial truth amidst their more profound falsehood. The small kernel of truth is that it's foolish not to include class background as a component of



Harvey Finkle/Impact Visuals

A rundown home
in Philadelphia.

affirmative action. Lockean liberal American ideology can conceive of discrimination based on the ascribed characteristics of race and sex. But liberal individualism cannot admit that class is a structural barrier to equality of opportunity (of course, race and sex are also socially structured, but liberals view these as purely ascribed characteristics). In recent months commentators from across the political spectrum have pointed out this hypocrisy. Some of them have gone another step, and called for a class-based affirmative

sal social programs cannot end-run the successful Republican depiction of all state programs as generating dependency and inefficiency. This conservative rhetoric, which has now become conventional wisdom, insists that public provision creates indolence, but market-based competition promotes just reward to effort. Our biggest task is to debunk this myth of the market as a purely neutral, meritocratic arena that provides equal opportunity to all competitors. In fact, not only do wage differentials result more from relative social power and prestige than actual marginal productivity, but state benefits go disproportionately to the middle class and corporate America.

Beyond cutting corporate welfare, the democratic left needs to propose replacing regressive state and county taxation with progressive forms of revenue-generation. Currently, many citizens devalue the benefits of the federal government, as it comes mostly in transfer payments to which they believe they are entitled (Social Security and Medicare). The programs that have the most public visibility are small, means-tested programs, which comprise only 6 percent of the federal budget and provide child care, nutrition, and health care for a vulnerable poor. And because of the regressive nature of state and local property taxes, many citizens devalue the quality of public goods that exist in many suburbs (affluent suburbs offer localized social democracy). Only by replacing local property taxes with state-wide progressive income tax can we guarantee equal educational opportu-

Our biggest task is to debunk the myth of the market as an arena that provides equal opportunities to all competitors.

action *instead of* race- and gender-based programs. But purely class-based affirmative action will not completely redress the legacy of generations of racism and sexism nor address persistent racist and sexist biases in recruitment. As 61 percent of the poor and working class in the U.S. are white, and half are men, strictly class-based affirmative action programs would not adequately redress the relatively autonomous nature of racial and sexual prejudice.

Those on the left who would like to avoid defending means-tested programs or affirmative action proffer that solely advancing universal programs can overcome the politics of racial division. But a political strategy based on univer-

nity and maintain any hope of a progressive response to the devolution of federal social programs to the states.

II. Wage Stagnation and Workplace Democracy

As the conservative and mainstream liberal paradigms fall into crisis, the middle class is increasingly anxious about its security and its future. With the left demobilized, this is an atmosphere ripe for the politics of scapegoating. Anxious middle- and working-class voters demonize government spending on the “undeserving poor” as causing the end of the American dream. This is the psyche of the “angry white male” electorate—victims of downward mobility are not all white men, but are disproportionately displaced white male industrial workers in their forties and fifties. Absent either a coherent left or right global growth strategy, the right keeps its audience by telling a tale of the state as an inefficient redistributor from the hard-working (read whites) to the undeserving poor (read non-white). This is not the first time in American history that economic anxiety has led nativist elements to engage in punitive stereotyping of the poor, people of color, and immigrants.

The past twenty-five years’ electoral trends reflect this failure of both left and right governing models, and have culminated in a demobilized “dealignment.” With the growth of PAC-driven, candidate-based, entrepreneurial politics, there is little hope for a coherent, ideological, party-based electoral response to the rightward, pro-corporate drift. Most leftists draw one of two conclusions from this situation—either become active at the grass roots of the hollowed-out Democratic Party, or build a third party that will eschew the cesspool of PAC politics and expand and remobilize the left. (The smartest and most prominent of these third party efforts has been the fusion-based New Party.)

I believe that our fundamental task is to help remobilize the grass roots of the left, and that electoral activity—whether inside, outside,



Donna Binder/Impact Visuals

or “inside/outside” the Democratic Party—is not the most effective mechanism for doing this. Given the control of state legislatures and conservative courts over ballot access, a third party strategy means lots of time in court and not much time in viable election campaigns. It's no coincidence that the New Party has invariably elected folks to non-partisan local offices or endorsed liberal Democrats as “New Party Democrats.”

In essence, the debate over party vehicles

A demonstration organized by the New York Unemployed Committee.

The middle class is anxious, and the left is demobilized—this is an atmosphere ripe for the politics of scapegoating.

puts the cart before the horse: politicians of all parties must respond to pressure from organized, active constituencies. Without a serious revitalization of the social movements of the left, we will neither be able to elect progressive politicians (whatever ballot line they choose) nor hold them accountable. This doesn't mean, of course, that we should totally ignore the electoral arena until our troops are amassed—only that we shouldn't place this arena at the center of our strategy. Progressive social movements must target campaign finance as the primary barrier to a left electoral resurgence.

Right now, the democratic left, at most, represents the conscious political opinion of 20 percent of our society. Are we really



Donna DeCesare/Impact Visuals

An unemployment line grows in Brooklyn.

underrepresented by the ninety or so progressive Democrats in the House who support single-payer and most other left-liberal legislation (and who, by no accident, are over 40 percent representatives of color). We can only demand a left presence in the state commensurate to our strength in civil society.

The structural causes of this politics of left-right stalemate—the absence of a global left and the control of capital over domestic electoral politics—both constrain and dictate our long march through the institutions. Such a march involves a battle for a democratic domestic polity and a solidaristic, global left capable of using state and multinational institutions to force capital to serve the interests of the vast majority. The structural constraints force us to ask: how do we advance an internationalist politics when there are no progressive international agents of any significance, be they strong international union federations or a clearly progressive multinational regional bloc (the European Community is still more a common market for capital than a social charter for labor)? How do we make work on global justice programmatic, concrete, and not solely educational?

To confront the political impasse of the left forthrightly, we must develop a convincing response to popular skepticism about the role of the state in a democratic society. How do we talk about public provision that guarantees equity, but also facilitates choice in a decentralized, non-bureaucratic manner? Do we simply say no to all forms of vouchers, choice among

and within public providers, public financing for non-profit forms of communal and voluntary social welfare provision? As long as the majority of politically active citizens believe that reforms such as single payer health care would result in “big, bad, inefficient government,” the democratic left will not be able to create quality public goods necessary for growth with equity.

The right’s continued ideological hegemony demonstrates the power of ideas and values. Immediate political pragmatism does not guarantee long-run political success. Our dual role is to defend the rights of the most vulnerable, while publicly advocating our revamped socialist values of equality, justice, and solidarity. The grip of the myth of the free market upon liberal democratic polities can only be challenged by a politics of global social solidarity. The choice we confront today may not be between socialism and barbarism. But it is between the development of a global international solidarity or IMF-austerity, mass poverty, and elite domination. Never have short-run politics been so haunted by long-term, epochal choices. Our choice may well be the only humane alternative. Thus, it is worth continuing the struggle in these difficult, times of left and right paradigm exhaustion. **DL**

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Hang Together— Or Hang Separately

Democracy's Future in a Global Economy

BY KURT STAND

From Marx to the present, socialists have proclaimed their fidelity to an international ideal. Now, however, internationalism is literally a matter of life and death for the very survival of socialism. Either the movement will define a new global politics or else it will go down as humankind's noblest illusion.

