

# DEMOCRATIC LEFT

EDITED BY  
MICHAEL HARRINGTON

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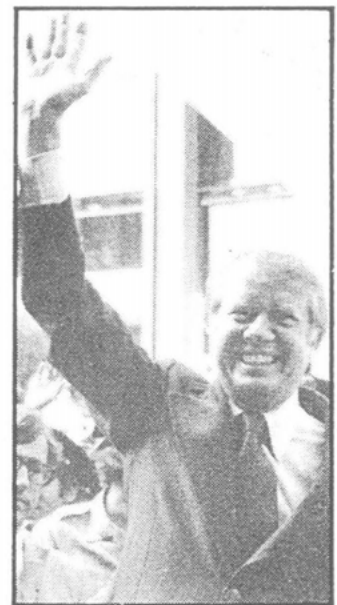
## Budget Scraps Social Support

By Michael Harrington

In his 1980 policy statements to Congress and the nation, President Carter reveals himself as dangerously belligerent in foreign affairs and a proponent of surrender on the domestic front.

I will not repeat my analysis of the Afghan crisis and the American response to it (DEMOCRATIC LEFT, February 1980). I remain convinced that the Soviet attack was, and is, an imperialist onslaught against the right of self-determination; and that the American riposte was, and is, a step in the direction of Cold War II. It will not prevent future Teherans or Kabuls but could lead to destabilization of the balance of terror. The Soviets, in short, must be opposed, but not in Mr. Carter's dangerous, unfocused fashion; and a negotiated peace between the superpowers is made all the more urgent by these events. However, before turning to the President's program for domestic surrender I would like to explore just a few more ramifications of his international belligerence.

There are two basic conceptions of what the Soviets are doing. One view, held by Carter, was succinctly summarized by Henry Kissinger in a *Wall Street Journal* interview. There is, Kissinger said, a "global offensive" from Moscow which began with the sending of Cuban proxies to Angola in 1975. Since then, the offensive has continued with Cuban troops in Ethiopia and Yemen, East German forces "all over Africa," two invasions of Zaire, and the Communist coup in Afghanistan in April 1978.



“President Carter reveals himself as dangerously belligerent in foreign affairs and a proponent of surrender on the domestic front.”

The other view was spelled out by Stanley Hoffman of Harvard, shortly before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Hoffman wrote: "But is Soviet policy a deliberate, planned and masterly march toward world domination? More plausibly, it is a relentless attempt at achieving equality with the United States—at breaking the American monopoly of control of the high seas or of means to intervene all over the world—and at imposing Soviet participation in the settlement of all major disputes. It is also the skillful exploitation of opportunities, many of which arise spontaneously or through the independent efforts of a Soviet client or ally. The USSR has moved, but with considerable caution. *The litany*

*of Angola, the Horn of Africa, South Yemen, Afghanistan and Vietnam ties together disparate events, tied by two threads: low risk and opportunities provided by previous Western mistakes, defeats, or (as in Afghanistan) indifference."* (Emphasis added.)

I find Hoffman much more convincing than Kissinger—or Carter. So is George Kennan, theorist of the "containment" doctrine of Cold War I, which called for containing the Soviets through military force and then negotiating with them. Kennan finds the American analysis of the present crisis simplistic, assuming as it does that one confronts a Soviet drive rather than a defensive aggression. This view, Kennan says, is "ex-

travagant" and leads to strident warnings and headlong involvement with unstable regimes such as Pakistan and the like. On another critical point Kennan writes: "If the Persian Gulf is really vital to our security, it is surely we, who by our unrestrained greed for oil, made it so. Would it not be better to set about to eliminate, by a really serious and determined effort, a dependence that ought never have been allowed to arise, than to try to shore up by military means, in a highly unfavorable region, the unsound position into which the dependence has led us?"

Kennan is right. One consequence of the situation he analyzes is a kind of intellectual disarmament which goes

## LETTERS

To the Editor:

The new "social gospel" of which Rosemary Radford Ruether speaks (January 1980) may prove to be just another passing fashion in the church, in part because, like the earlier social gospel, it is too often lacking in breadth and depth.

At any rate, just as there are literary critics who think they can be socialists without developing a "liberation aesthetic," or radical sociologists who ply their trade without dubbing it "liberation sociology," so also are there theologians who think they can and ought to be socialists without submitting their discipline to the reductionism implicit and explicit in much "liberation theology."

George Hunsinger  
Assistant Professor of Theology  
New Brunswick Theological  
Seminary

■ ■ ■

To the Editor:

Jan Rosenberg's article on the family (January 1980) was perceptive, but it failed to prepare me for the reality of the Governor's Conference on Families at Stony Brook, N.Y., one of many

conferences being held throughout the country in preparation for this summer's White House Conference on Families. The meetings she discussed concerned factionalism among feminists. Stony Brook brought us face to face with an attempted takeover by the "Right-to-Lifers."

Long Island is home base for the Right to Life political party. Their forces are well organized, they had a command post at the conference, and their members displayed missionary zeal. (I ran for delegate and was thus a target of their "pro-life" squads. When I said I was pro-choice on abortion, they almost literally spat at me.) But despite superior organization, they elected only two of the eight delegates and one of the four alternates.

Anyone who thinks the Right-to-Lifers are a single issue group should have attended the workshops. They tried to get the conference to define the family narrowly as a father who works and a mother who "unselfishly" stays home and rears her children. In addition to opposing E.R.A. and abortion, they cried, "Get the government off our backs." In my

workshop on the economy, they opposed unemployment insurance for strikers, opposed day care centers, and called for women to leave the workforce (no two-worker families) as a means of reducing unemployment while at the same time insisting that people on welfare be forced to work.

Fortunately, the conference resisted their ploys by a wide margin and called on the government to reorder its priorities to help finance the American families' needs in the present crisis.

While the right wing failed at this conference, it did capture 22 of 24 seats in Virginia and will pose a potent threat at the three White House conferences in June. Those who want to protect the family had better work hard at the other state conferences to ensure that the family, in its many new forms, will have a chance to survive.

Harry Fleischman  
Wantagh, N.Y.

*Letters to the editor must be signed. We reserve the right to edit for brevity. Please limit letters to less than 250 words.*

## DEMOCRATIC LEFT

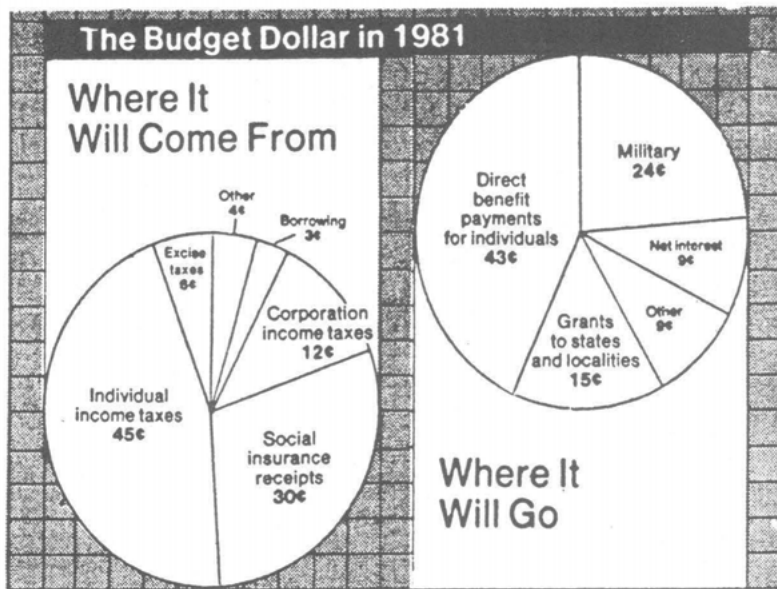
Formerly the  
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along with the patriotic fervor. In January, for instance, the *New York Times* editorialized, "Erecting barriers to Soviet power means collaborating with undemocratic regimes and sending them modern weapons." Is that the answer to our plight—or the cause of it? What if one took out the abstraction, "undemocratic regimes," and substituted "the Shah of Iran?" And Pakistan's Zia is even shakier than the Shah in all but his final days.

