

# DEMOCRATIC LEFT

EDITED BY  
MICHAEL HARRINGTON

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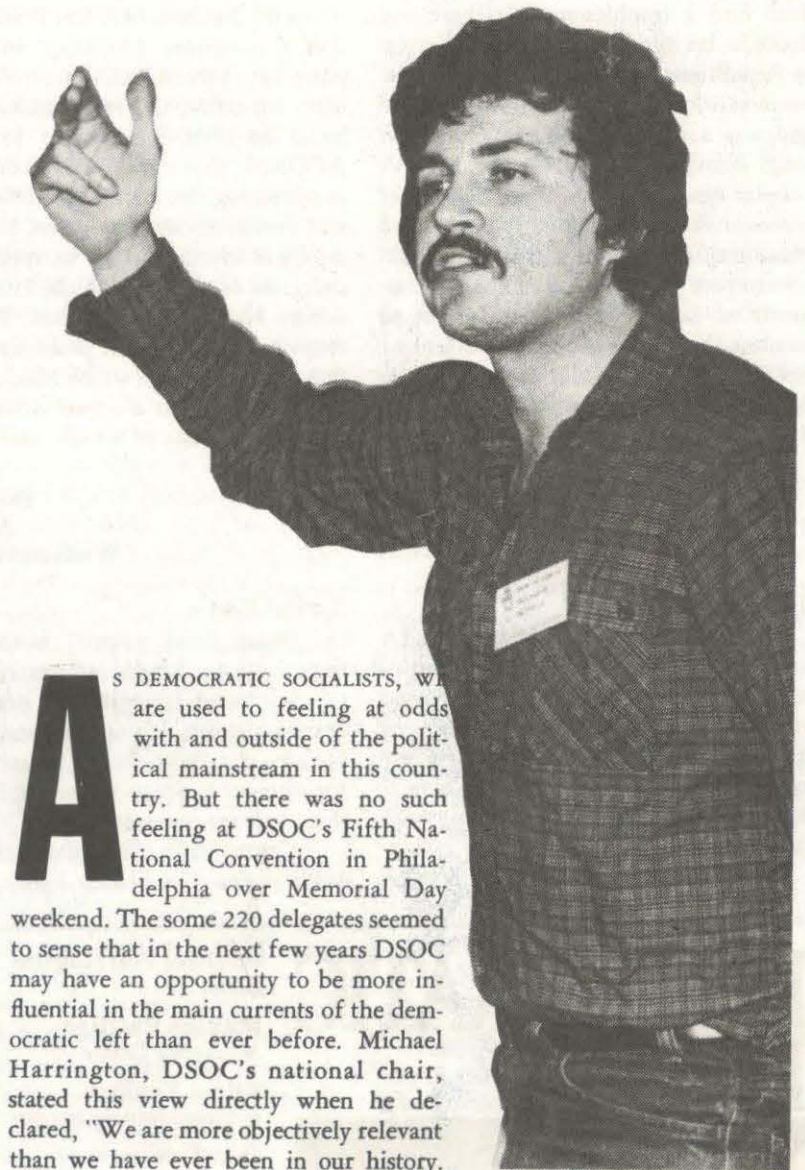
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Despite the romance of the Spanish Civil War, writes Ron Radosh, history books force us to take a hard-headed look at Soviet motives.

## Delegates OK Unity Steps



**A**S DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS, we are used to feeling at odds with and outside of the political mainstream in this country. But there was no such feeling at DSOC's Fifth National Convention in Philadelphia over Memorial Day weekend. The some 220 delegates seemed to sense that in the next few years DSOC may have an opportunity to be more influential in the main currents of the democratic left than ever before. Michael Harrington, DSOC's national chair, stated this view directly when he declared, "We are more objectively relevant than we have ever been in our history.

The challenge of this convention is: are we equal to our own relevance?"

Delegates responded to this challenge by adopting a resolution to strengthen DSOC's coalition-building

work and by broadening its base through possible merger with the New American Movement.

So much took place during the four full days from Friday morning, May 22,

through Monday, May 25, that to understand what was accomplished, one should consider that there were really several meetings woven in and out of each other.

The first was DSOC, as a democratic

# LETTERS

To The Editor:

In Ronald Radosh's review (April) of the *Socialist Register 1980* he writes, "Some democratic socialists will find troublesome Miliband's conclusion that when Soviet aid "Does help serve progressive purposes, it has to be supported (i.e., as in Angola and republican Spain)." Even if it serves a progressive purpose, it may prove troublesome to democratic socialists? Does brother Radosh find it troublesome? Is there any doubt in his mind that the support given to Republican Spain by the USSR, *independent of motives*, was most welcome and was a major factor explaining the long, heroic resistance of the Spanish people against the militarily superior forces of Franco supported by Hitler and Mussolini? If only the socialist Blum government in France, and the governments of Belgium and Sweden—not to mention those of England and the United States—had given similar support to the Spanish people, ulterior motives notwithstanding!

A veteran of the  
Abraham Lincoln Brigade  
Dr. Albert Prago  
Flushing, N.Y.

To the Editor:

Steve Max's summary of how VISTA and CETA cuts will affect citizen organizing in coming years (May) is a good overview. Much of it, however, does not apply to ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), the largest citizen action group, with chapters currently in 23 states.

ACORN has not relied on VISTA

or CETA for staff in recent years, so these cuts will not have a major impact on the organization. Reductions in the availability of foundation and other private sponsorship will also affect ACORN far less than it will other organizations: ACORN has always been largely dependent on dues and other internal income, and has steadily increased these sources over the past year in anticipation of current developments.

[It] has had ACORN Political Action Committees (APACs) in several states for years. APACs interview candidates for office, and make endorsements based on their commitment to specific ACORN objectives. In addition to participating in numerous referendum and initiative campaigns over the years, ACORN elected 40 of its members as delegates or alternates to the 1980 Democratic National Convention. We have never suffered from the problems of conflict or opportunism which Max describes as resulting from electoral activity, but these are pitfalls of which one must be aware.

Bart Laws  
ACORN  
Washington, D.C.

To the Editor:

Stuart Elliot (April) raises a strategic issue for blacks: affirmative action *vs.* class based remedies. His ambiguous answer suggests that racially neutral anti-poverty programs should be substituted for affirmative action. However, I suggest that *both* are necessary.

Critics claim affirmative action only helps upper-class blacks. False. Because

of affirmative action, and most of all in EEOC reporting firms, large numbers of blacks moved into *moderately paid* blue- and white-collar jobs; while the ratio of blacks in such low paid jobs as domestics, declined. How many blacks did one see *before* the mid-sixties affirmative action laws working as bank tellers and office clerks?

The government's seventies *failure* to take strong affirmative action insisting that employers hire *reasonable numbers* of blacks has contributed to present sky high black unemployment rates. Thus blacks have received only 5 percent of new private industry jobs and today a white high school dropout has a better chance at employment than a black with some college education.

But blacks also need class based politics. Because they are predominantly poor, a declining economy has disparate impact on blacks. For example, budget cuts—*race blind* in intent, *see* blacks first as victims. Hence blacks surely need anti-poverty programs.