—Michael Harrington, 1989

Five hundred years ago, ships courageously set forth across the seas, launching an era of global trade that made possible both the rise of modern democracy and many of the atrocities that democrats have battled against. The new age of trade supported the scientific challenge to traditional religion, elevated artisans above landowners, and laid the basis for a new understanding of the world. But all of this came with a horrible price, for accompanying this new wealth came the slave trade in Africa, colonization in the Americas and Asia, the expropriation of Europe's freeholders, and the rise of a new class whose religion was and is profits. Upon that ambiguous legacy sit many of the conflicts and contradictions that we are still struggling to resolve.

Today we are living through another wave of globalization. The bankers and manufacturers who are heralding this new age are far from heroic, but the march toward a borderless world will generate conflicts as profound as those that arose during the age of European colonialism. Global economic integration and new connec-

tions among nations are laudable—indeed, they are vital to the long-term goals of peace and justice. But such unity should not—and cannot—come about under the aegis of the almighty dollar (or mark or yen), which is busy undermining democratic forms of government, destroying local cultures, and creating an economic whirlwind in which a few new age robber barons rise while the vast majority of working people in all lands are pulled downward.

“Free trade” is the slogan of this new world order in which corporate profit remains the sole definition of a sound economy, and in which ever higher rates of unemployment are accepted as natural and inevitable. These self-serving assumptions provide governments with rationalizations for policies that accede to the wishes of the transnational corporations (TNC's). The weakening of the nation-state in our day has profound implications for democracy and social justice.

In the face of crumbling cities and growing poverty in the U.S., it may seem that international trade is a parochial issue, of importance at best only to high-paid unionized workers. Shouldn't we concentrate instead on defending the legacy of the New Deal and the Great Society? And wouldn't a focus on trade entail unsavory alliances with the likes of Ross Perot or Pat Buchanan?

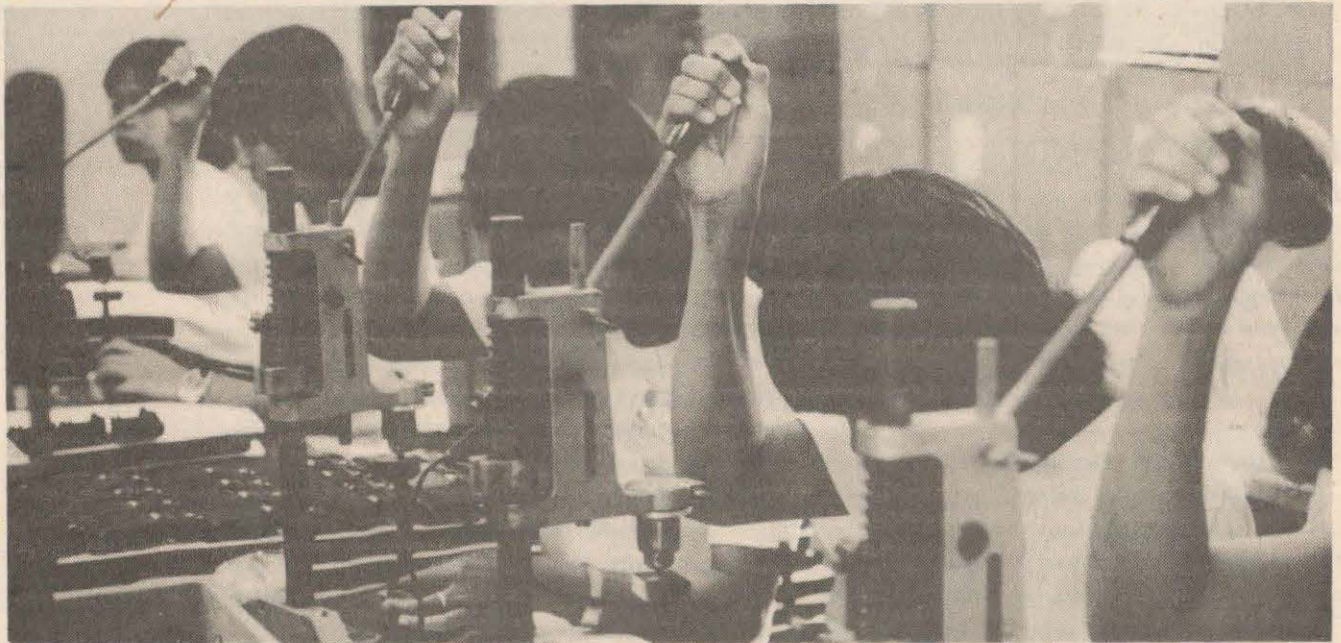
This outlook misses the point. Even if public pressure somehow managed to defeat the

Contract With America, new right-wing movements will arise again and again unless we fight to change the ground rules of the international economy. For it is the TNC's that are at the core of the economic anxiety that bedevils society and brings Newt Gingrich & Co. to national prominence. The global economy enables these businesses to enrich themselves at the expense of society by moving the locus of power from democratically elected government to unelected corporate bodies. And, in spite of claims to the contrary, the globalization of the economy doesn't magically bring about unity of the world's peoples but rather tends to create the social framework for divisions based on race, religion, and gender—which we have seen in the

new economy. This feeling may result in cynicism or it may result in support for demagogues, but in every instance it weakens the core notion of socialism: that the broad public is capable of wielding substantive economic and political power. It is this notion that the new trading pacts seek to obliterate.

The Alphabet Soup of Pacts

GATT, NAFTA, the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the Pact for the Americas, and—under very different conditions—the European Single Market claim to be about free trade, but in reality they are designed to promote and protect the interests of the TNC's. Intellectual property rights (as shown in the U.S. negotiations with



Oliver Garcia/Impact Visuals

An electronics factory in the Bataan Export Processing Zone in the Philippines.

worldwide resurgence of right-wing social movements putting forth claims of ethnic, religious, or national exclusiveness. As the weight of economic power is shifted away from government toward publicly unaccountable institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the new World Trade Organization, citizens have less leverage over the forces that shape their communities. Power is vested further and further away from home, but it is that power that must be confronted.

While not always articulated, the sense of this decline in democratic power is widely felt. Declining voter participation reflects the view that elected government is irrelevant to daily life and that resistance to the corporate agenda—let alone progressive change—is unfeasible in the

China) are a far more important issue to trade negotiators than labor or human rights. Even in Europe, where the strength of the trade union movement and of social democratic organizations has resulted in meaningful protections for labor, the thrust of the agreement is to create a framework that allows greater flexibility and concentration for TNC's, encouraging privatization and deregulation.