Such mindless—and dangerous—militancy is not, however, confined to editorial offices. The President has proposed to reinstitute draft registration—a real and present danger to American youth. It is also, as Senator Kennedy pointed out in

his Georgetown University speech, a substitution of symbols for strength. Kennedy noted that it would take six months to train draftees. Early registration would save only 13 days in the event of mobilization. Clearly, in this case as in so many others in this drama, little or no thought has been given to finding the means for a rational response to the Soviet invasion. Typical of the mood is the judgment of Representative Downey of the Armed Services Committee. Carter, Downey said, "is asking for a 5.4 percent across-the-board increase. The Armed Services Committee will try to give him 30 percent. The problem is that when you take the lid off like this, you don't do the hard thinking you ought to do."

But we are not merely asked to throw money at problems—we are being told that we must throw young men and women at them, too. For what precise purpose? For what kind of a war? In response to what kind of a Soviet challenge? Those are the unanswered—or wrongly answered—questions which make the registration proposal so unconscionable. That is not to say that the present situation—a volunteer army—is a responsible alternative to the draft. It is not. The intolerably high unemployment projected by Carter in the near future makes the volunteer army an effective agent of economic conscription, i.e. of the drafting of the black, the brown and the poor through economic coercion rather than legal compulsion. That is one of the many reasons why the growing antidraft movement must do hard think-

ing, too, and not confine itself to a simple "me-first" opposition to Carter's indefensible policy.

### Domestic Surrender

That raises, in turn, the domestic surrender portion of the Carter strategy. It is, as we have seen in the case of the draft, not unrelated to his international policies.

To begin with, the economic effect of military mobilization is radically different from the days of Cold War I. In 1952, during the Korean War, Washington spent more than 10 percent of the GNP on arms, controlled prices by law and reduced unemployment to 3 percent. But in 1980 Carter has given up on countering inflation and unemployment. You will search his economic message and his budget without finding a single serious measure that even begins to challenge this structural crisis. Under such conditions, public investment in capital intensive arms systems will certainly increase inflation and do very little to affect unemployment. That means that working people as a whole will suffer.

Early last month *Business Week* reported that "many U.S. defense analysts are convinced that Carter's budget projections are far too low. A recent report prepared for the American Enterprise Institute predicts, in an extreme example, that the U.S. defense budget will have to rise up to \$1 trillion annually by 1985 . . . to 'simply hold its own' in the renewed arms race with the Russians." A previous article had described "The Shrinking Standard of Living" to which Americans must become accustomed. The President corroborated that judgment in his economic report when his advisers publicly proclaimed that workers' wages must not be allowed to keep pace with price increases, i.e. that there must be a planned reduction in the real income of the great mass of the people.

### Intolerable Scenario

In this critical situation President Carter has totally abandoned the goals mandated for him—and signed into law by him—under the Humphrey-Hawkins Act. Not only has he completely given up the 1983 goal of 4 percent unemployment and 3 percent inflation, but the jobless rate he predicts for 1985 is higher than the official 1983 goal. And in a not

Continued on page 15

Sen. Kennedy's Georgetown speech is a major contribution to the nation and the democratic left. By criticizing Carter's shift from naive dove to cynical hawk, opposing reinstitution of draft registration and demanding that the response to the Soviets be political as well as military, he raises issues of the greatest urgency. I disagree with some of his economic suggestions—I am for price controls on major corporations but not wage controls—but his approach has the merit of defining our current domestic crisis structurally. Finally, Kennedy is right to say that Carter's Rose Garden campaign in the midst of such serious crises is an act of political irresponsibility.

M.H.

# Scorching the Economy

By David Hoffman

**T**HE GLOOMY ECONOMIC FORECASTS for the 1980s are now official. With President Carter's proposed 1981 federal budget and the accompanying Economic Report of the President, official government policy is now openly based upon a deliberately engineered recession and millions more Americans without jobs.

In the words of the Nobel laureate economist Paul Samuelson, the recession will likely send President Carter "out of office in a blaze of glory fighting inflation." But "that same blaze could scorch a considerable part of the U.S. economy."

With remarkable candor, Wall Street investment banker Felix Rohatyn agrees: "The economic forces being generated in the United States will increasingly divide the country between haves and have-nots." Thus, with an eye on the urban unrest such a policy could ignite, the Carter budget promises one domestic policy initiative next year: an attack on youth unemployment eventually to add \$2 billion to the \$4 billion already being spent. In line with his tight 1981 budget, however, only \$150 million in planning funds are actually allotted. The program itself will be "phased in" later.

Meanwhile, with the nation's seventh recession since World War II will come a hike in the numbers of jobless this year by at least one and a half million people, according to White House estimates. The administration forecast is for 7.5 percent of the workforce unemployed by the end of 1980. This is a sizable jump from the plateau of 6 percent joblessness recorded over the past year by the Labor Department.

Why will millions more be without jobs this year? The answer is simple. Real economic output—Gross National Product adjusted for inflation—will sink 1 percent by the end of 1980, according to the White House. The Congressional Budget Office predicts an even worse economic performance: a 1.3 percent decline in real GNP and a 7.7 percent jobless rate this year and 8 percent in 1981.

All forecasts share one unhappy pre-

dition. Inflation this year—as measured by the Consumer Price Index—will stay high, in the range of 10 percent. Even that estimate smacks of Pollyannaism, considering that the inflation rate among "necessities" like food, energy, and housing is soaring by around 17 percent.

The demise of the goals of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act—honored more in the breach than the observance anyway for the past year—was inevitable under Carter's policies. Thus, in January, the President made it official. He notified Congress, under the terms of the Act, that he was postponing from 1983 to 1985 the goal of 4 percent adult unemployment and to 1988 the target date for bringing inflation down to 3 percent.

The Carter policy "deliberately" contrives to force the economy into recession out of desperation to "fight" inflation, says Leon Keyserling, President Truman's chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors. The degree of slack contemplated is unprecedented in post-war history.

In a short volume titled "*Liberal and Conservative National Economic Policies and their Consequences, 1919-1979*,"\* Keyserling blisters such policies of "contrived low growth and recession" as having a "boomerang effect."

"Conservative" economic policies—fiscal restraint and "tight money"—encourage periodic business downturns with the announced aim of slowing inflation. But, Keyserling says, "they accomplish just the opposite of their avowed intent.

"... There has been no more vivid contrast in economic history than that

\* Available for \$3 from the Conference on Economic Progress, 2610 Upton St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

between low average rates of inflation under 'liberal' national policies and the high rates of inflation under 'conservative' policies."

When economic growth slows, unused resources multiply, national priority needs are neglected, federal deficits soar, and income is redistributed—in the wrong direction. And inflation worsens.

To Keyserling, the culprit is the wrong-headed policy of federal fiscal restraint and planned business slowdown. Instead, drawing upon the evidence of the Truman and the Kennedy-Johnson years, he proposes a high-growth, full production, full employment economic program. "It's not good enough," he says, "for a tree to grow two or three feet when it should have grown five." Comprehensive planning of federal policies can yield full use of our economic potential, lower inflation and lower deficits (Keyserling proposes a small federal budget surplus in calendar 1983), higher productivity and employ-

ment. Only faster growth during the next four years could drop adult unemployment to the 4 percent rate promised by Humphrey-Hawkins. But what economist Robert Lekachman calls "the specter of full employment" means the end of the "industrial reserve army of the unemployed" and threatens pressures from working people for higher pay and better conditions.

It is unclear whether Keyserling understands that the path to full employment poses a clear confrontation with corporate power. "Until a credible left rises in the U.S.," Lekachman declares, "genuine full employment... will stay a myth."

Last year, during debate over the fiscal 1980 federal budget, Congressman Parren Mitchell (D-Md.) told the House of Representatives, "Somewhere in Karl Marx's writing, he says that in order for capitalism to survive, it has got to have a reserve of unemployed people. The more I look at the policies being promulgated by the President and this Congress, ... the more I am inclined to think that Marx was right."