However, blacks also need assurances of a fair share in the benefits of such programs. Those assurances are forthcoming when class policies are combined with specific affirmative action commitments to black people.

Gertrude Ezorsky  
New York, 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. Letters should refer to articles that have appeared in DEMOCRATIC LEFT.*

## DEMOCRATIC LEFT

Formerly the  
Newsletter of the  
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political organization, meeting to elect officers and set policy. Delegates arrived knowing that the decision on merger with NAM would be the significant one of the convention. Few doubted that the votes were there to pass the resolution which would set in motion the final phase of negotiations. Uncertainty, however, hung over whether those opposed could find terms that they could accept.

After considerable behind the scenes discussion, all sides reached a formula they thought they could live with (see article on page 6).

Besides the merger resolution the organizational business of the convention included adoption of a priorities statement that commits DSOC to sustain its growth of the last two years by bringing in another 2,500 members, to do more to build up strong local chapters, and to establish at least two regional offices.

The major elements of DSOC's political work for the next two years were presented in a resolution dealing with the DEMOCRATIC AGENDA, DSOC's coalition building effort within the Democratic party. Since its founding five years ago, DA has worked at two mid-term conferences, held successful national conferences, and worked at the 1980 Democratic National Convention. The resolution committed us to support DA in its work on the upcoming 1982 mid-term conference and to build a true locally-based coalition. The first step was taken during the convention itself, when delegates signed postcards addressed to Democratic National Committee chairman Charles Manatt, objecting to his proposal for a tightly controlled, technically-oriented meeting, and calling instead for a real issues conference with elected delegates from all tendencies in the party.

Woven through all the political caucusing and plenary debates of the four days was a second, and in many ways equally important meeting. This was, in effect, an educational conference on socialist politics and values. The focal point for this part of the weekend was defined by Harrington in his keynote speech Saturday morning when he said, "We're here this weekend not simply to mobilize the democratic left in the immediate struggle against the most cruel and reactionary administration in the United States since Calvin Coolidge; we are here to prepare to work out the alternative when Reagan fails. . . ."



Delegates enjoyed looking at the display of socialist memorabilia organized by longtime socialist Harry Fleischman.

Several of the speakers, both in plenary sessions and in workshops, suggested some of the programmatic and political work that needs to be done, and at the same time gave evidence of how much solid work has already been done.

Speaking at an overflowing open public meeting in a church Friday evening, gay activist and San Francisco City Supervisor Harry Britt argued that a program for a broad democratic left, in addition to the traditional objectives of social welfare and economic democracy, has to give equal weight to efforts to remove barriers to full political participation for women, blacks, gays, and other ethnic and social minorities. Corporate America, he suggested, in opposing broader participation, understands better than the left the potential for progressive change inherent in these measures.

The need for greater political direction from the labor movement was stressed by Machinists' president and DSOC Vice Chair William Winpisinger in his closing speech to the convention. DSOC and the labor movement, he said, need to sweep away a variety of myths clogging up American politics, foremost of which is the myth that Reagan received a mandate last fall to come to Washington and "dismantle the kind of society we have been trying to build for the past 50 years." UAW vice president Martin Gerber, on Friday night, and at a trade union breakfast Saturday morning, sounded the same theme.

Some of the new ideas that Winpi-

singer and others were calling for were discussed in small workshops held on Friday and Saturday afternoons.

One session gathered together New York City councilmember Ruth Messinger, Washington D.C. councilmember Hilda Mason, Maine state legislator Harlan Baker, and writer and city planner Paul Dubrul for a discussion that illustrated the kind of local grassroots coalition-building DSOCers are engaged in as it ranged over rent control, real estate taxes, cable television, and municipal energy programs.

Running throughout both conventions was the "revival meeting" aspect that gives strength to people involved in long term struggles. Speaker after speaker gave eloquent testimony to the dreams we share and the traditions we come from. British Labor Member of Parliament Tony Benn, speaking Friday evening, and theologian Harvey Cox, speaking at lunch the next day, referred to John Ball, an English preacher and leader of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, to indicate the tradition of Biblical inspiration for egalitarian social movements.

Cox and Irving Howe discussed the "moral dimensions of socialism" at the Saturday luncheon, with Cox referring to the present as a "deviant period in American socialism" when the secular

*Do You Want to See  
Your Name in Print?*

*Then Greet Us  
on Labor Day  
in DEMOCRATIC LEFT*

and religious bases of the movement have become separated. He reminded the audience of the importance of religion in fueling revolutionary movements in other parts of the world, especially in Latin America and Poland, and of the fact that Norman Thomas had been ordained as a Presbyterian minister.

If Cox sought the moral dimensions of socialism in the church, Howe found it more in the secular writings of several political thinkers. In a model of insight and careful language impossible to summarize in this brief space, he identified the often implicit moral commitments in Marx and other writers who have sometimes claimed to have been strictly scientific in their analyses.

In an inspiring speech at the Sunday luncheon, NAM activist Roberta Lynch evoked the image of socialist feminism feeding hunger in the world—hunger for food, hunger for justice, and hunger for human solidarity.

### **Growing Pains**

Although the convention took significant actions in the decisions on merger with NAM, and in setting organizational and political priorities for the next years; and the intellectual caliber of the meeting was as great as it has ever been, DSOC in Philadelphia showed itself to

be an organization suffering at times from growing pains.

"Too large to be a family and too small to be a political party," was the way one delegate put it. One sign of this was in the working sessions that dealt with convention resolutions. In an effort to permit the larger than ever number of delegates to discuss and amend an equally large number of resolutions, a series of working sessions, modeled after similar sessions used by Canada's New Democratic Party (NDP), were instituted. Unfamiliarity with the system, which works well for the much larger NDP, led to severe cases of frustration among several delegates.

Another by-product of growth was what many delegates with experience at earlier conventions described as the most intense politicking they had ever seen at a DSOC convention. This appeared to be especially true of campaigns for slots on the NEC, as caucuses discussed slating and individuals lobbied to round up one or two more of the all-important first place votes that count so much in the proportional representational system.

The increased level of caucus activity was another sign of growth. In addition to caucuses of local chapter delegations, there were caucuses based on political tendency, region, age, sex, and sexual preference. The Women's Caucus held regular meetings at which it hammered out structure and procedures for the Feminist Commission. The Religion and Socialism Committee, which publishes its own newsletter, met regularly to set goals

for the next two years. A new group, the Gay and Lesbian Caucus, was small, but confident that as DSOC's work on gay rights and women's rights increased, more DSOCers would feel comfortable identifying with it.

No one had any doubts about what stirred the strongest feelings at the convention. The question was a constitutional one: whether to drop the right of the national vice chairs to an automatic seat on the NEC.