In essence, the various agreements provide greater protection for investments, limit regulatory controls over industry, allow for further integration of world money markets, and promote greater industrial concentration. Attempts to clean up the environment, ensure worker safety on the job, or improve wages can all be considered barriers to trade. NAFTA provides the clearest example of this: in key respects,

U.S.-Canadian and U.S.-Mexican trade has always been relatively free and open. What is new is uninhibited investment, which limits the ability of the government of any of the three countries to control economic growth. NAFTA ensures free movement of capital, not of labor; rights (copyright, patent, security) for investors, not for workers; and accountability to financial institutions, not to government bodies.

The ability of capital to move from market to market seemingly at the speed of light is like a pistol to the head of any duly elected government, which can face economic ruin if business feels threatened. The social democratic New Democratic Party government in Ontario faced such challenges and fell into political conflicts from which it has yet to recover. Another example is the Federal Reserve's ability to raise interest rates in order to maintain a high (or so-called "natural") level of unemployment and thus defeat any jobs creation program proposed by the Clinton administration.

The trade pacts perform the same political role as the federal budget deficit: they create a framework in which broad steps to redress social and economic grievances are seen as unrealistic, and so constituencies must compete with each other (or workers from one nation against those in another) for what few crumbs are left on the table.

Our response to this crisis must be rooted in the core principles of democracy. We must encourage the notion of self-rule in every sphere of life: the basic idea that working men and women, the poor and the dispossessed, are capable of running society. The internationalism of business must be confronted not by Perot and Buchanan's protectionism and narrow nationalism, but by a democratic and popular internationalism.

We cannot be successful internationally unless the labor movements of the Northern Hemisphere are linked to the movements from the South—by a common desire to raise living conditions, protect the environment, and preserve democratic rights. The exploitation of the most vulnerable undermines the conditions of workers everywhere. When corporations pay thousands of workers pennies an hour in Mexican *maquiladoras*, they can more credibly threaten their U.S. employees with abandonment or wage cuts.

Similarly, community struggles for housing or education in the United States will have little success in an economy where tax dollars and business investments go to the local bidders who are most able to debase themselves, and in which local governments sit impotently while corporations with budgets greater than most states call the shots. Nor will labor's battle to preserve jobs or the standard of living built up over generations have any greater long-term success if unions remain isolated. The link between community and labor, between the interests of organized workers and the poor, has often been rhetorically asserted—but as living conditions are squeezed ever tighter, not only must such links be made viable, they must be expanded to address international issues.

Who has the right to determine who works, when and where, and under what conditions? This is the question that we must bring into the center of public life, here and throughout the world. The internationalism of business can be confronted only when we build stronger institutions at home—stronger unions, more democratic local governments, a revived sense of public political participation inside and outside

The ability of capital to move from market to market at the speed of light is like a pistol to the head of every democratically elected government.

legislative chambers. We also need to build transnational democratic movements as dynamic and flexible as the TNC's. To think social change can be brought about in any other way is to give up just as the lines are being drawn.

The American, French, and Haitian revolutions two hundred years ago limited the first wave of world expansion and established an international concept of citizenship as a challenge to rulers who saw the world as their personal domain. Today, the internationalism of those who see the world as their plaything must again be challenged by an internationalism rooted in our common rights as human beings.

Kurt Stand, a member of the DSA National Political Committee, is North American Regional Director of the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations.

The New World Order We Need

The Limits of Regional Social Charters

BY JOANNE BARKAN

The economist John Maynard Keynes predicted the global mess we're in more than fifty years ago. Keynes advocated liberalized international trade, but he opposed (even more vigorously, some say) an open financial order. Without controls on the movement of capital and a stable system of pegged exchange rates, Keynes believed national governments would not have enough autonomy to pursue full-employment and welfare-state policies. Deregulate capital and allow exchange rates to float, Keynes warned, and the consequences for the welfare state would be grim.

Governments wouldn't be able to set the interest rates they needed; money would be shipped abroad to avoid taxes; economic elites would use the threat of a capital strike to manipulate legislation; speculators would destabilize entire economies by shifting vast amounts of capital from one country to another in search of high interest rates and appreciating currencies. (The only thing Keynes couldn't predict was how fast computer-aided capital flows could be.)

Everything Keynes warned would happen did happen. The virtuous cycle of economic growth, full employment, unionization of labor, and rising wages, which characterized the post-Second World War global economy, fell apart

after 1970. It was replaced by a downward spiral—call it global Thatcherism—that works like this. As international competition intensifies, wages are held down everywhere; in second and third world countries, wages don't reflect productivity gains; demand falters; high unemployment becomes chronic; markets are glutted; trade barriers go up. Labor standards converge in a globalized economy, but they converge downward. The welfare state comes under permanent siege.

A few years ago, many leftists thought regional markets governed by social charters would solve the autonomy problem. If, for example, the European Union (EU) set high standards for welfare provision and labor relations, it would create the equivalent of a strong welfare state in a market large enough to sustain autonomous policies for growth. A regional social charter sounded like a good idea; it *is* a good idea. But alone it can't recreate the virtuous cycle and save the welfare state.

At present, the EU provides modest subsidies to support its weakest members. But suppose the Union set up a rigorous charter that required all members to meet fairly high welfare and labor standards. Weak nations—for example, Portugal—would need much more help.

The aid would have to come from wealthier members—let's say, Germany. The German government could either cut back its own welfare state to help pay for Portugal's or it could raise taxes on its own citizens. The German electorate would almost certainly reject either solution.

Suppose instead that the EU adopted a social charter with standards as low as those of the weakest member or a charter with fine principles and no teeth (the latter pretty well describes the actual social policy of the EU). Capital might move to Portugal to take advantage of lower wages and taxes. In the best-case scenario, those investments would translate into jobs; workers would organize and win higher wages; tax revenues would increase to pay for a better welfare state; and then... investments would seek out lower wages in, say, South Korea. If workers there managed to organize and win more, the capital would move to Malaysia. The point is simple: in a global market where capital is hypermobile, regional charters without capital controls aren't sufficient.

John Maynard Keynes, living in 1995 and speaking on the *MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour*, would propose nothing less than turning global Thatcherism upside down. A new virtuous cycle of economic growth, full employment, and rising wages, he'd argue, wouldn't require an elaborate economic apparatus. Indeed, a stable system of pegged exchange rates, institutions to regulate international capital flows and curb risky banking practices, mechanisms to lighten the debt burden of third world nations, and democratic labor unions might suffice.

Since global Thatcherism makes the rich richer, they need everyone else to believe that the system, like hurricane season, is beyond human control. But political choices, not economic inevitability, produced the current mess. Reckless currency speculation, for example, would stop tomorrow morning if governments restabilized exchange rates. In general, Keynes could have his way if the U.S., Japanese, and German governments committed themselves to worldwide growth while jostling other governments to do the same.

