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LETTERS

Mixed Review

To the Editor:

The enclosed \$8 is for renewal. Harry Boyte's article (January) did what none of your other articles have done for me: given me a "feel" for socialist philosophy. Harry Fleischman's dig at *In These Times* for their broad coverage of Citizen Party races is—flat out—stupid. It's akin to one union criticizing another for getting a good contract.

Richard Virdone
Littleton, N.H.

A Plague on Papistry?

To the Editor:

I would like you to know how disturbed I was by Joe Holland's article in the November-December issue.

I recognize that DSA is a "multi-tendency" organization, and given the current state of the American Left this is no doubt desirable. However, we must stand for something, and I did not appreciate reading a paean to the Roman Catholic Church in our official organ.

For me, philosophical materialism is an absolutely essential ingredient of socialist theory, and it should inform socialist practice as well. It is materialism, relying upon empirical evidence to establish its goals and methods, which distinguishes scientific socialism from pie in the sky utopian socialism based upon unprovable assumptions concerning

"God," "Spirit," and other superstitions connected with religion.

The materialism/idealism question aside, do we really want to support an organization which excludes women from its leadership, prevents members from having abortions, and perhaps worst of all, forbids the practice of birth control, thus causing untold suffering in large families in poor third world countries like those Mr. Holland writes about? I don't think so, and I hope I do not read another article in DEMOCRATIC LEFT portraying the Roman Catholic Church in such a favorable light.

Jeffrey Hawk
Mercerville, N.J.

Joe Holland replies: Materialism versus idealism is a polarization which is misguided at both extremes. An idealism or spirituality which is uprooted from this world is dangerous indeed. But so too is a materialism which has lost the spiritual energy which lives in and through matter. It was classical Greek philosophers who separated the two and put them into opposition. It was the pre-modern tragedy of Western Christianity that it built its whole religious thrust on this false dichotomy and created an uprooted spirituality. But it was the modern tragedy of the socialist tradition not to return to the pre-socratic sense of holism, but rather simply to shift sides....

I don't want to enter into a quarrel over

this or that teaching of the church, but rather deal with your outright rejection. I suspect not many members of DSA would make such a rejection in such explicit terms, but I also suspect that a more diluted and hidden statement would be fairly common. It has often been remarked that anti-Catholicism is the anti-Semitism of the intelligentsia.

Catholicism has many, many problems, about which I could probably write much longer and more eloquently than you. But it has also carried a genius for understanding popular culture, which unfortunately the Left often does not. Something very new and powerful is happening among the poorer nations where the Catholic Church is strong. This Catholic awakening in the Third World will have a powerful influence on the next stage of civilization. By the end of this century, approximately 80 percent of the world's Catholics will live in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The church they create will be very different indeed.

Catholicism was around for a long time before socialism, and I suspect it will be around for a long time after socialism. But in the interim, there could be some fruitful interaction, if both sides are not too dogmatic.

God bless you, Mr. Hawk!

New York Conscience

To the Editor:

Thanks for your coverage of our March 25 supper honoring New York City Councilmember Ruth Messinger (On the Left, February 1983). She has indeed been the tireless Conscience of New York.

I'd like to correct one inadvertent impression that the item gave. New York City DSA publishes the *New York Democratic Socialist*. It is of course our comrades to the north, the Westchester County DSA, who publish the *Westchester Socialist*.

Gretchen Donart
Editor, NY Democratic Socialist

P.S. We still have tickets available to the supper. Mike Harrington and Representative Major Owens are among the speakers, with entertainment by Holly Near and Danny Kalb. Readers can call us at (212) 260-3270 for tickets and info.

Thomas Centennial

To the Editor:

For a documentary film about Norman Thomas, to be produced for the centennial of his birth, November 20, 1984, I would appreciate films, videotapes, recordings, photos, illustrations and reminiscences.

Harry Fleischman
11 Wedgewood Lane, Wantagh, N.Y. 11793

DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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STANDING UP FOR MARX

by Michael Harrington

On March 13, 1883, Karl Marx died in his sleep after a long, lingering illness. So one hundred years later, why not let him remain dead and buried?

After all, he has been more abused by his proclaimed disciples than by his open enemies, to the point that the former sometimes agree with the latter that he was indeed a simple-minded determinist and a principled totalitarian. If Joseph Stalin and J. Edgar Hoover could cooperate so effectively in dishonoring his memory, why bother with him on this centenary of his death? Microbiologists do not go around calling themselves "Darwinists"; why should a democratic socialist take up the burden of misunderstanding, of calumny and contempt, that goes with the term, "Marxist"?

Because Marx remains a Himalaya of the human spirit, a fallible man who made some astounding mistakes, a towering man who still teaches, not truths chiseled in marble, but a way of thinking that allows lesser folk to stand on his shoulders and see farther than he did. Because the analysis of society is inextricably bound up with values in a way that the natural sciences (which are far from being "value-free") are not. Because if Marx was not the discoverer of the socialist truth, if Marxism is but one of the ways to come to socialism, every socialist movement must learn from Marx and Marxism because Marx identified socialism with the actual workers movement, warts and all.

First, though, a few words about some of the most commonplace lies told of this man.

Myths and Mistakes

Marx did not for a moment hold that the economic, and particularly, the technological, "determine" politics and culture. Indeed, *Das Kapital*, his masterpiece, is a four volume polemic against the notion that capital is a thing, be it money, a factory or whatever. It is a sustained and profound analysis that capital is a relationship, the way in which money or factories are used. He despised the notion that the artistic "superstructure" is reducible to the material "base." In fact, his favorite novelist, Balzac, was a reactionary, feudalist royalist who, Marx thought, understood more about the historic rise of capitalism than almost any socialist.