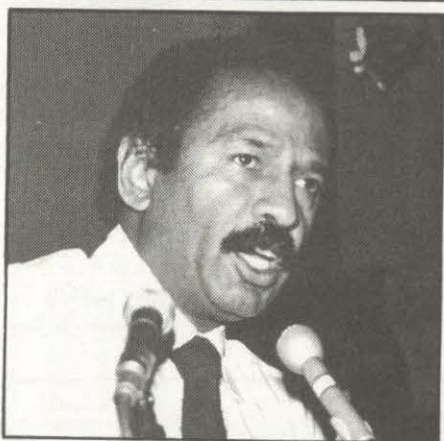
The five vice chairs have served both as spokespeople and representatives of



Harry Britt



Tony Benn



John Conyers



Roberta Lynch



William Winpisinger

*“Speaker after speaker gave eloquent testimony to the dreams we share and the traditions we come from.”*

## ELECTION RESULTS

The number of vice chairs was changed by the convention to six: three male and three female. Newly elected were: San Francisco Supervisor Harry Britt, left theologian Rosemary Ruether, trade union organizer Trudy Robideau, and Marjorie Phyfe of the Machinists political action staff. Hispanic activist Michael Rivas and Machinists President William Winpisinger were re-elected. Elected to the NEC were Bogdan Denitch, Brian Doherty, Peter Dreier, Harry Fleischman, Elizabeth Goldstein, Irving Howe, Victoria Hugley, Ruth Jordan, Nancy Kleniewski, Helen Kramer, Mark Levinson, Nancy Lieber, Kathy Lundy, Deborah Meier, Harold Meyerson, Maxine Phillips, Marjorie Phyfe, Charleen Raines, David Rathke, Michael Germinal Rivas, Trudy Robideau, Roger Robinson, Carl Shier, and Bill Thomas. Peter Mandler retains the Youth Section seat.

DSOC outside the organization and as leaders within it, although the degree to which they emphasized one role or the other varied from individual to individual. The proposed constitutional change was presented as clarifying the internal leadership function of the vice chairs. Its proponents argued for it on the grounds that all members of the NEC, the principal decision-making body of DSOC, should be elected with a clear mandate from constituencies.

Opponents of the change argued, in turn, that the organization needed more, not fewer, leaders who could claim a national constituency; and if that meant assuring that elections for vice chairs were contested, they favored a change in that direction rather than dropping automatic NEC status. Three of the vice chairs who had been very active as leaders within DSOC—Carl Shier, Ruth Jordan, and Deborah Meier—announced their unwillingness to serve again should the vice chairs be rendered, as they interpreted it, more "honorific." Proponents of the change asked them to reconsider their position.

A third position was that of Michael Harrington, who proposed postponing all changes indefinitely.

Each of these positions had its merits and able defenders—though the first one clearly had the votes. It carried 113 to 87.

A visitor from Mars, however,

would have been baffled by the anger and division that this seemingly technical constitutional issue aroused. And indeed a good many convention delegates were probably baffled, too. Although different views of the proper role for vice chairs had long existed in DSOC, in the months preceding the convention a host of disagreements, dissatisfactions, and frustrations seemed to have attached themselves to the issue. However one looked at it, the nature of the conflict left a number of individuals on all sides with a sense of having been treated unfairly. One outside observer, James Weinstein of *In These Times*, also concluded that the conflict involved, in effect if not in intent, an element of changing of the guard.

Deborah Meier implicitly linked the vice chairs debate to the convention's other difficulties in her reflections at the closing session. An essential mark of democratic socialism is its belief that process cannot be separated from substance, that process, in fact, is substance. DSOC needed to pay more attention to *how* things are done as well as *what* is done. She mentioned the need, in particular, to give a careful reassessment to both the method of debating resolutions and to the system of electing represen-

tatives to the NEC.

Jim Chapin also spoke to the point in his valedictory remarks as outgoing national director. He noted that an enduring commitment to social change involved both love—for our ideals and for those in need of their realization—and of anger—at injustice and oppressors. Sometimes, he said, this love and anger get mixed up and the anger is turned inward.

## Back to Work

But at the end, the prevailing mood was one of optimism. Delegates seemed to leave with their hopes for the organization and its work higher than ever. Jeff Tarbox, a first-time delegate from Maine, said he had felt "bewilderment" during the first days of the convention, but that by Sunday and Monday he was getting his bearings and was quite pleased with the way the plenary sessions were working out. Encountered as he gathered riders for the trip back up north, he said he was "ecstatic" about the merger, and eager to return home to political work. ■

*This article is based on reports filed by Richard Mounts, Peter Steinfelds and Maxine Phillips. All photos are by Gretchen Donart.*

## WHO WAS THERE

Affirmative action reports filed by the locals, and delegate registration forms, present a profile of delegates and alternates to the DSOC convention. They represented a fairly accurate cross-section of DSOC, if not of the nation as a whole. For instance, the number of women delegates as a percentage of all delegates was 33 percent (as compared to 28 percent in 1979).

There are complete statistics for the delegations (affirmative action reports) but not for the at-large delegates. Of the delegations, 37 percent were women, 37 percent were youth (30 and under), but only 12 percent students; 31 percent were trade union members, and only 7 percent were non-white (black, Hispanic, or Asian-American).

For about half the delegates and alternates it was their first DSOC convention. Slightly more than one-third had joined since the last convention, somewhat less than a third were founding members. The final third joined sometime between 1973 and 1979. For the first time there was substantial representation from the West Coast (15 percent compared to 5 percent in 1979).

It is a sign of the continued growth and change in the organization that only six of the sixteen outgoing members at-large of the old NEC were elected as at-large members of the new NEC. The composition and the results of the convention show that DSOC has come a long way in representing the society in which we live, but we still have a long way to go, particularly in recruiting and electing minorities to leadership positions.

Jim Chapin

# Along the Road to Unity

By Harry Fleischman

**I**N THE TWO YEARS SINCE ITS HOUSTON convention, DSOC has been engaged in discussions with the New American Movement (NAM) about the possibility of merger. Reams of paper and endless hours have been spent as representatives of both organizations have struggled with areas of agreement and disagreement, and as opponents of merger in both organizations registered their discontent (See DL, March 1981). Thus, to have expected the 1981 DSOC convention to adopt a resolution urging unity between NAM and DSOC without a single negative vote would have been the height of optimism. Yet that miracle occurred. It occurred because those within DSOC who were opposed to the merger (formally known as the Committee Against the NAM Merger), including Irving Howe and Alex Spinrad, worked conscientiously with other groups in DSOC to develop a *modus vivendi* on this issue. The result: a resolution authorizing final negotiations toward merger with NAM that was adopted 163 to 0, with 26 abstentions.

When delegates arrived for the convention, few doubted that the resolution would carry, but no one expected it to be passed without a fight. However, in pre-plenary discussions, all sides reached a formulation they could live with. If the convention would pass a resolution including inadvertently omitted language stating NAM's opposition to Palestinian Liberation Organization terrorism, along with a statement reaffirming DSOC's basic position on Israel adopted at the Chicago convention four years ago, those opposed to merger would record "abstention" rather than opposition in the vote. In debate on the merger resolution at the beginning of the Sunday morning plenary, Irving Howe, speaking for the opponents, summarized their original bases for opposition.

He noted that although NAM had clarified its positions, and thereby removed most of the basis for opposition, they remained troubled by several recent



Gretchen Donart

Richard Healey, I., and Irving Howe chat in hallway during the convention.

statements from NAM leaders. As Howe put it in his somewhat tentative greeting: "We retain use of our feet and we extend our hand to those NAM people who honestly want to build a democratic socialist movement in America."