A Keynesian world order, if it ever came



Ted SequimImpact Visuals

A textile maquiladora in Mexicali, Mexico.

about, would be a loose, unevenly realized affair—an agreement among economic leaders, resting on a few assumptions, a few regulations, and a couple of refurbished institutions. It's not too much to hope for, and yet a sober assessment must conclude that everything right now is moving in the opposite direction: the predatory search for markets, fierce competition, beggarthy-neighbor policies, social strife within nations, restrictive trade practices, risky banking practices, and uncontrolled speculation.

For many observers, this period bears a worrisome resemblance to the years after the First World War. If there is a pattern here, perhaps a Keynesian world order lies *somewhere* up ahead. Of course, it took cataclysmic events—the Great Depression and the Second World War—to create an opening for Lord Keynes. Carrying out another round of reforms without economic collapse or global conflagration would count as progress of a revolutionary kind. **DL**

Joanne Barkan is a New York-based writer and member of the Dissent magazine editorial board. She excerpted this article for DL from her longer essay "The Old Welfare State in the New Age of Competition" (Dissent, Winter 1995).

The Copenhagen Alternative Declaration

During the week of March 6, DSA National Director Alan Charney attended the UN World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. He found there that social movements throughout the world are learning the same painful lesson—that in an age of globalized capital, it is extremely difficult to fight for greater democracy and social justice at the national level. Feminist, environmentalist, and labor organizations from every continent met in Copenhagen to discuss strategies for building effective, forward-looking, *international* movements that can break the democratic left out of this trap.

The official documents passed by the Social Summit were disappointing: they implicitly accepted the new global trade order embodied in agreements such as NAFTA and GATT. A broad coalition of citizens' groups and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) responded by writing the following alternative declaration:

March 8, 1995
We, representatives of social movements, NGOs and citizens' groups participating in the NGO Forum during the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), share a common vision of a world which recognizes its essential oneness and interdependence while wholly embracing human diversity in all its racial, ethnic, cultural and religious manifestations, where justice and equity for all its inhabitants is the first priority in all endeavours and enterprises and in which the principles of democracy and popular participation are universally upheld, so that the long-dreamed creation of a peaceful, cooperative and sustainable civilization can at long last be made possible.

In this context, we expected that the Social Summit would address the

structural causes of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration, as well as environmental degradation, and would place people at the center of the development process. These include not only economic, political and social causes, but also the cultural structures of gender inequity.

While some progress was achieved in placing critical issues on the table during the Summit negotiation process, we believe that the economic framework adopted in the draft documents is in basic contradiction with the objectives of equitable and sustainable social development. The over-reliance that the documents place on unaccountable "open, free-market forces" as a basis for organizing national and international economies aggravates, rather than alleviates, the current global social crises. This false premise threatens the realiza-

tion of the stated goals of the Social Summit.

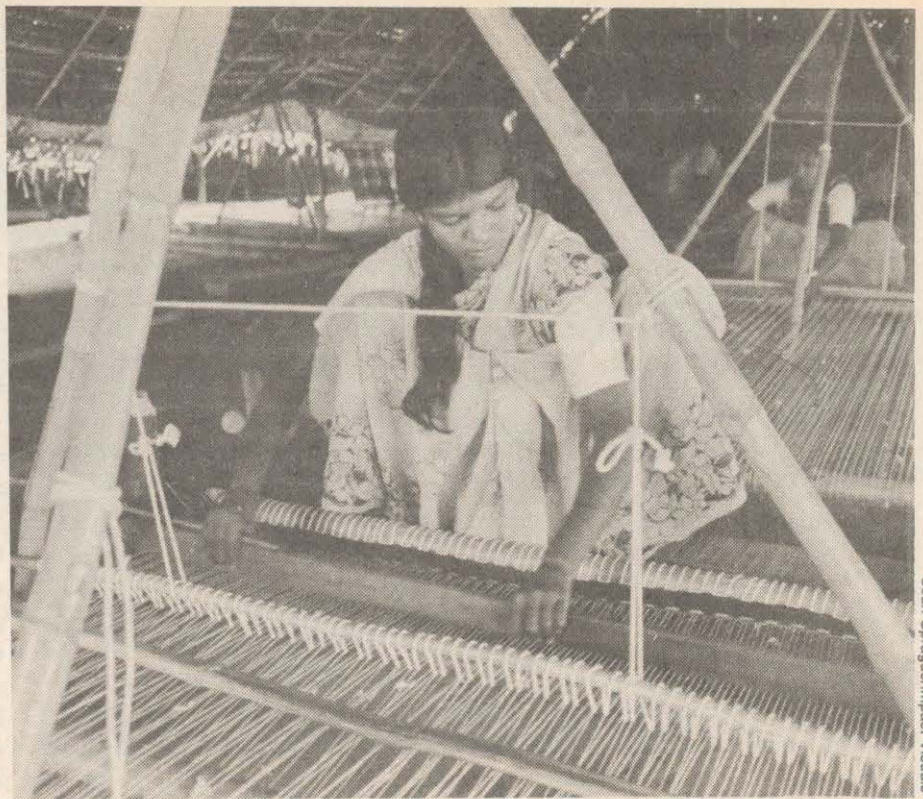
The dominant neo-liberal system as a universal model for development has failed. The current debt burden of dozens of countries is unsustainable, as it is draining them of the resources they need to generate economic and social development. Structural adjustment programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have consistently undermined economic and social progress by suppressing wages, undermining the contributions and livelihoods of small producers, and placing social services, particularly health care and education, out of reach of the poor.

In dismantling basic state services, these programs have shifted an even greater burden onto women, who care for the nutrition, health, well-being and

harmony of the family, as well as community relations. In promoting the rapid exportation of natural resources, deregulating the economy, and pushing increasing numbers of poor people onto marginal lands, adjustment has contributed to the process of ecological degradation.

This system has also resulted in an even greater concentration of economic, political, technological and institutional power and control over food and other critical resources in the hands of a relatively few transnational corporations and financial institutions. A system that places growth above all other goals, including human well-being, wrecks economies rather than regenerates them, exploiting women's time, labor, and sexuality. It creates incentives for capital to externalize social and environmental costs. It generates jobless growth, derogates the rights of workers, and undermines the role of trade unions. In the process, the system places a disproportionate burden on women and jeopardizes their health and well-being and consequently that of those in their care. Finally, it leads to an unequal distribution in the use of resources between and within countries and generates social apartheid, encourages racism, civil strife and war, and undermines the rights of women and indigenous peoples.

It is for these reasons that we also cannot accept the official documents' endorsement of the new trade order as defined in the Final Act of the Uruguay Round and Articles of Agreement on the establishment of the World Trade Organization. The documents do not consider that trade liberalization through the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) and the WTO creates more losers than winners and that the negative impacts will be disastrous for poor countries, and poor and working people within all countries. The interests of local producers, in particular, are undermined in the areas of foreign investment, biodiversity and



Sean Sprague/Impact Visuals

intellectual property rights.