KARL MARX
b. Trier, 1818
d. London, 1883

When asked if I'm a marxist

*I reach for the receiver every day
dial and talk*

*how different my life would be
if the telephone had not yet been in-
vented*

*how much harder living here
for the woman from greece
when she goes to the train station on
sundays*

*You didn't ask me
if I'm a bellist*

*and out of respect for alexander g bell
without whom we would be worse off
even worse off imagine*

I don't name myself after him

*Nor after the great inventor
from trier*

—Dorothee Soelle

Karel Kosik, the Czech Marxist, has put it well. For Marx, a medieval cathedral does not merely "express" feudalism; it creates feudalism as well. The economic, Kosik wrote, functions in Marxism like the God of Deist philosophy: as an indispensable first cause which therefore remains implicated in all that comes after. It sets in motion secondary causes that have their own effect, sometimes upon the first cause. Or, as Antonio Gramsci put it, the meaning of social class is different in every country because every country has a different political and social history that shapes its class relations in a distinct way.

And secondly, Marx was not a totalitarian but an impassioned advocate of freedom. From the youthful *Theses on Ludwig Feuerbach*, where he scornfully rejected all top-down schemes to tutor the people in proper socialist values—who, he asked, will educate the educator?—to his inaugural address to the International Workingmen's Association in 1864, he insisted that the "task of the

emancipation of the working class is the task of the workers alone." On one of the handful of occasions that he used the miserable phrase, "dictatorship of the proletariat," he made it clear that he was not using it in our sense of the word. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat, he wrote in his analysis of the Paris Commune, all officials would be paid the same wage as workers and would be permanently subject to recall by the constituencies that placed them in office.

Sometimes, of course, he was purely and simply wrong. In 1848, he mistook the rise of capitalism for its collapse. He never understood the power of nationalism. With the exception of his writings on Ireland, his concept of imperialism (and for seventy years that of every Marxist after him, including Lenin) was soft on capitalism, thinking that it would actually develop the Third World.

Rich Legacy

What, then were his accomplishments? Simply to have rigorously thought through the economic, social, and political preconditions of human emancipation and thereby to have made of socialism not a dream but a possibility linked to the class struggle. He developed a self-critical method that allows the Marxist, as Lukacs once said, to disagree with any, or every, specific judgment of Karl Marx and to remain a Marxist. He insisted, from the time he first became a Marxist in 1844-5 to his death in 1883, that socialism would be the self-creation of the masses.

But in a brief article one can only hint at the profound complexity of his thought. Perhaps a few examples, surprising to some, may at least evoke that quality.

The young Marx learned his feminism from Fourier (who probably coined the term itself). The relation of man to woman, Marx wrote in the Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, allows one "to judge the entire cultural development of humanity." It is the most revealing relationship. It can present the spectacle of "infinite degradation" when woman is the prey of lust, but sexual and romantic love also presents the image of socialism itself "in so far as the needs of humans become human needs, and an other human as a human is a need, in so far as we, in our most individual being, are at the same time communitarian beings." The older

Marx may not have spoken this way, but he still thought this way.

Secondly, as Jean-Yves Calvez, one of the first of the recent Christian interpreters of Marx understood, Marx was not an atheist. Insofar as atheism continued to exist, he thought, there would be class society. But when human life and fate were no longer determined by social class, when people died from natural causes, not from starvation or inadequate medical care, then the religious question would disappear. There would be neither God nor No God. Therefore, as the Protestant theologian, Helmut Gollwitzer, has written, Marx (and Engels) had contempt for those village atheists who attacked religion. They defended the rights of Catholics against Bismarck's repression. I—and other, much more profound Marxists like Labriola and Ernst Bloch—think Marx was utterly wrong in his expectation. In the good society, where women and men die not because of injustice, but because of the inherent mortality of the human condition, religion might not simply survive, it could even flourish.

There is another critical point. Marx did not believe that the ideal socialist society (which he called "communism," a vision unrelated to what the world today calls Communism) would treat everyone in the same way. Individuals, he said, are physically and spiritually not equal. To treat them as if they were is to reduce them to some simple measure which denies their human complexity. So, he wrote, in the communist future, society will inscribe upon its banner "From each according to their capacities, to each according to their needs!"

Marx, then, is more complex, more rich than is normally imagined. Still, why bother? To call oneself a Marxist in this country is to invite trouble. Why do it?

After all, that old Second Internationalist-Leninist conception of Marxism as an integral and total whole is obsolete and reactionary. Engel's view of natural science, for instance, is a last gasp of a nineteenth century scientism that survived neither Einstein



The Marxist Tradition
What's Left?
See p. 11

nor Max Planck. The notion of a Marxist party that takes official positions on metaphysical and religious questions—indeed, which presents itself as a counterreligion—appears scientifically designed to drive masses of people away from the movement. These "Marxisms" are dangerous rubbish and should be denounced as such.

But when all this is said, Karl Marx is

the greatest socialist thinker who ever lived, a man deeply committed to freedom, the author and practitioner of a profound and self-critical method. I defend him, I honor and identify with him. His way of looking at reality is not perfection, but it is the best we have, the best we are likely ever to have. On the second centenary of his death, may articles like this be utterly unnecessary. ●

Reflections of a Socialist Mayor

by Mike Rotkin

The socialist left in the United States has very little experience in actually exercising political power. The few socialists who have won elected office usually are part of the opposition in governments dominated by hostile majorities. The city of Santa Cruz, California, with its second DSA mayor, Bruce Van Allen, is an interesting exception. Because both Bruce and I have served as mayors on a city council with a progressive majority, we have had the rare opportunity to confront some questions about socialists in power.