Harrington, speaking for the supporters of the merger resolution, noted that because differences over issues get discussed in conventions of this sort, delegates can receive a distorted view. Rather than the differences, he wanted to stress the enormous convergence he sensed in the views between NAM and DSOC. "They overwhelm... completely any differences, particularly differences that are based on history and not on present and future policy."

## Resolving Differences

Amendments to the merger resolution were defeated in working sessions held before the plenary. Delegates did not want to change a statement so carefully worked out. Even though the delegates were strongly in favor of merger, they wanted to resolve the one remaining issue, on the Middle East, in a way that would satisfy all tendencies in DSOC. A resolution to that effect was unanimously recommended by the convention steering committee. It read:

"1. Although NAM's condemna-

tion of the Palestine Liberation Organization's terrorist activities against civilians contained in its negotiating document of January 1981 was inadvertently not included in the document agreed upon by the two negotiating committees to be submitted to the two conventions, DSOC strongly concurs with that condemnation. Since both organizations agree on this important political issue, we believe, should a unified organization be established, it would incorporate this perspective into its political program.

"We also understand that if a unified organization is established it would support such military and economic aid as is necessary to protect Israeli security.

"2. DSOC reaffirms its commitment to Israel as the only democratic state in the Middle East, created by the survivors of that monstrous crime against humankind, the Holocaust. We express a special sense of sorority and fraternity toward those in Israel, mainly organized in our sister socialist parties there, who struggle for both Israeli and Palestinian rights. We reaffirm our 1977 Chicago convention resolution which stated that the achievement of a just and lasting peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors requires: a) that the Arab states and the Palestinian Arabs accept Israel as a legitimate expression of the Jewish peo-

ples' right to self determination, and b) that Israel recognize the Palestinian Arabs' right to self determination, including national sovereignty, alongside Israel on a basis compatible with Israel's right to independence and security."

This resolution was adopted by a vote of 158 to 3 (with 30 abstentions).

Throughout the two years of negotiation, several areas were in contention. These included: 1) conceptions of Communism; 2) emphasis on work within the Democratic party; 3) attitudes toward the Middle East; and 4) the relationship between democratic socialists and the labor movement. The convention document, excerpted below, contained substantial agreement on almost all points, although the negotiating committees had not been unanimous in their acceptance of the statement (DSOC Committee, 7 to 1; NAM Committee, 5 to 2).

### On Communism

"As democratic socialists we oppose the claim of Communist countries to be socialist. We are firmly committed to democracy as the only political means to the economic and social power of the people. Thus, we oppose bureaucratic and dictatorial state ownership as hostile to socialist emancipation. We condemn Soviet and other Communist attacks on freedom, whether directed against truly socialist forces (the Polish workers), the right of national self-determination (Afghanistan), progressives seeking peace (Sakharov), or even reactionaries with whom we profoundly disagree (Solzhenitsyn).

"Our critique of Communism is from a democratic perspective, unlike the right wing's. Polish workers who organize for the right to strike are rightfully proclaimed heroes; American public employees who demand the right to strike are attacked by anti-Communist rightwingers as public enemies. In this country, the right wing's dominant politics of anti-Communism is a tool for whipping up consensus for intervention in the Third World, drastic social service cutbacks, anti-labor strategies, and ever greater weapons purchases. And if, as is quite possible, the Reagan years are anti-libertarian and repressive, our principled commitment to democracy as both a means and an end will lead us to defend vigorously the rights of all dissidents, even those with whom we have profound disagreements."

### On Democratic Party Work

"The immediate task of the democratic socialist movement is to help build a broad-based anti-corporate democratic left. . . . Despite short-term conflicts of interest, the potential is present for a new majority coalition opposed to the priorities of capital. . . . Central to our strategy is the development of a coalition of the major progressive forces in our society — trade unions, women's groups, minorities and others. . . . In the present period the forces we seek to work with find their electoral expression primarily within the left wing of the Democratic party.

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**“If unity is accepted, DSOC will meet with NAM in a founding convention of a unified organization, and a new era in American socialist history will begin.”**

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"Local and state political initiatives are both valuable in their own right and a complement to national electoral efforts. Of particular importance is the creation of local coalitions to combat the effects of the urban crisis.

"The form of our electoral work is not of primary importance. We emphasize the Democratic party because in the foreseeable future that is where the forces with whom we ally ourselves are located. If and when those forces take on other, electoral expressions — in nonpartisan campaigns or third parties — we would support those efforts as well."

### On the Middle East

"We support the right to self-determination expressed in the Jewish state of Israel—and the right of self-determination of the Palestinian people. These two rights are in territorial conflict which can only be progressively resolved by mutual recognition and negotiation, and that is the solution we favor.

"Both sides in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have legitimate fears which the U.S. must address. No peace can be achieved, however, so long as the majority of Israel's neighbors refuse to recognize Israel's right to a secure and peaceful existence. We support efforts to bring about negotiations among all parties to

guarantee Israel's right to exist. Also, there can be no long and stable peace in the Mideast without guaranteeing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination in peace and security. The U.S. should continue to provide such aid as is necessary to guarantee Israel's secure existence. The U.S. should also use its influence in the region to promote peace alternatives. We oppose, of course, long-term settlement policies in the Israeli-occupied territories and view them as an impediment to peace as well as to the legitimate rights of the Palestinians living in these areas."

### On the Labor Movement

The joint statement reviewed current attacks on unions and called for:

"Support for the trade union movement in its increasingly difficult battle against corporate union-busting and the right wing's attempt to blame inflation on a working class whose real wages have declined in the 1970s," and "efforts to stimulate rank and file involvement and to expand the base of organized labor (particularly in sectors such as clerical work where women predominate)."

After the vote, Richard Healey, NAM's former national secretary and co-chair of its negotiating committee, commented that he was quite pleased and expected the same result from NAM members at the organization's convention in Milwaukee, Wis., July 29-August 2. If NAM agrees to the same resolution adopted at the DSOC convention, the DSOC National Executive Committee will appoint a committee to meet with a similar NAM committee to negotiate the remaining organizational questions pertaining to unity, such as officers, dues structure, decision processes, etc. If these negotiations are successful, the DSOC committee will report to the NEC, which, if it accepts the report, is instructed to call a special convention of DSOC to consider the question of unity with NAM. If unity is accepted, DSOC will meet jointly with NAM in a founding convention of a unified organization, and a new era in American socialist history will begin. ■

*Harry Fleischman is a member of the DSOC National Executive Committee. Copies of the resolution passed by the convention are available from the DSOC National Office.*

# Chapin: Parting Thoughts

DEMOCRATIC LEFT asked outgoing National Director Jim Chapin to reflect on the last two years.

**DL.** What are you proudest of among DSOC's achievements in the last two years?

*Chapin.* 1. Membership growth targets achieved. We rose from 3,000 members in 36 chapters to 5,000 in 51 chapters and organizing committees.

2. An apparently successful resolution of our negotiations with NAM.

3. A major broadening and deepening of our work in the Democratic party. The number of elected public officials more than tripled; we held the first socialist caucus at a Democratic National Convention ever; and we had the largest DEMOCRATIC AGENDA meeting ever.

4. The development of a vibrant youth section, the largest such group since Students for a Democratic Society. Joe Schwartz deserves a lot of credit here.