We reject the notion of reducing social policy in developing countries to a "social safety net," presented as the "human face" of structural adjustment policies in the WSSD documents. This proposal is predicated on the withdrawal of the State from one of its fundamental responsibilities. The slashing of social expenditures in the North as a means of reducing the budget deficit has also undermined many of the achievements of the welfare state.

Social development can only be achieved if all human rights—civil, political, economic, social and cultural—of all individuals and peoples are fulfilled. We believe that the Summit documents fail to recognize adequately the primacy of human rights as a prerequisite for a participatory and meaningful social development for all sectors of society, especially for children and such marginalized groups as people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, people in occupied territories, refugees and the displaced. It also fails to note how the undemocratic nature of structural adjustment programs undermines the

rights of citizens and often leads to their repression. In addition, efforts made at the Social Summit to reverse agreements reached in Vienna and Cairo in relation to women's rights represent a further undermining of the possibilities for the kind of fundamental changes required for the creation of just societies.

Finally, we note that militarization creates enormous waste of human, natural and financial resources. It causes further inequality and pauperization, political and social violence, including violations against women, and violent conflict that adds to the rising global death toll and the growing number of refugees and displaced people.

In rejecting the prevailing global economic model, we do not suggest the imposition of another universal model. Rather, it is a question of innovating and devising local answers to community needs, promoting the skills and energy of women in full equality with men, and benefitting from valuable traditions, as well as new technologies.



In light of the foregoing, we consider that the following conditions must be fulfilled at the household, community, national, and international levels to realize this alternative vision of development:

At the household level:

- ❖ The new vision of development requires the transformation of gender relations, in which women are equal participants in the decision-making process.
- ❖ Women and men must share responsibility for the care of children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.
- ❖ Domestic violence in all its forms must not be tolerated.
- ❖ Women must be guaranteed sexual and reproductive choice and health.
- ❖ Children's rights should be respected and enhanced.

At the community level:

- ❖ The keys to effective development are equity, participation, self-reliance, sustainability, and a holistic approach to community life.
- ❖ The capacity of communities to

protect their own resource base must be restored.

- ❖ Governmental and intergovernmental decisions must be built upon the full participation of social movements, citizens' organizations and communities at all stages in the development process, paying special attention to the equal participation of women.
- ❖ Communities must gain control over the activities of all enterprises that affect their well-being, including transnational corporations.
- ❖ The political, social and economic empowerment of youth, especially young women, should be fostered.

At the national level:

- ❖ All forms of oppression based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, disability and religion must be eliminated.
- ❖ Governments must ensure the full and equal participation of civil society in the processes of economic policy-making and other development decision-making, implementation and monitoring.
- ❖ Education must be granted as the main instrument to empower youth to

take their rightful place in society, enabling them to take control of their lives. Non-formal education should be promoted, drawing on the experiences and skills of non-specialized people.

- ❖ Governments must ensure the full and equal participation of women in power structures and decision-making at all levels.
- ❖ National accounting systems should be revised to incorporate women's unpaid work.
- ❖ Governments must commit themselves to developing national strategies and implementation plans in order to fulfill their responsibilities under the Human Rights covenants. They must regularly report on their progress, in particular their efforts regarding marginalized groups' access to legal procedures. Governments which have not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) should do so. Governments should work for the approval of the Draft Declaration on the Universal Rights of Indigenous Peoples at the United Nations.
- ❖ Recognition of and respect for ancestral territorial rights of indigenous peoples and their right to self-determination is an imperative in order to ensure their existence as peoples and cultures. Territories that are still colonized should likewise be accorded their right to sovereignty and self-determination.
- ❖ Governments must make agrarian reform the basis of sustainable rural economies and ensure access to affordable credit for the poor without discriminating on the basis of gender, race and ethnicity so that people can create their own employment and build their own communities.
- ❖ Governments should develop sustainable employment programmes, in full consultation with trade unions and employers' organizations.
- ❖ Governments of industrialized countries should reduce their countries' disproportionately large claim on available natural resources by implementing the appropriate mix of incentives, eco-



Kenneth Martin/Impact Visuals

logical tax reforms, regulations, and environmental accounting systems to achieve sustainable production and consumption patterns.

- ❖ Southern governments have the right to protect their people from the effects of deregulated and liberalized trade, especially in areas of food security and domestic production. Moreover, they should be able to regulate the market and take fiscal or legal measures for the purpose of combatting inequalities among their peoples. Africa should be given preferential treatment in this respect.

- ❖ Governments should commit themselves to reducing military expenditure so that it does not exceed spending on health care and education and increase the conversion of military resources to peaceful purposes. This "peace dividend" should be distributed equally between a national and a global demilitarization fund for social development. There should be a conversion of the military economy to a civilian economy.

At the international level:

- ❖ A new partnership in South-North relations requires placing the cultures, development options and long-term strategies of developing countries first, and not those of the North.
- ❖ It must be recognized that cultural diversity is the principal source of new

strength, new actors, new social systems and sustainable development, creating an alternative globalization from below.

- ❖ There should be an immediate cancellation of bilateral, multilateral and commercial debts of developing countries without the imposition of structural adjustment conditionality. In the longer term, the international community should institutionalize equitable terms of trade.

- ❖ Policy-based lending and the interference of the World Bank and IMF in the internal affairs of sovereign states should be discontinued.

- ❖ The Bretton Woods institutions must be made transparent and accountable to civil society in both the South and North. Their policies and programs should be made people-centered; and participation of social movements and citizens' organizations at all stages in the negotiation of agreements, project implementation and monitoring should be ensured.

- ❖ Global macroeconomic policy should address the structure of poverty and stimulate the levels of real purchasing power. An alternative macroeconomic policy will have to meaningfully address the distribution of income and wealth, both between and within countries, leading to a democratization of consumption. This policy would require curbing lavish luxury-goods economies and redirect-

ing resources towards the production of essential consumer goods and social services.

- ❖ Global production and consumption must stay within the limits of the carrying capacity of the earth. Political regulation is mandatory in order to prevent the global market system from continuing to reward irresponsible behavior that cares nothing for the household, community, nation and humankind.

- ❖ Regulatory institutions and instruments of governance and law that are truly democratic and enforceable must be established to prohibit monopolistic structures and behaviour and to ensure that transnational corporations and financial institutions respect the fundamental rights of all peoples. In order to make this possible, TNCs must be reduced in size. Work to complete the Code of Conduct for TNCs should be urgently resumed.

- ❖ An international, independent body and accountability mechanisms should be set up to monitor, evaluate and effectively regulate the behaviour of transnational corporations and their impact on individual nations, communities, peoples and the environment.