As many socialist parties in Europe have discovered, it is often easier to oppose existing conditions than be responsible for changing them. Santa Cruz still exists within the capitalist world and most of our important resources and institutions continue to be controlled by private individuals or corporations and not the community as a whole. As a result, many of the crises we face—housing shortages and rising rents, unemployment, runaway growth and traffic, crime, inadequate health care, limited social services and the like—cannot be "solved" by even the best of city councils. On the other hand, if all we offer our citizens is an analysis of the way in which the broader capitalist system creates their problems, they will justifiably wonder why we ran for office in the first place.

Bucking the Tide

We are still relatively new to the process, but we can at least share some of what our experience of being "in power" has taught us. First, it is possible to fund needed social programs by changing priorities at city hall. Santa Cruz was one of the very few cities in California to increase social service spending last year. In fact, we doubled our expenditures in this area when we funded programs for child care, youth services, sen-

ior nutrition, neighborhood and women's health care, housing rehabilitation, legal aid, recreation, and the arts. We also funded a new commission to develop programs for the prevention of violence against women.

We did this not by raising taxes (an impossibility under Proposition 13), but by a combination of reducing unnecessary capital outlays (office supplies, etc.), cutting a number of vacant management positions (especially desk jockeys in the police department), and increasing city revenues. This latter area, which will become increasingly important in the future, requires the city government to break out of its traditional primary role as a servant of business. Our city is now developing new programs to rent beach equipment, expand the municipal wharf, develop low-income housing, sell home insurance, share in the profits of cable television and lease city land to business. By competing with the private sector in areas where the city can provide better and/or less expensive services, the city can serve citizens directly while making money to subsidize other city operations. In a number of areas we shifted the cost of operations previously paid for by all taxpayers to business assessment districts. Why should our citizens pay taxes to clean up all of the problems in society while the private sector makes all of the profits?

At the same time, we avoided rhetorical or abstract hostility to local business. Although we are unlikely to win general support from the local Chamber of Commerce, we have worked closely with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to increase tourism and in many ways to improve the business climate of our downtown mall.

Despite our success at funding new social programs in a time of decreasing tax revenues, we continue to face severe problems in many areas and we have used the council as a forum for indicting the Reagan

administration for mispending our national wealth on military boondoggles like the MX missile system and adventures in Central America. For example, we let senior groups know why their funding was less than requested and urged their involvement in groups attacking current national priorities.

As democratic socialists, we have felt a real responsibility to open local government to greater citizen participation. Changes like increased public hearings, open office hours, responding to all calls and letters, scheduling particular agenda items at the convenience of grassroots groups, and not postponing decisions, but making them in front of the concerned public have helped show Santa Cruz residents that they control the city council and not the reverse. Because our long-range goal is an active citizenry willing to and capable of controlling their own society, we make every effort to accommodate citizen groups seeking council support on a wide variety of issues.

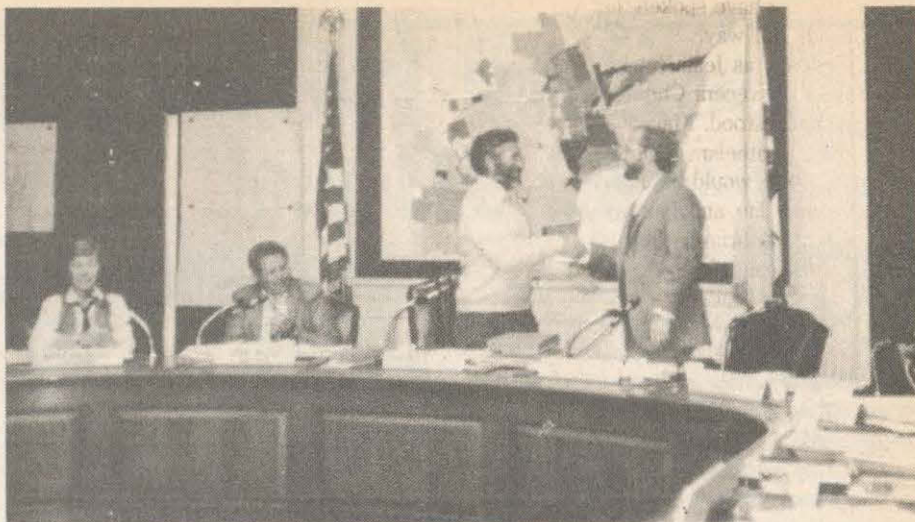
Extending Democracy

Simultaneously, city staff have begun to develop new working relationships with citizen groups. Rather than simply imposing new programs or developments on residents, the City Planning and Public Works Departments work directly with grassroots neighborhood groups throughout all stages of each project. In one successful case, for example, an environmental group helped the city staff in the Parks and Recreation Department develop an integrated pest management system to reduce the city's use of toxic pesticides and herbicides. In the past such a group might never have gotten beyond protesting city policies. By working directly with citizen groups, city staff learn that they are serving the public, and the public begins to believe that government is not an alien force but an instrument of their own social power.

Once in office, though, we did face the strain of isolation from our constituents. Our continuing contact with the DSA local and with Westside Neighbors, one of the community groups in our coalition, was extremely important in countering that isolation. Because DSA members were involved in so many areas we could keep in touch with what was going on in a variety of constituencies.