5. Great development in international contacts, particularly the Euro-socialism and America conference.

6. Participation in a number of mass demonstrations and labor support activities; March 22nd, 1980 Mobilization Against the Draft demonstration, Big Business Day, J.P. Stevens support work.

7. Growth on the West Coast, following the commitment of major blocks of Harrington's and Schwartz's time in the fall of 1979.

8. The beginnings of a more serious internal life in the organization. Particularly notable here is the successful development of *Socialist Forum*, our first regular discussion bulletin. Also it should be noted that there has been at least one regular regional meeting of DSOC in every section of the country.

**DL.** What were the failures?

*Chapin.* 1. America is still capitalist.

2. Ronald Reagan.

3. More seriously, we are still too weak and small to have affected the drift to the right that took place in the last two years in the nation as a whole and within the Democratic party.

4. The failure to develop good

DSOC literature explaining our position on the issues, or, for that matter, explaining DSOC.

5. Despite some improvement in bookkeeping and organization, our finances remain rocky.



Gretchen Donart

**“We'll be in an extremely advantageous position when the pendulum swings back to the left, as it always does.”**

6. Despite some real improvement in a number of ways, our recruitment is still restricted to certain groups in the society.

7. Our “cadre education,” for want of a better term, is still weak, both in terms of theory and in terms of actual political practice.

8. We need more growth in the Sunbelt. And there are still more than 200 major urban areas without a DSOC chapter.

**DL.** What are your feelings about leaving as National Director?

*Chapin.* Mixed. I'm very tired and very happy to be able to have some rest. I'm looking forward to a more relaxed, or at least a different kind of schedule. But the last two years were terrific. DSOC really does have some of the best people in the country.

**DL.** What do you see in the future for DSOC?

*Chapin.* The prospects are bright for DSOC if maybe not so bright for the general society. Even if we didn't do anything differently than we do now, and recruited only the same sorts of people, we should reach 20,000 members before the end of this decade. That would put us at the level of the Norman Thomas party at its height in 1934. Of course, we would still have a long way to go to match the Debsian party at its height (100,000). But political activism now is less than it was then, and the same numbers, even though the country is larger, mean more than then.

In a number of ways, DSOC is standing at an unusual juncture of events. The sects to our “left” are weak and discredited, at the same time that liberalism is in decline. Thus, if we continue to do our work and continue to grow, we'll be in an extremely advantageous position when the pendulum swings back to the left, as it always does.

**DL.** And what about the prospects for American socialism?

One thing we should remember is that when people talk about the “failure of American socialism,” what they are really talking about is the lack of a party calling itself Labor or Socialist. But socialism, democratic socialism as we would like to have it, exists nowhere, not even in Sweden. So in that sense, there's nothing unique about our failure.

Remember, it took capitalism seven centuries from its first stirrings in the Italian city-states to its triumph in the 19th century. There were a number of “premature” capitalisms that rose and fell—like Venice, and Amsterdam, before the development of British capitalism began the takeover of the world economy. I'd suggest that all the “socialisms” we've seen so far are equally premature.

So, I'd suggest, we stand at the beginning of the history of the American socialist experiment, not at its end.

It's a great way to live! Remember, the next best thing to socialism is fighting for socialism! ■



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June 1981

## Organizer Leaves Youth Section



Gretchen Donat

**D**SOC'S FIRST PAID NATIONAL youth organizer is returning to graduate studies at Harvard after a two-year stint during which he helped build the Youth Section from 400 members to 1,500. Joe Schwartz, who came on staff when the organization decided to make a major commitment to youth, saw that commitment pay off. "We have enormous growth potential," he says, adding that one of the major strengths of the Youth Section is its integration with DSOC as a whole. "We've already graduated a group of articulate activists into the leadership of DSOC community locals."

Bidding Joe a public farewell at the Philadelphia Convention, members of the Youth Section sang "The Ballad of Joe Schwartz," (to the tune of "Joe Hill"), that paid tribute to his enormous capacity for enduring long bus rides, coping with aggravation from left sectarians, and never giving up if there was one more member to be recruited, or one more speech to be given.

"I can't say I'll miss cross-country bus trips, and I hope we can raise enough money so that Penny can take planes," Joe commented, "but it was a privilege to work for the movement." Joe plans to be active at both the national and local levels in the coming year.

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# "Investing in the Poor"

By Richard Mounts

**W**HAT KIND OF CONFERENCE can attract as co-sponsors the Chemical Bank, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the Heritage Foundation, the United Auto Workers, the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Association of Neighborhoods, the International Downtown Executives Association, the Communication Workers of America, and more than fifty others of equally improbable variety?

Washington hosts hundreds of conferences a year, but probably few with the array of supporters listed for the one held in March with the somewhat ambiguous title "Expanding the Opportunity to Produce: Revitalizing the American Economy through New Enterprise Development." Coming at a time when "revitalization" threatens to outdo "impacted" as the most overused word of the year, the conference seemed sure to provoke interest. Organized by the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CfED), the conference featured a series of keynote speeches and over 60 workshops focused on how federal, state, and local stimulus to small business could both revitalize the national economy and provide new jobs for many of the unemployed.

The more than 500 participants came from a variety of backgrounds, but were somewhat less diverse than the list of sponsors might suggest. A quick survey of a list of pre-registrants showed about a third from federal, state, or local government agencies; perhaps another third from the collection of Washington associations, public interest research organizations, and consulting firms that keep so many people in the city employed; and perhaps a quarter from organizations directly engaged in local development projects, including housing rehabilitation, recycling, child care, solar collector manufacture, and related support organizations.

The rest included a smattering of academics, people from church organi-



Gretchen Donart

zations, and foundation administrators. Nor were there, despite the endorsements from several unions, more than a handful of labor representatives.

Precisely what drew the participants is harder to determine than their origins or occupations. John Naisbitt, vice president of the market research firm of Skelly, Yankelovich, and White, and publisher of the *Trend Report* (a newsletter on public opinion based on content analyses of about 200 local newspapers), told the conferees that they represented the "radical center," by which he appeared to mean that despite the criticisms they may have of federal antipoverty programs and their strong desire for substantial change, they were not prepared to support either Reagan's supply-side solutions or a Kennedyesque Democratic program.

Bob Friedman, president of CfED, remarked that the conference participants probably shared the feeling that federal programs had been "spending on the poor, rather than investing in the poor."

## Investing in Poor People

Investing in poor people, he explained in discussing the thinking behind

the conference, would mean finding new ways to locate businesses in low-income communities, and even more important, finding ways that poor people themselves can participate in creating and owning these businesses. The common search for these means, Friedman thought, had brought people together on a new political and programmatic ground where the old categories of left and right lost a lot of their meaning.

Throughout the conference, attention was drawn to several cases of successful community-based enterprise development, one of the most notable of which was the case of the Westside Community Development Corporation in San Bernardino, California. Valerie Pope Ludlum, executive director of the Westside CDC, described how a group of poor black women had successfully combined their entrepreneurial instincts and a commitment to community improvement.