- ❖ The international community should enforce the application of a tax on all speculative foreign exchange transactions (Tobin tax) of about 0.5%, the revenue of which should go into a

global social development fund with adequate control mechanisms.

❖ Effective international machinery to promote renewable energy should be installed in the UN system.

❖ Regional and international organizations should encourage diplomacy, peaceful negotiations and mediation, and promote institutions for research and training in non-violent conflict resolution.

❖ In the 180 days between the Copenhagen Summit and Beijing Conference, we demand an independent investigation and audit of World Bank and IMF performance. In the aftermath of the financial collapse in Mexico, it is essential that the international community prevent future disasters that result from the refusal of the Bretton Woods institutions to depart from the agenda

set by the financial and corporate communities, the U.S. government, and Northern financial ministries.

Existing power relations do not permit the realization of these goals. We, representatives of civil society, call upon governments and political leaders to recognize that the existing system has opened the most dangerous chasm in human history between an affluent, overconsuming minority and an impoverished majority of humankind in the South and also, increasingly, in the North. No nation so dramatically divided has ever remained stable; no frontier or force can withstand the despair and resentment that a failed system is now actively generating.

We do not have much time. We are at the point of leaving to our children a

world in which we ourselves would not wish to live. But we do find a tremendous inspiration and hope in the fact that the global NGO community taking part in the Social Summit in such a massive way can forge a common understanding of and strategy for the lasting improvement of humankind and nature. With shared responsibility, we can draw from the present crisis the creativity needed to make a world community that truly works. This is our common commitment as we leave the Copenhagen Summit. **DL**

This Declaration builds upon efforts emanating from the NGO Development Caucus during the Social Summit preparatory meetings, the Oslo Fjord Declaration, and other national and international citizens' initiatives.

Why Market Socialism? Voices from **Dissent**

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foreword by Robert Heilbroner

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Report from the DSA Youth Section Retreat

With the decline in student politics and progressive activism in general over the past four years, the DSA Youth Section has faced hard times since 1990. Of course, we were not alone. Most major national student organizations have been fighting apathy and economic insecurity among students, while watching their membership and level of activism decline precipitously. The Student Environmental Action Coalition, once the darling of liberal donors and foundations, last year was forced to lay off its staff due to lack of funds. On the more radical edge, the nearly 15-year-old Progressive Student Network lost its national office, widely-read newspaper, and most of its chapters. This year PSN merged with the Abbie Hoffman-inspired Student Action Union, which had also nearly ceased to exist.

It was clear that the DSA Youth Section had weathered the storm of the early 90s well when over fifty DSA student activists, representing twelve DSA chapters, gathered at Oberlin College in Ohio for a weekend campus

organizing retreat March 4 and 5. The retreat replaced our traditional winter outreach conference, which had been attracting fewer and fewer students over the past four years. This year, facing a right-wing resurgence and a demobilized left, the Youth Section decided to take a step back and plan new strategies for opposing the right.

The student chapters organized and conducted the meeting themselves. The retreat opened with a discussion of what it means to be a socialist student activist today, led by Carmen Mitchell, a graduating senior from Oberlin DSA, and Daraka Larimore-Hall, a first-year student from University of Chicago DSA (and also elected to be the new Youth Section representative to the National Political Committee). DSA National Director Alan Charney spoke on global economic restructuring and how it affects our organizing. Students presented workshops on the basics of organizing, using emerging media such as desktop publishing and

internet to organize, and developing a new magazine for the Youth Section.

The retreat elected a ten-person interim leadership to plan the annual summer conference, scheduled to be held at the University of Chicago in August. The students also made plans to organize events to oppose the Republican Contract on America on March 29. This national day of student protest, was initiated originally by the DSA Youth Section and the Boston-based University Conversion Project, and has been endorsed by over one hundred student groups throughout the country.

Students represented chapters from the following schools: Beloit College, Bryn Mawr College, University of Chicago, University of Colorado at Boulder, University of Colorado at Denver, SUNY Geneseo, Harvard, Metro State College, Miami University of Ohio, New York University, Oberlin, Ohio University, and University of Pennsylvania.

-- Ginny Coughlin

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Stop the war on poor women!

Stop the Contract on America!

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Washington, D.C.

Assemble: 11 a.m., The Mall

Rally: 12 noon

Information: 202/331-0066

**NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR WOMEN**

DSAAction

Stop the War on the Poor!

For obvious reasons, a mass-membership organization that can't mobilize effectively in response to something like the Contract With America isn't worthy of the democratic socialist tradition. So let's get to work: If you're part of a DSA commission, local, or Youth Section chapter, we urge you to redouble your activist efforts. If you're not part of a local or Youth Section chapter, consider launching one. (Contact the national office to learn how.) Exchange ideas and energy with every progressive social movement in your community. This is the time to be in the streets, on the campus, and on the editorial page.

On the national level, DSA's anti-Contract work will be coordinated by the leaders of DSA's commissions (see the last issue of *Democratic Left*). The staff facilitator for this work will be our new Program Coordinator, Michele Rossi.

Alan Charney has already begun the field component of this project; in mid-February, he met with DSA activists in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento, Colorado, Central Ohio, and Philadelphia to share ideas and to help launch local campaigns. By mid-April, the national office will distribute three new literature pieces, and extensive organizing packets, to every local, commission, and Youth Section chapter.

The following work plan was developed by the National Political Committee at its January meeting:

At the heart of the Republicans' Contract With America lies a mean-spirited attack on America's

tattered social safety net that provides benefits already inadequate to the needs of the poor. Federal payments for children through AFDC, for nutrition through food stamps, and housing through rent subsidies face severe cutbacks. This attack represents a radical redistribution of wealth from the poor to fund tax breaks for the wealthy. As socialists with a long commitment to fighting poverty and a historic link to the War on Poverty, we have a special responsibility to act and a unique role to play.

We cannot and must not simply defend the present entitlement system. Instead, we must develop a democratic and progressive set of programs to address the problems of unemployment and poverty, racism and crime, sexism and domestic violence, homophobia and resurgent racism. In the new global economy, we cannot simply promote traditional solutions of full employment or government spending. These times demand more radical solutions of economic democracy and community development. This plan of action is designed to build and implement such a program.

The following activities shall constitute the plan of action for 1995:

1. Participation in the national coalitions that emerge to oppose the Republican welfare reform. These include the Rainbow Coalition, the Poor People's Congress, and organizing for events on Valentine's Day and NOW's rally against violence against women on April 9. We will not work exclusively with one coalition, but will instead relate to significant national

efforts and promote our perspective within these efforts.

2. Mobilization of DSA locals and student chapters to organize local coalitions. We will target six to ten locals for a mini-speakers tour of DSA notables to speak about the War on the Poor. These large public events will be used to draw in new activists and resources for ongoing local campaigns and to develop media attention. DSAers will be expected to contact local anti-poverty groups and involve them in the organizing and follow-up of these events. We will also organize a day of action on campuses that highlights our opposition to the attack on immigrants. The National Office will help provide the speakers and organizing packets to launch these events.