Process and Goals

Perhaps our most significant learning experiences have come through the development of coalition politics. Bruce and I were not elected to office *because* we are socialists. We have been consistently open about our commitment to socialism and feminism, but most people voted for us because of our commitment to programs meeting the needs of a broad coalition composed of neighbor-



Mike Rotkin, I., congratulates Bruce Van Allen as the reins of city government change hands.

hood groups, seniors, tenants, minorities, labor, environmentalists, feminists, students, gays and lesbians, peace activists, and progressives in general (not necessarily in that order!).

Although the left in the United States generally accepts the need to build electoral coalitions, I don't believe that we have generally understood either the nature of successful coalitions or their implications for our vision of a democratic socialist society. The coalition we have built in Santa Cruz sinks deep roots into the population of our city. Unlike most coalitions, which are formed from the top down, our work in Santa Cruz, whether with the neighborhood movement, tenant organizing, or feminist issues, began with patient longterm grassroots organizing.

Most people in the U.S. have very little experience with democratic organizations. Whether we are talking about political parties, unions, church groups or civic organizations, we can see a general trend away from direct participation in face-to-face relationships. We believe that our coalition has won political power because it does in fact (and not just in intention) represent a broad cross section of the people in our community. It is simply not enough for socialists to help pull together coalitions; we have a critical role to play in helping build the active membership of the groups that constitute the coalition at the electoral level. All of the progressive and socialist councilmembers in Santa Cruz have had roots in this kind of grassroots organizing. There is simply no substitute for it.

My experience in working with our coalition in Santa Cruz has influenced my conception of socialism as a goal. Democratic leftists certainly reject the Stalinist conception of coalitions as mere "fronts" to be manipulated by the vanguard party with the "correct line." But most of us still imagine

that some day all of the members of a left coalition will "see the light" and our organization will rise to preeminence in the coalition. This view, whether expressed openly by socialists or just manifest in our often arrogant behavior toward grassroots organizers, workers or others who "have not yet risen to our level of sophistication," often leads our partners in coalition to wonder, "What will these socialists do if they really get power?"

We must understand that our goal is not the taking of power by a single monolithic party—no matter how democratic—but the devolution of power to a wide variety of institutions and organizations. The coalitions within which we participate are not merely a means to socialist electoral power. The empowerment of such a coalition as an ongoing proposition is in fact the content of the socialist vision itself.

For instance, a socialist society will still need trade unions and environmental groups, to name only a couple. The partial but real conflicts of such groups within our coalitions today will be lessened but will not disappear simply because resources and institutions have become socialized and are more democratically controlled.

As a socialist mayor I found that the full and open expression of this democratic and participatory vision of socialism created few conflicts between me and the vast majority of nonsocialists in the coalition that elected me to political office. It is a vision that goes back at least to the Paris Commune of 1871. Most significantly, it is a vision that suggests our ends and means are consistent and that the movement we build today will not become the totalitarian nightmare of the future. ●

Mike Rotkin served as mayor of Santa Cruz from 1981-82. He is currently on the city council.

Lonely Battle for Peace

by Jo-Ann Mort

Elazer Granot, born in Jerusalem in 1927, is a fourth-generation Israeli. A poet and politician, he was a commander in battles in Jerusalem and the Negev during Israel's War of Independence. His first wife was murdered in 1955 by infiltrators in the Kibbutz Sasa where they lived. He now lives in Kibbutz Shuval. He has been active in the small socialist party Mapam, serving most recently as its political secretary in 1980-81. In 1981 he was elected to the Israeli Knesset (parliament) from Mapam. During his recent visit to the U.S., Jo-Ann Mort, chair of the New York City DSA, talked with him about Mapam, the peace movement in Israel, and U.S. policies toward Israel. This conversation took place before the resignation of Defense Minister Ariel Sharon.

JM: *Could you briefly explain the history of Mapam?*

EG: Mapam, or the United Workers' party, was established in 1948. The Kibbutz Artzi, the Hashomer Hatzair kibbutz federation, was founded in 1927. In 1946, Hashomer Hatzair formed the Hashomer Hatzair party along with the Socialist League, a group of socialists from the cities. In 1948, this group joined with Achdut Avoda, which split from what was then the Labor party, to form Mapam. Mapam split in 1954 over party relations with the Soviet Union and the debate over whether or not Arabs should be full members of the party and Achdut Avoda returned to Labor. Today, Mapam consists of three parts: 81 kibbutzim with 22,000 members, about the same number in the cities, and about 10,000 Arabs, who are full members. Since 1968 we have been in an alignment with the Labor party, though there is always a call from all sides for splitting the Alignment because we differ on many vital issues. For example, Mapam voted in the Knesset against annexation of the Golan Heights. We also voted against the original 25-mile invasion of Lebanon. Mapam is a consultative member of the Socialist International, not a full member, because Labor won't agree to it.

JM: *Could you talk about the Peace Now movement, which started about the time of Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem?*

EG: Mapam has been part of the peace movement from the beginning. Our mem-



John Cole

Elazer Granot

bers take part in the demonstrations and many are in the leadership. The founders of Peace Now were army officers who decided that they wanted to organize against certain policies of the Israeli government, which, by the way, wasn't the Likud government, but the Labor Alignment government. Although we were in the government, we were with the peace movement. That shows you Mapam's dilemma.

JM: *One of the differences between Peace Now and the U.S. antiwar movement is that Israeli soldiers don't refuse to fight, for the most part.*

EG: Yes, because Israel has got real security problems. As long as the Arabs don't recognize our existence and as long as the Palestinian Covenant calls for the destruction of Israel, we must be part of every war.

JM: *That means that the soldiers fought in Lebanon and then returned to protest?*

EG: This time, we protested before they came back. Our sons went to war and phoned home and said to their parents, "We have to fight, but you have to protest." We on the left can't give the reactionary forces in Israel any claim to the responsibility of security. In fact, we feel ourselves responsible. No matter what, we must go if there is a war, but at the same time we must try to change the government.