In the early 1970s, she recounted, a group of black women active in the local Welfare Rights Organization began to sense the limits of the welfare rights strategy. Even full benefits, they realized, would never bring long-term changes—jobs for their children, or improved hous-

ing and community facilities. Shifting strategies, they formed the Westside CDC and successfully negotiated a contract with the Veterans Administration to act as property managers for 42 vacant houses in the California Gardens section of the neighborhood. At the same time, they sought and received funds under the old federal Neighborhood Youth Corps to employ and train young people to rehabilitate the homes for resale. Concurrent with the rehab project the CDC organized a Homeowners Association to support the project and to start other neighborhood improvements. Today, says Ludlum, California Gardens is a stable enclave in the Westside made up of predominantly black middle income homeowners in houses with market values in excess of \$50,000.

The California Gardens project initiated what has become a stream of successful programs that continues to include housing rehabilitation, and has branched out into solar collector manufacture, a vocational high school, and plans for a full-scale industrial park. Ludlum boasted that if "Reagan will just let us hold onto CETA for another year, we'll start sending money back to him."

The problem of creating more Westside CDCs was treated in the conference as part of the general problem of starting small businesses. A background paper prepared for the conference stated that "The opportunity to produce is determined in large part by the ability to form new businesses." Undeterred by the ups and downs of the economy, more and more people have been going into business for themselves, the paper reported. Between 1974 and 1979 the annual rate of new business formation jumped by 63 percent.

But it is hard to count on small businesses as a source of jobs when they disappear almost as fast as they appear. According to one estimate, 60 percent fail within five years and 90 percent within 10 years of formation. Several sessions on the first day discussed the reasons why so many wash out, and in general reached the same conclusions others have: they fail because of some combination of lack of capital and poor management.

Speakers and workshop participants were charged with coming up with proposals for public policies that could deal with these two problems, and with the further problem of targeting new growth

to poor communities, both in cities and rural areas.

Perhaps a handful were truly novel and deserve much wider circulation and discussion. A workshop on plant closings, for example, proposed that states and communities follow a business development strategy within their borders based on "import substitution." Preference would be given to firms that produce goods that are currently "imported" from outside the city or state. This would not only add to tax revenues and jobs, but would stimulate other businesses by keeping dollars recirculating in the local economy for a longer period. The same workshop also proposed enactment of a "conglomerate merger tax," with revenues to be earmarked for return to communities faced with plant closings and layoffs.

*“But it is hard to count on small businesses as a source of jobs when they disappear almost as fast as they appear. . . . Sixty percent of new businesses fail within five years and 90 percent within 10 years of formation.”*

Organizers of the conference praised it, but a few people were less sanguine about it and the significance of the proposals. One woman who works for an urban development organization noted that "there are really two economies in the U.S., the national/international economy, and the local economy." The first, she said, is made up of large corporations and multinationals, the second, of firms that operate in much more localized economies. "This conference," she said, "is only about the second."

Friedman himself allowed that one of the conference's limitations was its "failure to stress the systemic nature of the problem." "Putting all the stress on the local level," he said, "suggests that the solutions are also at the local level."

Another, and in some ways more serious criticism, came from John Alschuler, now head of the Hartford Policy Center, but formerly assistant city manager of that city and ally of Nick Car-

bone in his days as City Council President. Commenting on the assumptions underlying the conference's emphasis on policies for targeted enterprise development, Alschuler stressed that "talk about economic and structural reform without a political ideology to guide it is questionable at best."

The conference did score some notable successes. Undeniably Friedman and Parrish assembled a list of co-sponsors with unique political breadth. And in some ways they put on a conference that signaled a potentially significant departure in both analysis and proposals from past federal programs to deal with poverty and unemployment. It successfully mixed the experience of several successful community-based businesses, the current fascination with the job generation potential of small business, and the growing questioning of social programs on the left as well as on the right.

Aside from attacks on the general problem of bigness in government and business, the conference held almost resolutely to a technical level of discussion when it talked about programs and policy, a decision which may be both the key to its success, and the source of its greatest weakness. People who were willing to gather on this new ground of targeted enterprise development, in Friedman's phrase, may have come out of an interest in talking with others and looking for solutions to problems they are immersed in—running a community organization, holding on to a job training program, devising new financing schemes for energy conservation, and so forth.

But as a group, and as a potential coalition, they may show much less unanimity when the talk turns to implementing these policy proposals. Without the broader "systemic" analysis that Friedman spoke of, including specific critiques of social and economic conditions and a clear statement of the extent to which government is a legitimate vehicle for reform, the group is in danger of splintering as the memory of the conference fades into the background. Without a stronger ideological glue, the CfED conference is likely to be remembered more for its remarkable co-sponsors list than for what it contributed to political and economic change. ■

*Richard Mounts writes on energy policy and is a member of the D.C.-Md. DSOC local.*

# New Faces, New Titles

By Jo-Ann Mort

**T**HE FINISH OF THE FIFTH DSOC National Convention ushered in a new era of staff changes and reorganization at the DSOC National Office, with newly elected political director, Ben Tafoya, incoming field organizer, Penny Schantz, and the new positions of organizational director and special projects director to be filled by Selma Lenihan and Frank Llewellyn.

For the past two years, Ben Tafoya has been the public affairs director of Advocates for Children, a New York City children's rights advocacy organization. He holds a B.A. in economics from Georgetown University, where he founded a college DSOC chapter and was active in the Washington, D.C. local, where he spent six months as that local's staff organizer. Tafoya served on the Youth Section Steering Committee for two years. Since moving to New York, he has been active in the New York local, recently organizing a Queens borough branch. In Queens he is active in Democratic party work, is a member of Community Board #3, and most important, spends Saturday mornings coaching a Little League team.

Tafoya, who begins his new job just as DEMOCRATIC AGENDA is being reconstituted, cites our spearheading of DEMOCRATIC AGENDA in the Democratic party as a top priority. "We need to put our coalition work on a firmer footing by institutionalizing DEMOCRATIC AGENDA on a local, regional, and national basis."

Tafoya's other goals for his administration include helping locals relate better to national projects; strengthening the Youth Section; and working with the organizational director to ensure that resources are directed to specific priority areas such as the further development and sustenance of the commissions.

## Field Organizer

Penny Schantz will be, in essence, filling two positions: those of Youth Section organizer and general local organ-

izer. Her experience suits her to that combined task. She's been active in DSOC for four years, organizing two chapters combining college youth with the community, in Ithaca, N.Y., and Madison, Wisc. Recently, she's been serving as co-chair of the Midwest region of DSOC and has been active in Madison as part of Democratic Socialist Alliance, a combined DSOC-NAM organization. She has worked for three unions—the UAW, National Association for Broadcast Employees and Technicians, and the Allied Industrial Workers — and been president of the Madison American Federation of Teachers Local 320, comprised of 1000 teaching assistants. She holds an undergraduate degree in industrial labor relations from Cornell and a graduate degree in the same field from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

## On the Home Front

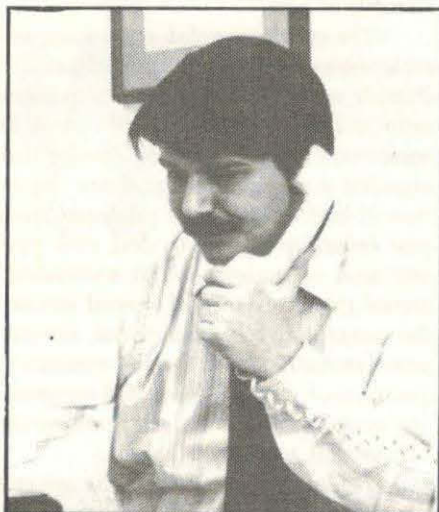
Selma Lenihan is no stranger to the National Office, having worked there since 1974. As organizational director, her role will expand from handling Mike Harrington's scheduling and all of the office duties to holding full responsibility for functioning of the National Office. This shift splits leadership in the office between the political director and the organizational director.