David Hoffman is a congressional staffer.



Workbook/cpf

# Will Antidraft Movement Fall Into Same Old Traps?

By Joseph Schwartz

**W**ALTER CRONKITE PUT the imprimatur of the mass media upon "the reborn student movement" when he announced on CBS *Evening News* January 31 that the mass demonstrations against plans for the draft registration marked the first significant stirring of campus activism since the 1960s. Not being a careful reader of *DEMOCRATIC LEFT*, Cronkite ignored Dick Flacks's persuasive argument (December 1979) that a "new" student movement in the '80s would not simply rise phoenix-like from the ashes of the "new left," but would be an indirect creation of the "underground" campus activism of the '70s. Largely unreported by the mass media, a modest, but significant network of campus activists participated in community organizing, feminist activity, public interest research and labor support work throughout the decade.

With the antinuclear movement and rapidly growing antidraft movement posing the potential of the return of mass activism among young Americans, it is imperative that democratic socialists think creatively about the role they will play. The democratic left's greatest impact in these emerging movements will probably come not so much through providing core activists (though that will be crucial), but through patient work around education and program. Patience will be the key virtue, for the white, middle-class, and student nature of these movements will make the construction of alliances with labor and minorities an arduous task. We must do the difficult work of building a strategy and program that will enable these movements to transcend their initial composition.

The results of patient work from within, rather than criticism from without, can be seen in the antinuclear move-



Nevin I. Shalit

ment. Democratic socialists working in that movement recognize the diversity of its politics, which range from those favoring a radical de-industrialization of society to those who believe that immediate total disarmament is on tomorrow's political agenda. Through the efforts of Environmentalists for Full Employment, Barry Commoner and Bill Winpisinger, the key issue of a full employment, democratic transition to a non-nuclear future has begun to resonate throughout the entire movement. The next challenge for the democratic left is to develop a concrete plan for that transition—a plan which would train and reemploy the one million workers currently dependent on the nuclear industry at jobs of comparable wage and skill level.

The task of building both radical and *politically relevant* mass movements may be eased by the new activists' political orientation. Many of today's young left activists do not embrace a false vision of students "liberating" the rest of the world, but talk of the imperative of coalition politics and close links with the labor movement. Ironically, the relative quiescence of the campuses of the 1970s helped produce this healthy strategic re-

orientation. The most vibrant development within a chastened left in the 1970s came not from the campuses, but from the gradual emergence of a loose, anti-corporate coalition of community, minority, women's, and labor organizations. The important role that many ex-new left activists have played in forging this coalition has not gone unnoticed among aspiring student activists. And DSOC's ties to the labor movement and its role as a meeting ground for activists from diverse constituencies has drawn many young activists to its ranks.

## Two Dangers

Paradoxically, however, it has been the absence of a "mass movement" which has made coalition politics an accepted imperative. If politics once again returns "to the streets" in resistance to the Carter administration's strident call for a revived Cold War, the democratic left will have to redouble its efforts to keep a revived "movement" on an even keel. Here there are two dangers. The first is narrow self-interest. The second will be a tendency to draw a "good-guys, bad-guys" picture of a world which in reality is growing increasingly complex. As if to

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“It is imperative that the anti-draft movement advance a vision of social justice at home and abroad. . . .”

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mirror the media stereotype of the “me” generation, much of the initial campus fervor has been of a visceral, almost apolitical nature. It is certainly a rational response to say “Hell, no” to the threat of military build-up. But such a response does not evince a compelling vision of social purpose. The antidraft movement must address the stark reality that 40 percent unemployment among black, Hispanic, and working class youth has engendered a cruel form of “economic conscription” into the armed forces. It is not enough to argue that the inequality in our society would be mirrored in the job assignments of a draft army. Undoubtedly, this is the case. But we must also be bold enough to make the demand for meaningful full employment an integral part of an antidraft movement which must move beyond the campuses.

It is imperative that the antidraft movement advance a vision of social justice at home and abroad if it is to counter the Carter administration’s exploitation of a loss of national purpose felt by many Americans. In the 1960s, even though an unconscionable war severely limited the possibilities for change, most Americans felt we were committed to eliminating social injustice at home. Now we no longer have a vision. Carter’s caving into the priorities of Big Oil rendered his energy-conservation Moral Equivalent of War still-born. And now he is cynically trying to create the moral equivalent of war by threatening a real war abroad. Alan Wolfe put it well in a brilliant piece in the February 2 *Nation*: “In the absence of a tradition of domestic reform the cold war remains the best way to unify the society.” We can only counter the hysterical calls for turning the Persian Gulf into an American lake if we popularize the need for a massive energy conservation program and development of alternative energy sources. We are “dependent” on the unstable regimes of the Persian Gulf only because corporate priorities made us so.

If the first danger is an inability to put domestic political reform on the agenda of the antidraft movement, the

second will be a naive and unproductive rhetoric which makes one superpower the sole source of evil. It takes two to make a cold war (and trying to play the China card to make it one and one-half against one will only escalate matters). The Carter administration must be condemned forthrightly for its cavalier concessions to the right in the SALT II debate. And its hasty decision to introduce a new generation of tactical missiles into Western Europe, while ignoring Brezhnev’s appeal for further negotiations, undoubtedly strengthened the hands of the hawks in the Kremlin. But the unprecedented Soviet invasion of a previously unoccupied nation (albeit a client, border state) must also be condemned as a provocative adventure that played into the strategy of the U.S. hawks. Russian and American hawks have developed an implicit symbiotic relationship—military tension unifies both their nations and allows them to ignore demands for social reform.

### *Legitimate Security*

The task for the antidraft movement is to develop a conception of the legitimate security interests of the United States. We cannot simply be against the military in the abstract, but must offer a specific foreign policy strategy. If we believe the MX missile is a wasteful, destabilizing weapon we must detail why and describe a possible path for resumption of *mutual, negotiated* disarmament. Unilateral disarmament *steps* can help to create a favorable environment for arms control. But, as the Italian Communist Party, among others, recognizes, in a bipolar strategic world it is not only utopian but also destabilizing to demand

that disarmament be the responsibility of *only one party*. We may oppose the U.S. military blustering as futile and potentially dangerous because we don’t believe the “defensively aggressive” Soviets are engaged in a lemming-like drive to the Persian Gulf. As we condemn the invasion, however, what diplomatic and political steps should we support against the Soviets? These are tough questions—given the disagreement among our allies and the tendency of the Soviets to harden their position if a stick without a carrot is offered. The American public certainly will continue to demand some proposals. Better our measures than the right’s.

In the 1970s much of the left believed the broadest base for social change could be constructed by focusing on the domestic economic crisis. It is now evident that the international dimensions of that crisis threaten to overwhelm the left if we do not develop a positive response to them. Offering the alternative of a sane energy policy is one response. Developing a popular analysis which will allow Americans to comprehend a radically altered world strategic map, however, may be a more crucial task. In the 1970s the Soviets began to *approach* strategic parity with the United States. But they have by no means clearly overtaken the U.S. militarily, as the right wing prophets of doom would claim. Their economy is in even more tenuous shape than our own. Their Warsaw Pact allies are far less reliable than our own. And their much vaunted naval buildup consists mostly of small attack submarines and coastal vessels aimed at patrolling the Chinese coast and countering American shipping superiority.

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## NATIONAL MOBILIZATION AGAINST THE DRAFT

On March 22, the National Mobilization Against the Draft (MAD) will sponsor a mass march and demonstration in Washington around the slogan, “No Registration, No Draft, No Cold War.” The list of sponsors, in formation, includes the United States Student Association (which represents 3 million students nationwide), the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the War Resisters League, SANE, and others.

The time to begin organizing buses and cars to Washington is *now*. Promotional materials for the action, including brochures, posters, stickers and buttons will be available soon. Contributions to organizing expenses are sorely needed as well as local organizational endorsements and key contacts for local areas. We can stop registration, the draft, and a resurgence of the Cold War. Come to Washington March 22. Get involved and send for more information today. Contact: The National Mobilization Against the Draft, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, NY 10003, (212) 260-3270.