JM: *What did the demonstration last fall of 400,000 people protesting in Tel Aviv represent?*

EG: First of all, 400,000 Israelis equals 25 million in this country. Ask yourself, what could 25 million in America accomplish? This is a tremendous force. This was the first time since the establishment of Israel that the Labor party joined a political demonstration. It was a special issue, of course, establishing the Commission of Inquiry. No doubt this government really didn't want the inquiry, but agreed because of the demonstration.

JM: *You have presented your own peace plan, which Mapam has adopted.*

EG: Peace plans are for bargaining. We must concentrate on bringing the parties into negotiation. So we must ask ourselves, what are the obstacles that hinder the way toward negotiations? I see eight such problems. (1) There is not equality between the parties. We have a state and the Palestinians do not. So, we must say that the Palestinians are equal to us. (2) Parties cannot negotiate if they don't recognize each other. Therefore, these negotiations must take place on the basis of mutual recognition. (3) All parties should recognize the sovereignty of all states. (4) There should be no agreed-upon goal of these negotiations. (5) During negotiations, no hostilities should occur. (6) During negotiations, no new settlements should be built on the West Bank. (7) The Israeli government says we are not going to discuss a Palestinian state. The Palestinians say we are going to discuss nothing but a Palestinian state. So, let's say that each party has the right to come to the negotiations with their own peace plan. (8) Begin says he won't speak with Arafat and Hussein says he won't speak with Begin. We say, anybody who accepts the above seven points is a legitimate representative of his party. If Arafat accepts them, then he is legitimate because then it is obvious that the PLO is no longer the PLO.

JM: *What would be the response in Israel if this proposal were presented in a poll?*

EG: Twenty percent immediately would accept it.

JM: *If Arafat accepted the proposal, would that make a difference?*

EG: Absolutely. If there's no response on the Palestinian side to these suggestions, then we are in a spot, then we lose.

JM: *To return to the problem of the West Bank, what are the implications of the recent*

vote by the Histadrut (Israel's labor federation) to employ workers on the West Bank?

EG: Mapam voted against this decision. But, when the government is putting all the resources into the territories, there is a problem. When a young couple wants an apartment, they can live in the territories for one-third of what they have to pay inside Israel. So, they go there and the building goes on there. If Begin continues in office for two and a half more years, there will be 100,000 Jews in the territories. The Histadrut is in a dilemma, because if they don't take the work, someone else will.

JM: *Israel is often criticized by third world countries and people on the left for selling arms to repressive regimes. Ariel Sharon [then Defense Minister] and Itzak Shamir [Foreign Minister] recently traveled to South America and Africa to negotiate arms deals. What is the response inside Israel to this?*

EG: I was the only member of parliament to ask for Sharon's resignation when he went to Honduras. There is opposition to these policies in Israel. Some people say, "Show me democratic countries which will buy our goods. If we can't sell to the good, we will sell to the bad. It's a matter of survival. All countries produce arms and sell to the worst, including the Soviet Union, so why only Israel?" But, we have a problem. We have put Israel as the shining light to the nations. We Israelis have claimed that we are more moral. Our main competition in South Africa, by the way, is Mitterrand's government. While I know that others are hypocrites, attacking us when they do the same thing, I still cannot condone it. I think that Israel does have other things to export. I'm very proud of Israel, you must understand, because even though we make mistakes, I think that Israel is a miracle. But arming fascist and racist regimes is bad when the French, Russians, and Americans do it. So, it can't be good when the Israelis do it.

JM: *Recently, there has been much talk about the tension in Israel between the Ashkenazim [Jews of Eastern European origin] and the Sephardim [Jews from the African and Arab countries]. Would you comment on this?*

EG: When the Sephardim came to Israel in the early 1950s, after the horrible destruction of the war, we, who were only 600,000 in Israel, had to absorb hundreds of thousands of Jews. There were no bad intentions, but we didn't know what to do, so these people were kept in camps. We had no housing for them. They brought their culture, but they didn't bring western technology. We made the mistake of identifying culture with technology. They felt themselves patronized by us. The children of those who were patronized bear this feeling of insult. Begin is trying to say that these mistakes

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were a policy, which is sheer nonsense. He has maneuvered the anger and humiliation of the Sephardim against the labor movement. We've got problems, you see, fighting a demagogue like Begin, in a situation where people were humiliated. The labor movement deserted the streets, factories, and settlements, and left them to Begin. We, the labor movement, are to blame for Begin. Never before has there been such a simple transition from socialism to capitalism! Israel was not a socialist country, but there were important socialist elements in the country and there still are. So, we must educate. For instance, our youth movement, Hashomer Hatzair, concentrates on building new branches in the Sephardic community. Since 1975, we have been accepting youth from these branches into our kibbutzim.