3. Activation of the entire DSA membership through phone and mail to put pressure on targeted members of Congress. We will mail every DSA member a priority message urging sponsor messages to their federal Representative opposing the "Personal Responsibility Act" and other legislation. We will also phone those who do not respond by mail. The overall goal is to send two thousand messages to Congress.

4. Development of a DSA perspective on the new war on poverty. This will involve DSA academics and thinkers in an effort to redefine poverty and how we fight it. Crucial to this effort will be panels at the Socialist Scholars Conference addressing poverty in the context of the new global capitalism.

DSA Action

DSA Health Care Activists Plan the Next Campaign

Approximately fifty people attended the special DSA Health Care Activists Conference in New York on January 21. The meeting was highly participatory and sometimes contentious—but most of the activists there reported that it allowed for a useful evaluation of DSA's past health care activism and a thoughtful analysis of health care reform's current prospects.

At the day's end, the group endorsed the following "sense of the body" resolution:

In the current political situation, there is no longer an opening for the anti-corporate left to move an immediate agenda of national health care reform in general and a single payer system in particular.

Our goal remains universal, affordable health care under democratic control, and we still maintain that the single payer system is the best vehicle to achieve this goal.

Moreover, with the corporatization of the health care industry and the continual degradation of income and living standards for the vast majority of Americans, the health care crisis can only deepen over time.

At the present time, however, we can best continue the struggle for universal, affordable health care under democratic control by working on a variety of state and local campaigns. These include state campaigns for single payer where the political terrain is favorable, campaigns to regulate the growing managed care sector of the health care industry, efforts to secure a patients' bill of rights at the state level, support of alternative systems of health care delivery along the lines of cooperatives, etc.

Health care will remain a national priority for DSA. By working on a variety of crucial health care issues, we will be building a broader social base for the reemergence of a national struggle for health care reform in the future.

Staff Notes

DSA has a new full-time Program Coordinator, Michele Rossi, who joined the staff on February 15.

Michele graduated from Villanova University in May 1994 with a degree in Philosophy and minors in heresy and hell-raising. While at Villanova, Michele helped to build the university chapter of DSA by provoking student insurgencies around the issues of reproductive freedom, gay and lesbian rights, and freedom of speech.

DSA's previous Program Coordinator, David Glenn, remains on staff in the new position of Communications Coordinator. David will have primary responsibility for *Democratic Left*, *Socialist Forum*, and DSA's other publications.

DSA Field Coordinator Ginny Coughlin will be leaving staff at the end of March. Look for an announcement about the new Field Coordinator in the next *Democratic Left*.

In Memoriam: Hugh Cleland, 1922-1995

Hugh Cleland, a longtime socialist activist and founding member of DSA, passed away on Valentine's Day. Hugh played many roles in DSA, and was the chair of the Suffolk County, New York local. He will be sorely missed by the entire organization. The following reminiscence is by Karen Marie Gibson and Jeff Lacher, who were the 1992-93 co-chairs of the DSA Youth Section.

Dear Comrades,

We would like to share some thoughts about a friend and teacher who recently passed away, Hugh Cleland.

Hugh was one of those rare people who balanced vast knowledge, a devotion to organizing for

social justice, and a great sense of humor, yet managed never to appear pretentious or aloof. He was always speaking to us where we were—the mark of a good organizer. He not only taught us *how* to organize, but he organized us!

Hugh had a special affection for the Youth Section, or at least he always made us feel as if we were something very special to him. The feeling was certainly mutual. Regardless of the distance, or the inconvenience it would cause, Hugh was always there when we needed him. He would come to Youth Section conferences to share his knowledge with the next generation of socialist activists—always with a strong emphasis on practical orga-

nizing skills. In many ways Hugh was more a part of the Youth Section than anything else in DSA.

Despite the sadness we now feel at Hugh's passing, it's hard to think of him without remembering his generosity and good humor. . . and smiling.

Hugh will certainly be missed by a great many. Not just within DSA, but at SUNY Stony Brook, where he taught History, and at the Long Island Progressive Coalition, where he pursued much of his activism, and in the hearts of his family and many friends. We will all miss him very much.

-- Karen Marie Gibson
and Jeff Lacher

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The DSA Library

Recently Published Books by DSA Members

- ◆ Steve Askin, *A New Rite: Conservative Catholic Organizations and Their Allies* (Catholics for a Free Choice).
- ◆ Harvey J. Kaye, *The Education of Desire: Marxists and the Writing of History* (Routledge Press).
- ◆ Joel Blau, *The Visible Poor: Homelessness in the United States* (Oxford University Press).
- ◆ Harvey J. Kaye, ed., *Imperialism and Its Contradictions: Selected Writings of V.G. Kiernan* (Routledge Press).
- ◆ Gerard Braunthal, *The German Social Democrats Since 1969: A Party in Power and Opposition*, second edition (Westview Press).
- ◆ Harvey J. Kaye, *The Powers of the Past: Reflections on the Crisis and the Promise of History* (University of Minnesota Press).
- ◆ Mari Jo Buhle, Paul Buhle, and Harvey J. Kaye, eds., *The American Radical* (Routledge Press).
- ◆ John J. Kulczycki, *The Foreign Worker and the German Labor Movement: Xenophobia and Solidarity in the Coal Fields of the Ruhr, 1871-1914* (Berg Publishers).
- ◆ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*.
- ◆ Janet Landman, *Regret: The Persistence of the Possible* (Oxford University Press).
- ◆ Miriam Eldridge (translator), *St. Croix Avenue*, a novel by Lauri Lemberg (Tyomies Society, Superior, Wisconsin).
- ◆ Stephen Charles Mott, *A Christian Perspective on Political Thought*
- ◆ David G. Gil, *Unravelling Social Policy: Theory, Analysis, and Political Action Toward Social Equality* (Schenkman Books).
- ◆ Steven Soifer, *The Socialist Mayor: Bernard Sanders in Burlington, Vermont* (Bergin and Garvey).
- ◆ Maurice Isserman and Rick Fantasia, *Homelessness: A Sourcebook* (Facts on File).
- ◆ Tim Wohlforth, *The Prophet's Children: Travels on the American Left*.
- ◆ Robert Karp, M.D. (ed.), *Malnourished Children in the United States: Caught in the Cycle of Poverty* (Springer Publishing Company).

This feature will appear regularly in Democratic Left. Any single list we publish is certainly not meant to be complete. If you or your DSA comrades have published books during the last three years, please send information to David Glenn at the national office.