The dreaded threat of a "window" of Soviet first strike capability in the mid-1980s rests on the unlikely possibility that the Soviets could land 1,500 warheads in a three-minute span, within one-half mile of their target while traveling at two and a half times the speed of sound. Even if this happened, the U.S. would still have its entire submarine missile force and most of its SAC bombers at hand.

But calming fears of an imminent Soviet first strike will not suffice to re-introduce sanity to foreign policy consideration. Greater competition in the periphery, as well as in the strategic balance, is bound to make many Americans nervous. The Soviets now demand the same prerogative to influence developments around the globe. Neither superpower behaves in a particularly principled way, as each tries to exploit the mistakes of the other (witness the Soviet-U.S. trading of sides in Egypt, Ethiopia, and Somalia). The dependence of the Third World on Western capital gives us a greater covert grasp, while the Soviets must often resort to more blatant modes of intervention.

Third World nations from Angola to Somalia to India do not desire to embrace either "bloc," but seek aid from whoever will provide it to them. A U.S. policy more tolerant of the dynamics of social change in the Third World (dynamics that will not always please socialists) would not only be more principled, but also more prudent. Rather than getting into bed with such "popular" rulers as Somoza, the Shah, Selassie, and now Zia, not choosing sides so readily would be of considerable advantage to the U.S. and the people of the Third World. Obviously, there are substantial ideological and economic barriers to the U.S.'s following such a non-interventionist strategy. But popular opposition to blind intervention did prevent wild U.S. adventures in Angola, Nicaragua and Iran in the 1970s. Despite national security advisers hailing the end of the "Vietnam syndrome"—our "pathological" fear of overseas involvement—it is worth striving to revive the disease.

Mass movements begin around a few basic demands. If we want to see "No Draft, No Registration, No Cold War" we must build a strong antidraft movement and a mass presence in Washington, D.C. March 22. In the midst of



Ellen Shub/cpf

that organizing, however, we must begin to develop an alternative foreign policy program that calls for a full employment energy program at home, rational defense cuts, and a principled opposition to great power intervention abroad. Mutual, negotiated disarmament must be at the heart of such a foreign policy. Tension will continue in a rapidly changing world and we cannot afford to have tension flare into annihilation. In the 1960s the antiwar movement failed to develop into a permanent left force in American politics

partly because one wing failed to recognize the systemic nature of the conflict, while another wing substituted left rhetoric for a left strategy relevant to the particularities of America. This time we must struggle for the victory of single issue movements—whether antinuclear or antiwar—while also developing a *strategy and program* which will begin to attack the undemocratic nature of our foreign and domestic policy. ■

*Joseph Schwartz is the DSOC national youth organizer.*

## Students, Labor Meet

By Penny Schantz

**I**F THE 1960S WITNESSED A DIVISION between the student and trade union movement, the 1980s may see a healing of the breach. "The 1980s: Plight or Prosperity: A national conference on the future of the American labor movement," might have been the first step of the decade in bridging the gap between the two movements. John Herling's *Labor Letter* hailed it as a "momentous coming together of the academic world and union leadership." Students for Employment and Economic Democracy (SEED) spearheaded the conference, held at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor on January 18 and 19, and attended by 1100 people, approximately sixty percent of whom were trade union-

ists (forty percent rank-and-file).

When several young participants asked panelist Roger Robinson, a UAW rank-and-filer, how this diverse crowd of students, labor rank-and-filers, leaders, and numerous new left graduates now active in the community organizing and labor movements had been gathered, he responded, "In a modest way, a socialist center for the labor movement has been reconstructed after 30 years of non-existence."

Plenaries and workshops covered a wide variety of issues including inflation and unemployment, union busting, minorities and unions, working women, organizing in the South, employee participation, and worker health and safety.

Continued on page 14

# A SPECIAL REPORT Education "Reforms"

**OPINION**

**150,000 Get Reading Test To Overcome Student Lag**  
With 40% in the High Schools Believed at Least 2 Years Behind in Abilities, Officials Seek Remedial Action

By LEONARD BUDER  
Diagnostic reading tests are said to provide information that have been given this week to 150,000 students in the nation. The tests, which are given to high school students, are said to be the largest and most systematic ever attempted here. The tests are said to be a key to overcome widespread reading retardation in the nation. The tests are said to be a key to overcome widespread reading retardation in the nation. The tests are said to be a key to overcome widespread reading retardation in the nation.

**Stemming tide of illiterates must start with The Newest Innovation: Back to Basics**

Will your child graduate from H.S. with a 6th grade education?  
IS ANYONE OUT THERE LEARNING?  
Dick and Jane

By Deborah Meier

**A**LARMING RISE IN ILLITERACY," "Steady Decline in Achievements," declare the headlines. "Is it too much to demand that twelfth grade graduates read on a twelfth grade level?" an indignant editorialist asks.

Conventional wisdom has it that, despite all the money we've spent and all our best intentions, children are learning less than ever before.

Based on the usual myths about the "good old days" and a misrepresentation of the present, such clichés have given an enormous advantage to current educational "reforms." Budget cutting is always dangerous to education, especially when public school enrollment is dropping and the voting population getting older. But the pseudo-scientific garb of the new pessimism is especially dangerous to our ideal of a democratic society.

Three "popular" explanations for the "crisis" all relate to the presumed failure of the egalitarian ideals of the 1960s. These explanations hold that:

1. Reforms were based upon a utopian view that everyone could handle cognitively complex subjects. Vast numbers of

children could not keep up, became frustrated, and failed to learn even the lower-level skills appropriate to their mental capacities;

2. Teachers accepted lower standards because they no longer saw themselves as dedicated professionals but as trade unionists with their eye on the clock and the buck;
3. Society failed to hold teachers and children accountable. A combination of do-good liberalism, new left anti-authoritarianism, middle class permissiveness, and the welfare mentality of blacks and the poor produced teachers and children unmotivated to work hard.

**What Really Happened?**

The best part of the educational reform movement of the sixties tried to give all children what traditional elite education had provided for the few. The aim was that simple.

However, in traditional elite schools the choice of subject matter and teaching method are connected with their mission—to prepare a ruling class for careers as makers of history. Since a democracy must prepare all its citizens for that task, it needs to select with care what it takes

from this tradition. In a field in which nostalgia, habit, and myth play enormous roles, this task is extraordinarily complex.

What democratic socialists defend, however, is the idea that knowledge and insight are powerful means of freeing human beings, individually and collectively, from past bondage. It is this grandiose idea that we need to keep before us as we look back upon the sixties.

In the 1960s we looked at the stripped-bare, angry schools of urban America and knew that parents with the money to do so chose private schools and moved into select public school districts where class sizes were smaller, where music, arts, sports, literature, history, and science flourished and where precious money was "wasted" on the aesthetics of buildings and grounds and the latest and most expensive equipment.

We figured that there must be something to these "frills" rich people always bought for their children. Let's start by providing all children with these, we suggested.

Since the home life of the affluent provided additional advantages, we proposed to "make up" for this through preschool, after school, and summer programs. Access to the larger cultural heritage belongs by right to all children.

Reformers also took note of the impact of parental feelings of alienation and mistrust as they affected the learning experience of low income and minority children. The proprietary interest that affluent parents assumed toward their schools seemed to have a positive effect on their children's trust and confidence in education. Wouldn't all children benefit by this?

Clearly, even if all these reforms had been carried out they would not have created equal results. There is knowledge about learning we have never sufficiently put into practice; until we do so, lower class children will suffer disproportionately. A classroom with 20 pupils conducted as though there were 60, hardly taps the potential advantage of de-



creased class size. Furthermore, schools can't eliminate the relative advantages of having highly educated parents, financial security, high status and access to power. Why would we try so hard to give these to our own children if they weren't so advantageous?

But the struggle to provide "merely" a more equal school day was abandoned by the mid-1970s.

How could the reformers of the sixties answer the charge, made so loudly and with apparent assurance, that reducing the distinctions between the schools of the richer and the poorer turned out, after all, not to make any difference?