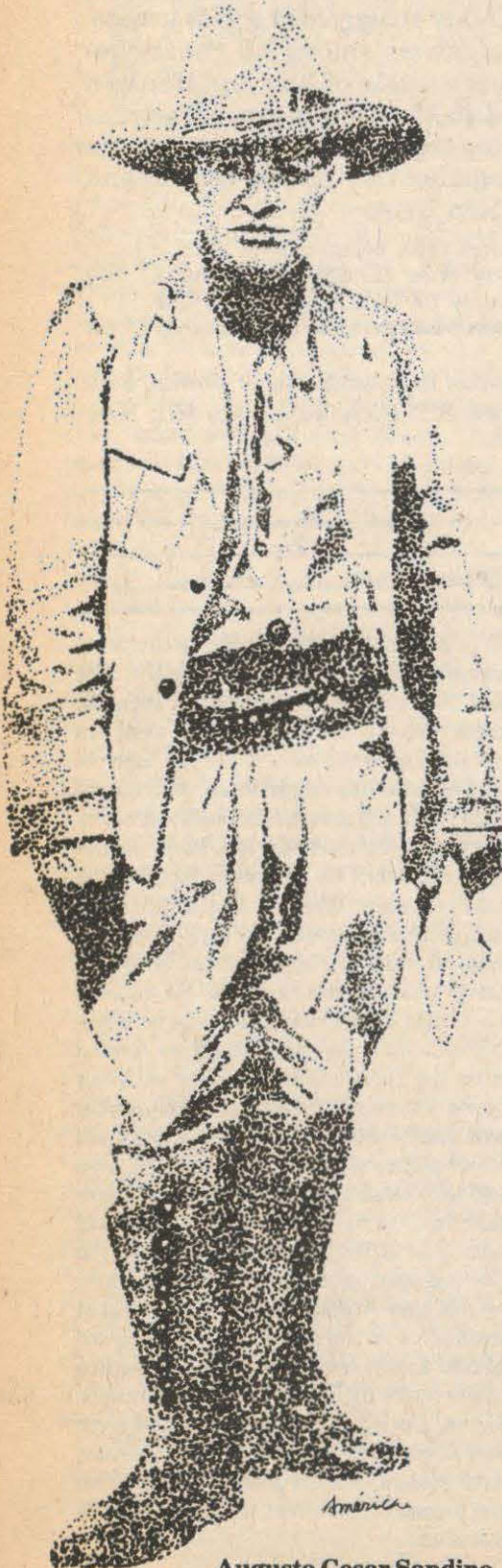
JM: *In the U.S. there has been increasing talk of cutting off military aid to Israel in response to the invasion of Lebanon. What is Mapam's position on this question?*

EG: Mapam is against any economic pressure being placed on the government of Israel from outside. You see, this time the U.S. could force Israel to withdraw from Lebanon, but next time, the U.S. could force Israel to begin a war. I hope you understand what I'm saying. I hope that no one thinks I am for the Begin government, but it is still a democratically elected government. It is for the Israeli people to decide their future. The

U.S. government wouldn't give us one penny unless it were in the interest of the U.S. The fact that the Begin government uses the money the way that it does doesn't mean that we don't need the money. We still have objective problems of existence. Mapam will fight the Begin government on almost everything, but we can't say that Israel doesn't need aid. If the U.S. cuts off aid, Begin will be made stronger. He is the kind of leader who will go to the masses and say, "See, they want to make us hungry so that we will do things which are bad for Israel." He will unite the people behind him. By the way, as socialists, you must say, what should we demand from the Palestinians? We have an Israeli peace movement. Since 1927, Mapam has said that Palestine on both sides of the Jordan River is the common homeland of the Jews and the Palestinians. For 56 years, we have said this, we have fought for this, and paid heavily for it. Where among the Arabs do you find one small group which is willing to take on this kind of fight? Don't you think that at least some of the problems we have in the Middle East is because so little is demanded of the Arabs by the socialist or progressive forces? During these long years, when there was no response from the so-called socialist Arab leaders, we lost ground in Israel. Help and demand of the Arabs the same thing you ask of us.

NICARAGUA

Astonishing Changes



Augusto Cesar Sandino

In January of this year 22 DSA members visited Nicaragua at the invitation of the Sandinista government. Group members came from various parts of the U.S., ranged in age from mid-twenties to mid-fifties, represented differing political points of view, and had experiences with South and Central America ranging from having been born there to never having visited. Their reactions to what they saw may have varied, but all were appalled by the effects of U.S. policy on Nicaragua. The accompanying resolution adopted at the DSA National Board meeting in February reflects their concern. Presented here are two highly personal reactions to the trip.—Eds.

by Russ Christensen

I first traveled in Nicaragua in 1958, just after I graduated from college. Later I lived in Costa Rica and Honduras, and during this period made perhaps ten trips through Nicaragua. At that time I had no real understanding of the Somoza system or the effects of American economic penetration on Nicaragua. Yet the memories are vivid and the contrasts between those visits and this one of January 1983 are striking.

Crossing the border, the traveler would often be delayed unless he was willing to pay off the customs official—or, more likely, the military official at the border. But on this trip the customs and immigration system functioned smoothly, and there was no demand for a payoff.

Even so, not everything had changed. Outside the terminal, I was, as in the past, accosted by dozens of *muchachos*—young boys offering to carry my bags in exchange for pencils or coins. Obviously, there is still poverty and unemployment in Nicaragua. Nevertheless, whereas on earlier trips I often saw deformed children seated beside a parent in the streets, maimed on purpose to be more pathetic, on this trip I did not see any such beggars.

We were met at the airport by TOUR NICA and by Raul, our guide. Each evening of our week in Nicaragua, our group met to decide who and what groups we wanted to

visit and talk with. Approximately 90 percent of the time Raul was able to arrange the visits we asked for. The government did not shunt us away from the opposition groups, nor did it place amongst us someone who would defend the government position when we were with the opposition groups. We visited opposition labor unions and opposition business associations. This contrasted sharply with my previous visits, where I was always aware that opposition groups were not tolerated and either had to be underground or very disciplined in how they exhibited their opposition. As the week went on, I had a growing sense both of the differences between the old Nicaragua and the new and of the continuing difficulties faced by the Sandinista government.