"This new set-up will allow both Ben and me to have more control over our domains in the office. Consequently, we'll be able to accomplish much more than what has been accomplished before," Lenihan remarked.

In the new position of special projects director, Frank Llewellyn, who has been with DSOC almost since the beginning, will devote more time to fund raising projects, conferences, and other political activities.

With the new arrangements, National Office staff hope to be able to respond more quickly to the needs of the field and expand their areas of service. ■

*Jo-Ann Mort is vice-chair of the New York City Local.*



Agnes Zellin



Gretchen Donart

From top to bottom: Ben Tafoya, Selma Lenihan, Frank Llewellyn.

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# ON THE LEFT

By Harry Fleischman

**C**ALIFORNIA—DR. GUILLERMO UNGO, PRESIDENT OF the Democratic Revolutionary Front of El Salvador and a Vice President of the Socialist International, spoke on "Non-Intervention in El Salvador" at an Oakland meeting sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom with DSOC help. . . . San Diego members Trudy Robideau and Greg Akili work with the United Domestic Workers of America which recently made history by signing its first union contract for 2,300 workers in San Diego County.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA—More than a hundred delegates attended the first annual convention of the DC/Maryland local of DSOC recently. Councilwoman Hilda Mason outlined a progressive legislative strategy, opposing right-wing attempts to undermine the public schools, and proposed an initiative to allow tax credits for money spent sending children to public schools. In her speech Ruth Jordan described the rapid growth of DSOC since its 1973 founding, and urged delegates not to become divided over matters of style and strategy. The convention considered scheduling a city-wide conference, modeled on the DEMOCRATIC AGENDA, and running a candidate for D.C. School Board in November 1981 and for D.C. City Council in 1982.

ILLINOIS—Chicago DSOC is working with the Illinois Coalition Against Reagan Economics (ICARE) and joined a lobby for Jobs and Justice in Springfield May 13. The lobby focused on plant closing legislation, workers' compensation and unemployment insurance and so-called "right to work" (which the legislature defeated handily).

MARYLAND—The mid-Atlantic Region of DSOC holds its Fourth Annual Retreat June 26-28 at Claggett Center, Buckeystown, Md. 21717. For more info, contact Marjorie Hickman, 2708 Fairhaven Ave., Alexandria, Va. 22303, (707) 768-0773. . . . A new local has just been organized in Columbia, Md. and celebrated May Day with a happy songfest.

MISSISSIPPI—At the Southern DSOC-NAM conference in April in Tennessee, a joint newsletter, *Behind the Cotton Curtain*, was started. For a free single copy, write South Mississippi NAM, P.O. Box 5479, Kreole, Moss Point, Miss. 39563. A year's sub is \$5.

MISSOURI—St. Louis DSOC has been picketing and leafleting

in support of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers boycott of Faberge.

OHIO—The U.S. has "thrown away an exhausted liberalism to embrace a fantasy conservatism," said Mike Harrington at Cleveland State University last month. The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* gave extensive coverage to his talk. . . . UAW organizer and DSOC leader Carl Shier made the main speech at the Grand Lake Labor Council's dinner in Celina, Ohio. Noting that Walter Reuther in 1949 had unsuccessfully urged the auto companies to downsize their cars and get rid of gas guzzlers, Shier called the major oil companies "crooked and unpatriotic" with loyalty only to "profits." They are "buying coal and copper companies and buying into the solar industry" with profits gleaned from the decontrol of oil, plus "buying department stores like Montgomery Ward, and supermarket chains that are milking the consumer and causing stagflation."

VERMONT—Mary Mitchell Miller, Weston, goes on WVPR's Public Access regularly to inform women on legislation affecting them. She heads LAW (Let's Alert Women). . . . Bob Lancot, St. Johnsbury and Bill Kemsley, Sr., Bellows Falls, spoke on "Unions in our Society" recently at high schools in Concord and Hinesburg. . . . Greg Bolosky, Westminster West, was elected to represent that town on the Windham County Regional Planning Commission.



Gretchen Donart

We mourn the passing of DSOC member Stanley Plastrik, a pillar of strength on the editorial board of *Dissent* magazine from its inception, and one who always managed its affairs. In addition, he was one of the top experts on European and Indian socialism. After World War II, he studied at the Sorbonne on the GI Bill, and maintained close relations with French and other European socialists throughout the years. He had a particular interest in India, visited there frequently and was intimate with J. P. Narayan and other leading Socialists and intellectuals in that vast subcontinent.

The annual national Debs-Thomas dinner in New York in May honored District 1199's Bread and Roses Project. Speakers and honorees gathered on the platform are, l. to r., John Sweeney, president, Service Employees International Union; Moe Foner, director, Bread and Roses project and executive secretary, 1199; Joyce Miller, president, Coalition of Labor Union Women; Leon Davis, president, 1199; Jacob Sheinkman, secretary-treasurer, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; and Michael Harrington, chair, DSOC.

# WHAT'S LEFT TO READ

By Ron Radosh

Burnett Bolloten, *The Spanish Revolution: The Left and the Struggle for Power during the Civil War* (Chapel Hill, N.C.; U. of North Carolina Press, 1979); 664 pp; paper.

Fernando Claudin, *The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform, Vol. I* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975); 304 pp.; \$5.95 paper.

**I**N HIS LETTER TO THE EDITOR, (P. 2) BROTHER ALBERT Prago raises serious questions about the past—questions with political ramifications for our own era. The issue here is particularly sensitive, when we realize that men like Al Prago fought valiantly and bravely in what they understood to be an unsullied cause—the effort to stop fascism in its tracks as volunteers fighting to save the Spanish Republic. My own uncle, Irving Keith, was a commissar with the Lincoln Battalion and was killed in battle, and I grew up filled with the lore of the Brigade, educated to appreciate their heroism and sacrifice.

But such personal history does not mean that one should not take fresh looks at the past, when the passing of time and new research and scholarship allow us to gain new perspective—even if the lessons learned challenge our most cherished old preconceptions. Understanding of the Soviet role in Spain, fortunately, is now available from the majestic study, recently released in paperback, written by Burnett Bolloten, who as a journalist, covered the Civil War. The result of forty years of research and inquiry, his book allows us to lay to rest many of the myths surrounding that struggle.

Bolloten begins by establishing that by the time of the Franco rebellion, a truly authentic and spontaneous revolution from below had taken place in Spain. Others have made that estimate, but Bolloten proves its validity from many sources. He notes that direct workers' control was established as factory workers took over their factories; that peasants seized, collectivized and nationalized the land of large landowners, and even that of middle sized land-owning peasants. A revolutionary fervor had overtaken Spain. For Stalin, Bolloten points out, this revolution came at "an awkward time. . . . Stalin was seeking to appeal to moderate opinion in the West, while at the same time trying not to appear to desert the revolution movement in Spain."