Many lost their sense of purpose in face of this blitz. Some erstwhile radicals even joined in—with sophisticated sociological explanations for the failure. (Super-radicals hardly helped as they argued that all reforms under capitalism are doomed to fail.) The result: a frustrated demand for "results." By 1980 "everyone" agreed: let teachers work harder; let kids apply themselves; let families accept responsibility; let the penalties be more severe. Then perhaps they'll all do what they were unwilling to do when we "bribed" them with better salaries, better working conditions, more "joy" and lessened penalties.

While I've rarely met public school parents who bought this argument, their willingness to challenge the critics is blunted by reluctant acceptance of the view that past reforms never made any difference.

### Did "Our Reforms" Fail?

Not all the reforms being attacked were "ours." The reforms having to do with improved facilities, staff-student ratios and access to the common heritage of knowledge were the result of progressive pressure. But the primary function of these reforms was not to "work" by the criteria of the test measures. They were espoused because they were the right of all children—like good health.

Further, many of the pedagogical and curricular reforms were not the work of progressive reformers. The classrooms under attack—those dominated by the active authority of the teacher over docile, passive students—could be modified by many models. Not all of them are any better, and some are worse from a socialist viewpoint.

In a schematic and much-simplified

"In an increasingly permissive welfare state, is it reasonable to expect backward groups to take much interest in education when, literate or not, they can look forward to a lifetime of state support. . . ."

*Wall Street Journal*  
Aram Bakshian, Jr.  
August 22, 1978

way, three major tendencies with different views about the *purpose* of education as well as the nature of the learning process competed during the sixties.

1. The occasional privately subsidized "free schools," which the media popularized, focused on "freeing" children while immobilizing intelligent adult activity. This has little in common with a socialist or democratic tradition that honors planning, knowledge, commitment, and social cooperation.

2. More significant were the massive reforms eagerly promoted by the textbook and educational technology industries. They fastened onto what might be loosely labeled "individualized programmed instruction." In such programs, except for interior decorating tasks, *both* teacher and pupil are reduced to passivity, following directions along a predetermined one-way course. In the name of "mastery," all the participants are enslaved.

3. The third alternative, progressive or open education, involved a structured, planned adult-initiated environment in which children examined subject matter in purposeful ways. The "novelty" of the sixties was practicing this in urban public schools; it had long been part of the tradition of many elite independent schools.

Encouraged by a general acceptance of novelty, support for looking at individual differences, and an increased demand by teachers and parents for deci-

sion-making powers, all three innovations, including "ours," had increased opportunities. But change is slow and most schools were only loosely affected by these new ideas, borrowing gimmicks rather than consciously opting for a choice. Certainly progressive educational changes hardly swept the day in the sixties any more than they had in the thirties.

Not only were many of the innovations not good ones, but many of the reforms socialists and progressives supported were only minimally implemented. Similarly while class sizes were reduced, the reductions in city schools were from huge to "very large," an insufficient drop to demonstrate definitively the relevance of student/teacher ratios. Other reforms were introduced helter skelter, with a myriad of bureaucratic rules that vitiated much of their potential. Furthermore, reforms were subject to assessments (tests) unrelated to their stated purposes. (IQ tests to measure self-esteem!)

Despite the much publicized and politically charged struggles over community control or linguistic and cultural diversity, efforts rarely went beyond exploratory posturing by all parties, and left the gap nearly as wide as ever.

Few reforms were in place long enough to assess them by any tool. Time is critical to assess the impact of educational changes. Educational innovations are peculiarly difficult to implement, requiring as they do not new marching orders, but changes in the habits and ideas of teachers and parents. Despite the apparent American penchant for educational fads, of necessity the real life inside most schools is only superficially affected by any imposed program. Teachers, parents, and children have a healthy way of holding on to their traditions and resisting impositions by experts.

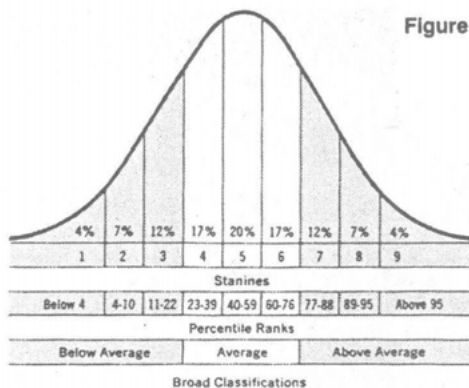
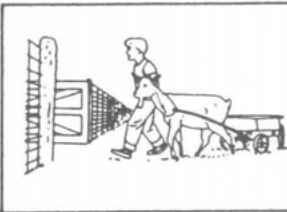


Figure 4. A Normal Distribution of Stanines, Percentile Ranks, and Performance Classifications

Metropolitan Achievement Tests/Teachers Manual



- The boy helps the goat pull the cart through the gate.
- The gate is open so the boy and goat can go through.
- The boy got out of the wagon and closed the gate.

Is the drawing here clear enough so that you can be **sure** your answer is correct? If you are not, is this because your reading is at fault?

From: Reading Tests: Do They Help or Hurt Your Child?

Yet preschool education, class size, after school programs and new instructional ideas were tested and found wanting before most could be properly implemented and developed. Only now, six years after the headlines proclaimed failure and 14 years after its implementation, is Head Start beginning to receive "proof" of success.

Finally, the method that both the public and the educators accepted to decide if these innovations "worked"—norm-referenced tests—are not merely faulty, incomplete and misleading, but entirely beside the point.

The misuse of such tests was doubly sad because not only have we been misled with regard to the effect of reforms, but in an effort to make them look successful the reforms were often distorted.

These particular kinds of test cannot provide evidence of success or failure. They are based, like IQ tests, on a prior assumption that all abilities must fall along one normal curve; the task of such a test is only to rank-order the population into a never-changing curve.

The same percentage of pupils (and scores) is always above and below the midpoint, as well as every other specified point along its arc. Items are periodically selected to produce this pattern, with scores being merely a way of expressing each student's place along it. Since this kind of test is designed to replicate IQ tests, and is validated on them, it is hardly surprising that the same questionable assumptions underlie both, and certain people and their kids (known as "inner city") predictably fall along the lower portion of this curve.

To demand that more kids read (score) "on grade" or that 12th graders score at a 12th grade level, is like asking more teams in the American League to be in the top half. It's a statistical absurdity. Scores on such tests are not scores in the usual sense, but only tell us where a stu-

dent stands in a single-file rank order. The number on grade or one year below grade remain forever fixed.

Arguments about shockingly low literacy are often buttressed by pointing to data that merely say that 20 percent are in the bottom 20 percent! Norm-referenced tests cannot, by definition, provide us with data on illiteracy.

It was self-defeating to accept an instrument to measure change which was precisely developed not to show change: but to appear as insensitive to instructional interventions as human intelligence, knowledge, and statistical sophistication could make it

The other "hard" evidence—the decline in SAT scores of college-bound pupils has nothing to do with "basic skills." The only serious drop—the rest could be accounted for by changes in who took the test—was among the most academically elite students and clearly had no relevance to basic literacy.

If it seems hard to believe that current students may be no more ignorant

than their predecessors, let us remember that virtually every generation believes that those coming after it are more poorly educated. When SAT scores were highest (late '50s and early '60s), a period now known as the "good old times," a popular and widespread attack upon declining standards (remember Rudolf Flesh's *Why Johnny Can't Read?*) was also in vogue.

But even those who are the greatest alarmists seem unable to decide what the crisis is: the 3 R's? . . . the disappearance of the classics? In a bait and switch fashion, the argument and the evidence always remain illusory. We fall back upon intuition—which may be correct, although we need to temper it with a reminder that it's an intuition held by every generation. (In fact, contemporary definitions of minimal [functional] illiteracy are considerably higher than those used in former times.)

This "evidence" is hardly sufficient to justify the current pessimism.