The new Nicaragua is a nation governed by young men and women. They work long hours and attend meeting upon meeting. More than one young Sandinista told us that it was not a time for marriage—the revolution still required a total commitment.

In the past every Nicaraguan I met seemed to hope for some gift or favor, but on this trip people asked very few if any personal favors. Rather, they pointed out the needs of Nicaraguan society as a whole, and suggested that we might find ways to help them resolve those needs. What they do want from North Americans is our understanding, our patience and our support within our own communities for their efforts.

The Sandinistas are working hard to spread privileges once enjoyed only by the elite. For example, I visited a recently opened popular beach resort previously owned by approximately five families, all cronies of Somoza. Now it is a national park and each Saturday and Sunday thousands of people enjoy the beach, the surf, and the new government-built facilities.

Some of the other differences between the old Nicaragua and the new are best suggested by statistics. Under the Somozas only 23 percent of the population would ever see a doctor or a nurse in their lifetime. Now it is 86 percent and still climbing. The health centers concentrate on preventive medicine, nutrition, and community hygiene. They are training thousands of health workers to go

out into parts of the *campo* that have never seen health workers before. The shift from agriculture-for-export to a determined effort to produce in the country most of the foods necessary to feed the Nicaraguan people has also had a visible effect on health. Few of the children that I saw suffered from the bloat and other signs of malnutrition that I often saw in my days as a CARE administrator in Central America.

The educational system too has seen some major changes. The Somozas were very wary of promoting education, fearing Marxists in all the departments. But the Sandinistas encourage education, with the result that the University has swollen from approximately 10,000 students to over 24,000 students, and the Catholic University has jumped from 3,000 students to 4,500 students.

The literacy campaign has also been a resounding success. A North American now living in Nicaragua told me many stories of 14- and 15-year-olds, members of the educated middle class from the cities, who had gone out into the *campo* to educate the *campesinos*. When their mothers and fathers visited on weekends, they became caught up in this project as they saw their children fighting to change the patterns of poverty typical of the countryside. One member of our group told of seeing a vendor sitting at her stall in the village marketplace, reading poetry, while her baby slept nearby.

Perhaps the complex transition from the old Nicaragua to the new can best be typified by the transportation system. Under the Somozas almost all the buses came from the U.S. The cut-off of U.S. aid has meant that large segments of this fleet are now in garages being cannibalized for parts. While we were in Managua the government was expecting a delivery of 100 Bulgarian buses, sign of a change in the patterns of supply that previously left Nicaragua heavily dependent on the U.S. economic system. In the meantime, the transportation system limps along—less reliable than under the Somozas, but also more democratic. In past trips I enjoyed the luxury of a cab all to myself. Now the cabs stop for everyone who flags them down, until they are filled up.

Here, as elsewhere, the will of the Sandinistas to build a new society repeatedly comes up against the effects of U.S. economic pressure. Everywhere we could see the evidence of the deep penetration of the American economic system into Nicaragua: Texaco (which has a compound resembling that of the U.S. Embassy) signs, IBM machines, Coca Cola bottles, McDonald's wrappers. With this corporate permeation came various forms of American aid. Under Somoza, the U.S. government proffered food aid. These foods have now been shut

off. Gas is rationed; toiletry articles are in very short supply. Paper and pencils are hard to find and the university system urgently needs textbooks and reference works. Often a professor in an engineering course must take the English copy of his textbook and allow students to handwrite a chapter at a time.

The rapid build-up of the Nicaraguan armed forces is another sign of U.S. pressure on the country. The army now numbers 30,000 soldiers, more than three times the size of Somoza's army. This military build-up diverts scarce resources from the public sector, resources needed to build roads, ports, hospitals, opera houses, and factories. This diversion of resources will continue until American destabilization efforts end.

Much of the information in this report

came to me from members of the Sandinista government. Is this information reliable? To cross-check on statements made by government officials, I regularly sought out people who were working in Nicaragua, but who had no direct stake in the revolution. Many were not socialists, but had been in Nicaragua long enough to form a valid impression. These included nuns, priests, and staff workers for volunteer organizations. Invariably they supported the revolution and could offer independent corroboration of the facts I have here summarized. ●

Russ Christensen is a lawyer and DSA member in Bangor, Maine. He would like to thank Burt Hatlen and Virginia Steinhoff for help in preparing this article.

Nagging Questions

by Deborah Meier

The achievements of the Nicaraguan revolution would be hard to assess on even a much longer visit. Never having been there before, and having the opportunity to speak with only a relatively small number of people, I could not honestly wax enthusiastic or pessimistic about what is actually being accomplished, much less what the future looks like. But I can record some impressions.

Clearly the oft-referred to Great Literacy Campaign was a major achievement. Basic reforms in year-round schooling take far more time, but a crash program of adult literacy is a legitimate priority, even though its aims were as much to spread propaganda as to bring literacy to the people. Both goals are understandable. My assessment, based on looking at the final exam of the program, suggests that the literacy attained was at a second-grade reading level. Much of the material was crude political indoctrination, but the program brought people together and made teachers and students familiar with Sandinista goals. Similarly, although no miracle could be expected in health in a few short years, the Sandinistas have achieved some breakthroughs, apparently by focusing on such basic and inexpensive reforms as vaccinations, sanitation measures, information about birth and infant care, and training of paraprofessionals.

On the economic front, claims regarding redistribution of wealth and provision of basic necessities may be exaggerated, but it



seems that a genuine effort has been made to skew limited resources toward the needs of the bottom half.