DSA Regional Activist Conference

Chicago, Illinois ◆ Saturday, May 13

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PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

BY DSA NATIONAL DIRECTOR ALAN CHARNEY

In the last issue of *Democratic Left*, I argued that the traditional social democratic vocabulary of DSA—and much of the rest of the U.S. left—is inadequate for responding to the present political moment. The new reactionary majority in Congress, along with the globalization of the economy, suggests that it is time to abandon our traditional strategy, which I like to call the strategy of the “anti-corporate left.” What exactly does this phrase mean? The 1982 founding convention of DSA expressed it well in “Where We Stand,” our original political perspectives document:

While our long-term goal is to create a majoritarian movement for democratic socialism, the immediate task of socialists is to help build a broad-based anti-corporate left. Thus, central to our strategy is the development of a coalition of the major progressive forces in our country—trade unions, women’s groups, minority organizations, and others. Whether by virtue of race or sex, geography or job, the needs of the majority of Americans are fundamentally in opposition to the system of private enterprise....In the present period, the social forces we seek to work with find their electoral expression primarily within the left-wing of the Democratic Party. It is for this reason that our national electoral strategy consists of working within and strengthening this left-wing, creating a socialist presence in this arena, and shifting the terms of public debate to the left.

The strategy of the anti-corporate left was grounded in the world of post-war Keynesianism. It assumed a society of mass prosperity, in which economic growth was linked (although very imperfectly) to social justice. Today this era is clearly over; now our terrain is one of mass (majoritarian) pauperization—that is, growth with social injustice and a decreased standard of living for a significant majority.

Let’s look at the problem schematically by dividing the population into the top third, middle third and bottom third. During the period of mass prosperity, our anti-corporate strategy was to move a program of economic justice

(such as single payer health care reform) that could unite the bottom third and the middle third. As long as there was some connection between economic growth and social justice—as long as there was economic security for the middle third—such a majoritarian strategy was possible. However, in the era of global capitalism and mass pauperization, the link between growth and justice has been severed. The U.S. economy grew at a healthy pace during 1993, but the median household income fell that year by \$312.

In this environment, the anti-corporate strategy serves us very poorly, for two reasons: First, in this period of mass pauperization, the middle third, which is losing ground, is hostile to social democratic programs, which it sees as “subsidizing” the bottom third, which is losing even more ground. The right has exploited this situation by using social issues to drive the middle third against the bottom third. Second, even if the political support for social democratic reforms existed, the Keynesian framework for financing them has evaporated. If the U.S. raised taxes in order to finance, say, universal college education, international capital would go on “strike,” downgrading U.S. debts and triggering a currency crisis.

What sort of strategy might lead the left out of these dilemmas? Unfortunately, some progressives seem to be choosing the strategy of *ignoring* them. Even people who recognize the death of traditional Keynesianism on an intellectual level still put forward programs based on state-financed and -administered reforms. I would argue that instead we must invent a different route to mass prosperity and social justice based on civil society and workplace democracy. The centerpiece of this strategy is defending and expanding radical democratic institutions, combined with international movements to defend civil rights, labor rights, and the environment. This strategy requires that moribund mass liberalism, which is now a marginal force in the U.S., give way to

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the “next left”—a mass socialism, which is now marginal but can be the next mainstream. It posits that the first task of DSA is to create a socialist movement for the social movements (including the trade union movement) around a program of economic democracy, global social justice, and anti-militarism.

Let me add a personal note to this. As the former Director of Citizen Action in New York, I was completely committed to the strategy of the anti-corporate left. Yet one of our great strengths as socialists is our ability to see the total picture, to separate our predilections from our prognoses. I believe that the shift from mass prosperity to mass pauperization, from national capital to global capital, is an epoch-defining transition. Forsaking nostalgia and comfort, we must learn to welcome these changes, even if we now find ourselves in very dark times.

DL

The Global Economy . . .

A series of panels at the Socialist Scholars Conference, April 7-9, organized by the Democratic Socialists of America Global Justice Task Force.

PANELS

Cross-Border Organizing and the Future of the Left

Immigration Politics and the Global Economy

Women and Development in the Age of International Capital

The Mexico Crisis and the Future of NAFTA

Democracy, Sovereignty, and the State in the Era of GATT

INVITED SPEAKERS

Amalia García Medina PRD, Mexico · José LaLuz DSA Vice Chair · Elaine Bernard Harvard Trade Union Program · Manning Marable Columbia University · Bertha Luján Authentic Workers Front of Mexico · Eric Vega Californians United Against Proposition 187 · Stephen Coats US/Guatemala Labor Education Project · Alex E. H. Ng New Democratic Party of Canada · Dolores Huerta United Farmworkers · Cornel West DSA Honorary Chair · Ron Blackwell Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union · Jeff Faux Economic Policy Institute · Ricardo Hernández Equipo Pueblo, Mexico · Philip Cordery European Union Organization of Socialist Youth · Lynne Engelskirchen DSA African American Commission · Carlos Heredia Civic Alliance, Mexico · Dorothee Benz International Ladies' Garment Workers Union · Robin Alexander United Electrical Workers · Alan Charney DSA National Director · David Brooks Mexico/US Diálogos · Christine Riddiough SIW

. . . and the Future of Democracy

The Legacy of Malcolm X Liberation By Any Means Necessary: 30 Years Later

A series of panels at the Socialist Scholars Conference, April 7-9, organized by the Democratic Socialists of America African American Commission.

Invited Speakers Include

Cornel West DSA Honorary Chair · bell hooks Professor, City College of New York
Angela Davis Professor University of California at Santa Cruz · Kandria Moseley UCLA Rap Sheet
Komozi Woodard Professor, Sarah Lawrence College · Sonia Sanchez Poet and Professor, Temple Univ. Clark
Arrington Black Cooperatives, Hartford CT · Willard Smith Dean, New Hampshire College
Esmeralda Simmons Medgar Evers College Center for Law and Social Justice
Shakoor Aljuwani Manhattan Voter Participation Project

Conference Information

Location: Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street, New York City.

Schedule: The conference begins at 7 pm on Friday. Registration opens at 9 am on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about times for DSA panels, please call (212) 727-8610.

Directions: By subway take the A, C, E, 1, 2, 3, or 9 trains to Chambers Street. All of these trains are accessible from Penn Station (Amtrak, LIRR and New Jersey Transit) and Port Authority Bus Terminal. Metro North passengers should take the Times Square shuttle (S train) from Grand Central to connect with the above trains.

Housing: Unfortunately, the conference does not have the staff to assist out-of-town guests. Inexpensive dorm-style housing can usually be found by calling the American Youth Hostels at (212) 932-2300. We recommend the 103rd Street/Amsterdam Avenue location.

Child Care and Other Questions: Contact the conference at (212) 642-2826.

Socialist Scholars Conference 1995 Pre-Registration

Pre-Registration forms must be received by March 31, 1995

PRE-REGISTRATION FEES

\$30 \$20 student/low-income (at the door: \$45/\$30)

Please make check or money order payable to Socialist Scholars Conference and mail to: Socialist Scholars Conference, Dept. of Sociology, CUNY Grad Center, Room 800, 33 West 42nd Street, New York NY 10036.

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