Stalin, he reveals, made a decision to intervene with military aid relatively late in the war, and in reality pursued a policy of "cautious military intervention." The first Soviet tanks, airplanes and artillery did not reach Spain until October and November of 1936; they were no match for the equipment used by Franco, and the hardware was accompanied by a corps of Soviet military advisers and intelligence operatives, whose role was that of political interference.

Fearing involvement in a war with Italy and Germany, Bolloten writes, "Russia limited her aid to bolstering the resistance of the anti-Franco forces until such time as Britain and France, faced by the threat to their interests in the Mediterranean . . . might be induced to abandon the policy of non-intervention." And Stalin was most careful "not to throw his influence on the side of the left wing of the Revolution," since

such a step would have revived fears among the very classes the Comintern was seeking to influence. Thus the Comintern sought to "minimize and even conceal from the outside world the profound revolution that had taken place in Spain by defining the struggle . . . as one for the defense of the democratic Republic."

Stalin sought to steer internal developments within the Spanish Republic to coincide with his foreign policy objectives. Much of the Soviet "aid" thus took the form of attempts—unfortunately somewhat successful—to liquidate and purge the anti-Stalinist left in Spain. And Spanish CP leaders, Bolloten writes, "executed the directives of the Kremlin without apparent hesitation even though those directives meant antagonizing irreversibly other parties of the left and eventually undermining the war effort and the will to fight."

Is Bolloten's analysis too unfair to the Spanish Communists? Fernando Claudin, a young Communist leader in Spain in 1933, and until his expulsion from the leadership of the Spanish CP in 1965, a top CP functionary, confirms it.

Since Soviet aid was dictated by the desire to gain an alliance with Britain and France, Claudin notes, Stalin's agents in Spain sought to make sure that the Spanish proletariat and left went no further than was acceptable to the British and French bourgeoisie. *Soviet aid, thus, was directly related to Soviet motives.* Comintern military aid, Claudin explains, "was placed at the service of two main political aims: offering military resistance to the rebels and ensuring the triumph of bourgeois democracy." Such a course, Stalin thought, would be acceptable to the Western democracies.

The thorn in Stalin's side was that a revolution had taken place in Spain. Soviet aid finally worked to dampen the revolutionary fighting enthusiasm of the Spanish people. Instead of affirming and furthering the socialist content of a revolution in progress, Soviet advisers counseled moderation—a political retreat that only weakened morale. The military aid given Spain by the U.S.S.R. was woefully inadequate and was geared to reinforcing the political hegemony of reformist forces that sought a compromise with the fascist enemy. Claudin writes:

The stifling of the revolution and the dependence to which the Republic was forced to submit were not even compensated by military aid at least equivalent to that which Franco's generals received from Germany and Italy, although the Soviet arms had been paid for in advance . . . by the gold of the Bank of Spain.

The truth, Claudin concludes, was that Stalin "could not, without altering his international strategy, help the Spanish republic to a greater degree than was compatible with his policy of alliances with Western democracies. And the latter did not accept at all that Soviet help should give a military advantage to the Republic." Stalin, the former CP leader writes, "helped the Spanish republic in order that it might prolong its existence and arrive at a compromise solution acceptable to the 'Western democracies,' . . . and not in order that it might win."

Revolution was sacrificed to Soviet *raison d'état*—not for the last time—a policy of cynicism and defeat that is in reality a far cry from encouragement to a long and heroic resistance.

# JIMMY HIGGINS REPORTS



**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**—In case you were wondering what happened to the French participants in last December's Institute for Democratic Socialism Eurosociology conference, they are now governing France. Keynoteur François Mitterrand is President, Jacques Attali is his special assistant; Nicole Questiaux is Minister of State for National Solidarity (Social Welfare Programs); Michel Rocard is Minister of State for Planning and Regional Development; Edith Cresson (last-minute stand-in for Jacques Delors, Minister of Economy and Finance) is Minister of Agriculture.

**AND THAT'S WHAT MADE AMERICA GREAT. OR RUSSIA?** Get behind the doubletalk of supply-side economics. Look beyond the President's praise of the common people, and you will find the same old "coddle the rich" reaction guiding this administration as it guided Calvin Coolidge. Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan made that sentiment explicit in his April 8 testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee. Representative Pat Williams (D-Montana) crossed swords with Donovan on the Reagan economic program; soon they were debating what the American Dream is all about. Williams disagreed with Donovan's statement that new machines and increased capital formation made America great and offered the opinion that those things made a few Americans rich. "It was when the public began to demand the distribution of wealth, and the federal government stepped in to do it that this country became not only rich but great." Donovan disagreed and stressed that redistribution sapped incentive. Williams later said: "We ought to have capital formation in this country in a way that the wealth that emanates from that enormous productivity is shared. . . ." Secretary Donovan: "By the stockholders." Mr. Williams (continuing): ". . . with some equality across all the people in this land. That is what America is all about." Secretary Donovan: "No, that's what Russia is all about."

**SOME COMMON SENSE** on the New Right comes from the AFL-CIO's *Memo from COPE*. An April 20 article from labor's leading political action committee "does the unthinkable. It defends the record of the new right PACs." Taking on

the Establishment media and their nitpicking about how much of the New Right money goes for overhead and fundraising, COPE says that such critics miss the point. Some New Right luminaries have found a way to make a living off the movement they've spawned, but quoth COPE, "Why shouldn't they? They built it. And the important thing is that they did *build* something. A lot of us might not like what they built, but it's there, anyway, and they put it together practically from scratch. The Goldwater right-wing movement of the early 1960s didn't begin to approach this one in effectiveness. Nor in staying power." The clear message for labor and its friends: go therefore and do likewise. The apolitical tongue cluckers from the Mugwump middle who wish that movements would just go away are part of the problem. A genuine popular movement, using some of the techniques of the New Right to beat the New Right, is needed. And when we've built it, be ready for some of the same complaints from the same quarters.

**HERE AND THERE**—For years, conservatives have hit left-liberals as naive, other-worldly, unsophisticated souls who both misunderstood and tried to change basic human nature. Unlike those tough-minded right-wingers who understand how the world really works. Well, in some departments, anyway. Frosh Senator Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.) raised some eyebrows when he called for the death penalty for adultery (one way to clean out Washington, as several wags joked). He's now been joined by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) in sponsoring a \$30 million federal program to discourage promiscuity (defined as having sex out of wedlock). The bill would also outlaw federal funds for groups like Planned Parenthood which provide counseling on abortion. It's almost humorous in its naive approach except for the hard consequences of ignoring the way the world really works. . . . There's not even a touch of humor in Phyllis Schlafly's latest campaign. She testified before Congress recently on the very serious subject of sexual harassment in the workplace. Her message very simply is that nice girls don't encounter that sort of thing. Or the victim got what she deserved. This from the person who's claimed that the Equal Rights Amendment would harm women's special status. Legal equality represents a real threat, but unwanted advances made from a position of power don't. Orwell has a word for it: doublethink.

## DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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