### **Latest Innovation: Dual Schooling**

The view that higher thinking is inappropriate for "some" children has a long tradition. In its contemporary guise it was put forth in 1972 by Carl Bereiter, who provided the intellectual rationale for the first "back-to-basics" reading program (DISTAR) and geneticist Arthur Jensen, whose pseudo-scientific research proclaimed the inherent limits of certain groups (primarily blacks). The specific programs they advocated are today being carried out with a vengeance, although without their explicit rationale.

Instead, in the name of improving academic standards and pupil discipline, the explicitly dual structure they advocated is developing. One system is governed by the increasing use of trivial minimum competencies and behavioral objectives: the other offers a richer cur-

"When we were boys, boys had to do a little work in school. . . . Spelling, writing, and arithmetic were not electives, and you had to learn. In these more fortunate times, elementary education has become in many places a sort of vaudeville show. The child must be kept amused and learn what he pleases . . . it seems to be regarded as a misfortune to read and spell by the old methods."

Editorial, New York, 1897  
". . . public school officials are talking about tougher standards for high school graduation. Nothing so 'radical' as 12th grade reading proficiency is contemplated yet but the prospect of any decisive upgrading is a welcome breakthrough."

*New York Post*  
Editorial, 1979

riculum in which knowledge, appreciation, and judgment remain legitimate.

The explicit goals of "back-to-basics" programs are students who can read labels, fill out forms, write business letters, balance checkbooks, and read subway maps. Such "competencies" and "skills" can be taught by well-trained, although not necessarily highly educated or thoughtful, teachers held strictly accountable as they move children along "diagnostic/prescriptive" tracks. Teachers, with their heads deep into piles of computer printouts, listing and tabulating hundreds of subskills, are promised success if every step is followed and none left out. ("Individualized programmed instruction" par excellence.)

The other school system continues in the historic tradition of elite education, offering at least a taste of literature, history, aesthetics and scientific inquiry to well-to-do or "gifted" children (defined by norm-referenced test scores). In contrast, I literally have to defend including any subject matter in my East Harlem school by arguing that it is a useful means of teaching the basic skills!

Meanwhile legislative pressure mounts to provide a larger share of scarcer public resources to such elites—through vouchers or tax exemptions for private schools and bonuses for the "gifted" in public schools. We are dangerously close to explicitly authorizing a dual structure, sold to a confused and frustrated public as a way to raise school standards.

The shift in mood is part of a larger malaise, not merely a misperception about educational reform. The rapidity and scope of the shift, however, is related to the left's acceptance of blame for the sixties, as well as our acceptance of norm-referenced tests to measure success. Such acceptance provides grudging endorsement for the educational innovations now being launched by the new conservatives.

### Distorted Ideal

In the history of attacks upon education—whether from the left or right—our ideal of education has often been distorted. Today's attack is particularly dangerous because it is aimed precisely at the ideal itself.

Our belief in the educability of all children requires us to clarify the kinds of reforms we stand for and the criteria we will accept for judging them. These

are never neutral matters best left to educational technicians.

The educability of all children, for purposes that go beyond receiving the skills necessary to fill their norm-referenced occupational niches in the existing economic curve, is at the heart of our democratic ideal. It has never been widely practiced at any time in history; it is still worth fighting for. ■

Deborah Meier is director of an alternative elementary school within the New York public school system. She is a vice chair of DSOC.

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### EDUCATION PLATFORM

This special report is a discussion starter. If you are interested in exchanging ideas about education with other DSOCers, perhaps in working on an education platform for the '80s, contact Deborah Meier, c/o DSOC, Suite 801, 853 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003.

## Discover Democratic Socialism

Do you think of yourself as a socialist? Do you belong to a socialist organization? If you answered yes to the first question and no to the second, then you should join the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC). DSOCers are active in unions, minority, community and feminist organizations, the anti-nuclear movement and the left wing of the Democratic party. We do not separate our vision from practical politics. It is because we are socialists that we have a unique contribution to make to the democratic left, showing how incremental reforms must be extended toward a structural transformation of society. By joining thousands of DSOC members in 40 locals and every state you can be part of the resurgence of the American left.

I'd like to join the DSOC. Enclosed find my dues. (\$50 sustaining; \$20 regular; \$10 limited income. Dues include \$5 for DEMOCRATIC LEFT.) Send to: Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, N.Y. 10003. Tel.: (212) 260-3270.

I want to subscribe to DEMOCRATIC LEFT. Enclosed is \$10 for a sustaining subscription; \$5 for a regular subscription; \$2.50 for a limited income subscription.)

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# Dissidents Continue In Spite of Setbacks

By Adrian Karatnycky

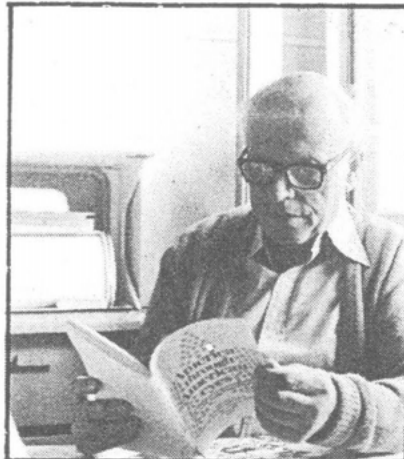
**S**OVIET SOLDIERS ARE FIRMLY entrenched in Kabul. The nonaligned countries have vocally condemned the Soviet invasion. In the United States there is much talk of a second Cold War. Will the draft be reinstated? Are we headed for war? All of these questions may at first seem far removed from the status of human rights in the USSR. But I would like to suggest that they are directly related. Indeed the existence of a viable and active opposition movement in the Soviet Union is our greatest hope for peace. For without an internal movement that can challenge Soviet militarism, future Afghanistsans are inevitable.

Today Dr. Andrei Sakharov is in exile in Gorky, forbidden from contact with Westerners and "criminal elements." In the last three months more than forty Ukrainians, Russian, Jewish, Lithuanian, and Crimean Tartar activists have been incarcerated for their participation in the movement for human and national rights. To the outsider it might seem that a fragile democratic movement at the mercy of a government willing to ignore the resounding condemnation of the world for its military aggression does not have much of a future. Indeed, have not all the best-known dissidents (Sakharov, Shcharansky, Orlov, Rudenko, Bukovsky, Plyushch, Amalrik, Grigorenko, Ginzburg) been exiled, imprisoned or driven out of the USSR? Is there in fact any dissident movement left to speak of?

Yes; dissent continues and there is good reason to be cautiously optimistic about its future in the USSR. For despite the most recent wave of repressions, a wave that began well before the invasion of Afghanistan, a solid core of activists exists in the Soviet Union to continue the work of the arrested. Indeed, new voices are emerging to replace the familiar names.

Currently there are functioning Helsinki Monitoring Groups in Moscow, the

Ukraine, Lithuania, Georgia, and Armenia. These groups issue detailed reports on violations of the humanitarian and human rights provisions of the Helsinki Accords. Although more than forty of the Groups' members have been imprisoned or driven into exile in the West, they continue to attract adherents. Recently, for example, the Ukrainian Moni-



Andrei Sakharov

Jeri Laber

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*“We have not heard the last from Andrei Sakharov nor from the many Sakharovs waiting in the wings.”*

---

toring Group announced the addition of twelve new members.

Worker dissidents have also continued their organizing and human rights activities. The Free Interprofessional Organization of Workers (SMOT), despite arrests and repression of its leading activists, shows every sign that efforts to create a trade union movement independent of government control will persist.

Religious activists are also proceeding with the work of the Christian Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Believers, and Evangelical Christians and Baptists are quite well organized and enjoy a good measure of popular support.

Last year, the existence of a commune of young Leningrad leftists, although crushed by Soviet authorities, indicated that a new generation is willing to question the party line and to attempt to create an alternative to Soviet political orthodoxy. The commune's journal published the writings of an eclectic assortment of thinkers ranging from Marcuse to Bakunin to Santiago Carrillo.

As a result of the initiative of Raisa Lert, a Marxist dissident who broke with Roy Medvedev over his vicious and unfounded attacks on other human rights activists, a *samizdat* (self-published) journal devoted to a dialogue between Eurocommunists, socialists, religious activists, people of all points of view, has been founded. Four issues of the journal, *Searches*, have to date reached the West, and the range and quality of its subject matter is impressive.

Moreover, despite concerted repressions and the confiscation of manuscripts, several interesting theoretical works have appeared recently. The most notable of these is an "Open Letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union." The "Open Letter," written by recently sentenced Ukrainian dissident, Yuri Badzio, is a synopsis of a longer sociological study of Soviet society from a Eurocommunist perspective.

Thus, both in terms of theory and practice, the dissident cause has a future that is far from bleak.

How many dissidents are there? This is a complicated and ultimately unanswerable question, dependent to a large extent on how broadly one defines the phenomenon. Former Soviet political prisoner Cronid Lubarsky, writing in the West German Soviet affairs journal *Ost-europa*, concludes, on the basis of studying *samizdat* sources, that there are in the neighborhood of 10,000 human rights activists (i.e. more than twice the membership of DSOC). But, he indicates, this number would swell to well over a quarter of a million if religious groupings vehemently opposed to Soviet-power as well as the large numbers of Jews and others seeking emigration were to be included.

Finally, and perhaps most compellingly, Soviet oppositionists will continue to be active not merely because of their numbers or because they have begun organizing into a political force, but above all because the social and political con-

Continued on page 14

# SOCIALIST NOTES

by Nancy Kleniewski

**D**SOC MEMBERS AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE CARRYING out some interesting experiments in using cultural media for socialist education.

Three Vermont DSOCers were involved in the Labor Day broadcast on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," a sensitive portrait of workers' lives. "The Blood of Barre" treated the unionization of Vermont's granite industry.

DSOC members Bill Kemsley, Sr., Ben Collins, and Greg Bolosky initiated and researched the project.

■ ■ ■

IN WASHINGTON, D.C., DSOC HAS PRODUCED TWO HALF-hour radio shows on Pacifica affiliate WPFW. Both shows featured an introduction on DSOC's political perspective, some folk music and jazz, a talk segment on a theme, a listeners' call-in segment, and a summary of news of the democratic left. The themes of the shows were housing and labor, respectively. Although the programs were aired at noontime, listener response was very good, according to Alex Spinrad, who worked on the programs along with Kathy Lundy, Stan Gacek, and Vivian Andrade. The local now has an application pending with the station for a monthly prime-time show.

Washington also runs a coffeehouse combining political and cultural themes. Last year's film series included "Sacco and Vanzetti," "Nothing But a Man," "Joe Hill," and "Dr. Strangelove." Each program opened with a talk on DSOC, including connections between socialism and art, and ended with a discussion and refreshments. One of the coffeehouse organizers, Jehane Dyllan, says that the lessons she would pass along to other locals are to have adequate publicity, a "gutsy" opening speech and socialist-guided discussion, and to serve alcohol. ("It keeps people around longer.")

In addition to its cultural programs, the D.C. Coffeehouse group hosted a benefit auction for International Chemical Workers' Union members in Laurel, Miss. Co-sponsored by DSOC, the ICWU, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and the National Organization for Women Labor Committee, the highly successful benefit included speeches, music, and an auction in which all bidders paid whatever they bid for the items auctioned, whether or not they won them.

This year's cultural program in D.C. will include two film series, a poster contest and exhibit of May Day posters, a program of readings from Brecht, and an evening with feminist musicians.

■ ■ ■

THE NEW YORK LOCAL HAS OPENED A SCHOOL FOR Democratic Socialism at its new office, 125 W. 72nd St., New York 10024. Courses for the spring term include: "Problems of Modern Politics" by Irving Howe and Robert Lekachman, "Corporate Power and New York Politics" by Ruth Messinger and Paul DuBrul, "The Making of Soviet Society" by Andrew Arato, "Schools and Society" by Deborah Meier, and "An Introduction to Democratic Socialism" by Jack Clark. Fees are nominal, ranging from \$3 to \$25.

N.Y. DSOC's newly formed Cultural Committee holds regular discussions, and is planning a film series, a poetry anthology, and a talent show—to be made up of the local's (500 strong) membership.

## ELECTIONEERING

As we go to press we learn from Maine State Representative Harlan Baker that two DSOCers were elected as alternates to the state Democratic convention in the Maine caucuses.

## RESOURCES FOR MEDIA WORK

*Taping It Together*, a video manual written with community group members in mind. Includes how to choose your medium, how to use a camera and portapack deck, lighting, editing, etc. Available for \$1.25 each plus 50¢ postage from Urban Planning Aid, 120 Boylston St., Rm. 527, Boston, Mass. 02116.

*Community Press Features*, monthly packets of graphics ready to be offset or mimeographed by electrostencil, on political topics. Great for newsletter illustrations. Also available from the address above.

*How To Do Leaflets, Newsletters, and Newspapers*, an illustrated booklet by Nancy Brigham and the Boston Community School. \$1.25 from The New England Free Press, 60 Union Square, Somerville, Mass. 02143.

*Unemployment Marches On*, a slide show-tape presentation on the crisis of unemployment and responses by the corporations, the government, and citizens. Available in two versions, 45 minutes or 28 minutes, from the Michigan Interfaith Full Employment Committee, 23 E. Adams, 5th Floor, Detroit 48226. (Or contact Peggy Posa at (313) 962-9730).

*If you have items of interest for this column, send them to Nancy Kleniewski, 3308 Baring St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.*

## UPDATE: BIG BUSINESS DAY

Activists around the country are gearing up for Big Business Day April 17. In Boston, look for a weekend conference on corporate power. . . . Pittsburgh will have a press conference and educational march to four corporate headquarters. . . . New Yorkers are focusing on Citicorp. . . . Long Islanders will hold teach-ins. . . . St. Louis will see a massive labor march. . . . Southeastern Illinois University plans a teach-in. . . . San Francisco and Los Angeles have events in the works. . . . The state executive committee of the Florida AFL-CIO has endorsed the day and committed time and personnel to work on such events as a rally in Tallahassee, a teach-in in Miami and a giant billboard on the interstate near Miami.

In Washington, D.C. Big Business Day will sponsor a "Constitutional Convention" to announce formation of "shadow boards" for ten major American corporations. These "boards" will monitor "their" corporations—analyzing investments decisions, holding hearings, meeting with managers of the corporation, and issuing annual social reports.

If you aren't involved in a Big Business Day activity yet, call the Big Business Day office at 202-861-0456 to get a copy of the Organizers' Manual. BBD's address is 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Room 411, Washington, D.C. 20036.

ditions which have spawned their discontent remain.

Soviet citizens are increasingly unhappy about a government which is limiting the growth of the consumer goods sector in favor of military expenditures. Workers are ever more vocally expressing their displeasure over poor work-safety conditions and a trade union leadership whose concerns are limited almost exclusively to increasing worker productivity and ensuring that state plans are fulfilled.

The greatest potential for discontent derives from national groups: the Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and, increasingly, the Islamic peoples of the USSR, who will continue to voice their dissatisfaction with the current Soviet policy of Russification. Because of their potential for mass support, these oppositionists are particularly harshly repressed. Nearly three-quarters of all known political prisoners, for example, are non-Russian, although Russians constitute approximately half the population of the Soviet Union.

The invasion of Afghanistan is likely to lead to heightened repression; for the Soviets, who are entering a period of greater insularity, will be unrestrained by the pressures of Western public opinion and thus able to callously uproot their internal opponents. However, the dissident movement has demonstrated its resiliency. After all, it managed to survive the period of East-West tension immediately following the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

We have not heard the last from Andrei Sakharov, nor from the many Sakharovs who are waiting in the wings.

*Adrian Karatnycky, who insists that he is not "exceedingly distrustful of Soviet power," has written on Soviet and East European affairs for The New Republic, Commonweal, The New Leader, and other journals.*

■ ■ ■

#### WE'VE MOVED

The DSOC national office has literally brought socialism out of the closet into more spacious quarters in the same building. Now that we have more wall space we would like to decorate it with socialist memorabilia. If you have posters, photographs, etc. that you could donate or lend, contact us.

## EARTH DAY '80—APRIL 22.



To commemorate the 10th anniversary of Earth Day, groups around the country are planning conferences, seminars, open houses, street fairs, walking tours and other environmentally oriented activities. The focus of the celebration will be on the initiatives of citizens to improve environmental quality and protect natural resources. For more information, contact: EARTH DAY '80, 1638 R Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 2009 (202) 293-2550.

#### STUDENTS, LABOR, from page 7

Gloria Johnson, Director of Education and Women's Activities, International Union of Electric, Radio and Machine Workers, stated that with nearly half of the workforce comprised of women, the labor movement must open its executive positions to women, and concentrate on bargaining issues that directly affect women, such as sexual harassment on the job, and day care as a right of working women.

Gloria Jordon, vice-president, International Chemical Workers Union, stressed the need for organizing in the South. Describing the conditions she faced as a worker in a chicken processing plant in Mississippi, Jordon received a standing ovation for the remarkable display of courage and determination that she and her fellow workers, on strike since February 1979, demonstrated in combatting racism, sexual harassment, and sweatshop conditions.

Another theme was the importance of countering the recent influx of corporate influence on college campuses with the funding of "chairs of free enterprise," and programs that promote corporate America. Students felt that they knew little about the American labor movement and many called for more courses on labor and labor history to balance the pervasive pro-corporate influence.

The rise of the corporate state, and the translation of economic power into political power, highlighted presentations and discussion. DSOC Chair Michael Harrington emphasized that the existence of a structural crisis does not mean that a movement against it will evolve, as crises do not create movements—people do. He added, "If the American la-

bor movement goes on as it has been, it will fail. Change has to be on the agenda to respond to the crisis."

Speakers agreed that faced with attacks from the New Right, inflation, right-to-work laws, and a declining organizing base, the labor movement must not only react, but be the catalyst for change. IAM President and DSOC Vice Chair William Winpisinger cited the growing maldistribution of wealth and income, unemployment, "energyflation," and the failure of elected officials to address these issues as areas of concern for the eighties. The trade union movement's demands must include democratic economic alternatives, including price controls, passage of the Ford-Riegle bill requiring one year's advance notice of plant closings, union representation on the boards of directors of corporations, and increasing public sector employment.

IJAW Vice President Martin Gerber stated that "in order to build the coalition [necessary to achieve that goal], we must concentrate on issues that unite us, and compromise on those that divide us."

If the issues raised and the optimism expressed by conference participants are any indication of labor's future, then the 1980s will be characterized by prosperity. As Coalition of American Public Employees Executive Director James Farmer stated, "The 'me' decade is behind us now, and I think the 'we' decade can embark."

*Penny Schantz is active in Madison DSOC and a graduate student in industrial relations at the University of Wisconsin.*

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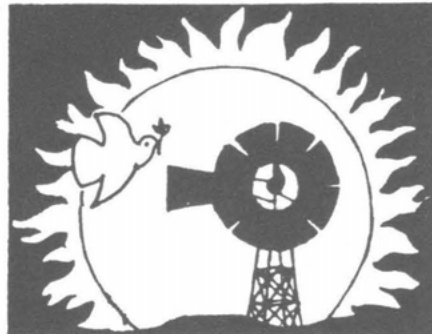
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BUDGET, from page 3

unimportant footnote, the administration has redefined full employment as 5.1 percent unemployment, which would have been called a recession a mere ten years ago. That same footnote once again

*“... the economic mismanagement in Washington is subverting the warfare state as well as the welfare state.”*

implies that our problems largely derive from the entrance of women into the labor force in great numbers. Accompanying these dismal forecasts, we now have proposals for military spending—and perhaps even countercyclical outlays to offset the recession—which could raise the rate of inflation and further erode our living standards. If one accepts corporate monopoly pricing and the sectoral contradictions of the food, fuel, housing, and health sectors, *then—but only then—* is one indeed caught in the dilemma the conservatives insist on. *Then* one begins to act like a Republican, which is what Carter has done.

But it is possible that even this intolerable scenario will not work. For if the President's appeasement of stagflation goes on and inflation does rise along with unemployment, then there will be an international run on the dollar. Washington—and here another profound difference between Cold War I and Cold War II surfaces—is now limited by international economic constraints in a way never before true. If that happens and the present militaristic mood continues, Carter would have to make even more drastic reductions in the living standard to keep to his foreign policy plans.

In short, economic mismanagement in Washington is subverting the warfare state as well as the welfare state, and a posture of international truculence and domestic surrender could well produce the worst of all possible worlds. Above all, a tactic of unfocused and unanalyzed belligerence in a nuclear world once more threatens human life. The Soviets have behaved outrageously, but that is no reason for the United States to behave stupidly and dangerously. ■

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# JIMMY HIGGINS REPORTS

A NEW COLD WAR SEEMS TO HAVE BEGUN. For all the reasons Michael Harrington outlined last month, that's bad: world peace is endangered, patriotism replaces politics at home, etc. And through it all, the Cold Warriors rage on, fighting the ideological battle on both sides. From the ridiculous to the tragic, here's how they line up in the contest for Cold War honors. The Communist Party USA holds its own in competition for the "war is peace" doublespeak medal. On December 28, the *Daily World* reported that the Afghan government was consolidating its social gains, and President Amin was favorably quoted as opposing U.S. imperialism. On December 29, Amin was discovered to have been a fascist, but the readers were assured that criticism of Soviet intervention consisted of slanders. Soon thereafter, the Soviets' internationalism was hailed because they responded to calls from help from the progressive Afghans fighting the fascist Amin. Got that? The Peter Pan "We'll never grow up" medal is shared by various Trotskyists. These implacable foes of Stalinism welcomed the extension of Stalinism by imagining hordes of Afghan workers and peasants welcoming the tanks. The ever amusing Spartacist League ran a banner headline in its paper (and an actual banner on some campuses) reading "Hail the Red Army." In the other trenches, Al Shanker wins the Purple Heart with a non sequitur cluster for his argument in the *New York Times* defending the New York City school budget against further cuts and comparing the budget cutters to liberals who want to cut the defense budget. Lane Kirkland has the Maginot Line award for preparing well for the last war. In a January speech, the new AFL-CIO head blasted "the neo-liberals" for not understanding the Soviet threat and endangering labor movement gains. Just what we need right now, a labor leader who will stand up to the New Left (or Communists or Wobblies, you fill in the blank). Standing above the battle and speaking some sense is the original Cold Warrior, George Kennan. In a February *New York Times* op-ed piece, Kennan decries the "militarization of thought

and discourse in the capital" and goes on to call for "realism, prudence and restraint in American statesmanship." May his words be heeded.

**IS WORKER SAFETY AN OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD FOR POLITICIANS?** — Some Senate liberals seem to think so, judging by the co-sponsorship of Richard Schweiker's bill (S-2153) to gut OSHA. Traditional friends of labor like Alan Cranston, Frank Church, Gaylord Nelson (who has since changed his mind) and even Harrison Williams joined Schweiker in introducing this so-called improvement legislation which would exempt about 90 percent of all workplaces from health and safety enforcement and inspections. The liberals argue that only by this drastic reform can OSHA be saved. Labor response: save us from such saviors. This looms as the toughest and most important fight since labor law reform, and labor is gearing up, along with its allies. Secondary level activists in the various committees on occupational health and safety and in groups devoted to specific workplace hazards (like black lung and brown lung) are mobilizing their members locally to ensure that it's not just a traditional Washington lobbyists' battle. Environmentalists are sending out the word to fight S-2153. It could be the kind of battle where rank-and-file workers, labor officials and their allies from non-union backgrounds forge close links and assert themselves all across the country. **DEMOCRATIC LEFT** readers can help by writing their senators and congressional representatives supporting OSHA and opposing S-2153. Send us copies of your letters and any response.

**CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER** runs this campaign season. In December, Ted Kennedy criticized the administration for admitting the Shah. The consensus quickly emerged that while the senator was not quite traitorous to raise the question, he was undoubtedly irresponsible in the extreme. In January, Ronald Reagan proclaims that proliferation of nuclear weapons is none of our business, and no one notices.

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