Opposition leaders with whom we met did not contest these achievements, but argued that the cost of the Sandinista bureaucracy and the large military establishment were excessive. They believed that FSLN policies have alienated needed specialists unnecessarily. They do not, however, dismiss the threat of foreign aggression, the need for programs that require an expanded bureaucracy, nor the possibility that any major social and economic reform would have caused a money and brain-drain. Genuine achievements in both economic and social policy seem clear pluses for the FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front), which inherited a decimated economy and huge foreign debts created by Somoza.

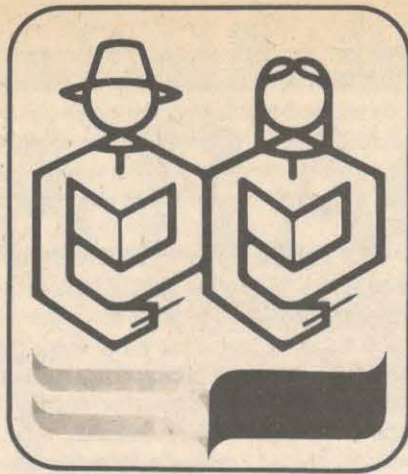
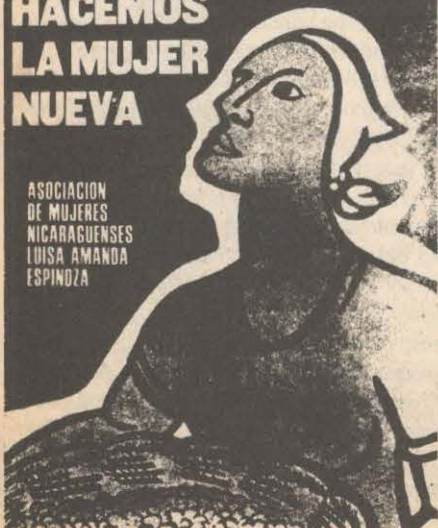
On the issue of human and democratic rights, the picture is darker. In reports generally favorable to the FSLN, especially in

comparison to past Somoza practices and those of many other Central American states, the Socialist International, Amnesty International, and Americas Watch have raised serious questions. As socialists we were concerned about these issues as we spoke to leaders who claimed to be trying to build a socialist model. It seemed incontestable to me that the principles of a free press are not observed. Two of the three newspapers permitted are 100 percent pro-Sandinista. The one opposition paper, *La Prensa*, can publish deviant views, but the censorship is both arbitrary and extreme. The television stations are all controlled by the Sandinistas, and although independent radio exists, news programming remains an FSLN monopoly.

Independent opposition parties exist with offices that are easily accessible. Members spoke frankly and freely to us, even in the presence of our official Sandinista guide. They claimed that their capacity to engage in political work has been nullified by the emergency rules in effect since last March, the absence of an electoral system, and the existence of Sandinista youth groups that disrupt their public meetings with impunity. Further, lack of access to public data on the economy and budget makes it hard for them to offer realistic alternatives. The Sandinistas do not deny most of these charges, although they explain them. Given the present fragile economic situation and their undeniable popularity, they insist, there is no need for a costly and potentially divisive election campaign. They have not ruled out elections in 1985. They don't always have available data either, they explain, and in some cases supplying it would provide subversive forces with information that could be used to sabotage the economy.

**CONSTRUYENDO
LA PATRIA NUEVA
HACEMOS
LA MUJER
NUEVA**

ASOCIACION
DE MUJERES
NICARAGUENSES
LOISA AMANDA
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El 50 % de los microcomputadores instalados en 10 oficinas gubernamentales leerán en español
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Independent unions also exist, but marginally. The mass union, CST, is the newly created organ of the FSLN. Work stoppages are illegal. The older independent unions, such as the CTN, which is social Christian in origin, are legal, but claim that their contracts are ignored, their leaders harassed and sometimes jailed.

All other "mass organizations" are, like the CST, direct organs of the FSLN itself. Dialogue flows upward, policy downward. Participation and mobilization are the key ideas. No machinery apparently exists for holding top policymakers responsible for representing "the people" democratically or for permitting alternative programs or policies to be debated and voted upon by those at the bottom. When we spoke with the public relations director of the national women's organization, she saw no possible conflict of interest between women's rights and the party leadership. (The same point was made by the CST spokesman with regard to workers' rights.) Participation is their mutual goal. Birth control and abortion are illegal, but she insisted that this was as satisfactory to women as to men. If, we prodded, there were a group pressing for an alternative viewpoint, what would the mechanism be? Could they demand a hearing, a vote? She found the question either inconceivable, puzzling, or insulting, no matter how we tried to reword it.

Significantly, as the opposition groups kept pointing out, all forms of coercive power, from the Army and the police to the large volunteer militia, are directly subordinate to the FSLN, not the government itself. The impact of this monopoly surely could be significant for future democratic development. None of the opponents claimed that the legal system was as terrible as it had been in pre-revolutionary times, nor that political

rights had once been better. During just the last few months of Somoza's rule, at least 40,000 out of a population of less than three million had been murdered. This background of terror suggests with what relief most citizens look upon the FSLN's mild authoritarianism.

The situation on the Atlantic coast for the indigenous Meskito population was on our agenda when we met with the director of a resettlement camp. He acknowledged many mistakes, but his lack of concern for investigating alleged atrocities committed by the Army against Meskitos—"In war there are always unfortunate incidents"—did not impress me favorably.

The pro-Sandinista leaders we met with impressed all of us with their intelligence and sincerity. Their answers, however, seemed contradictory and all-too-familiar. Illiteracy was given as one reason why democracy had to be curtailed, but later the increased literacy resulting from the campaign was used to explain why press censorship was required! We were told that democracy is not possible under the present difficult circumstances of foreign aggression and a tenuous economy, then in the next breath that Nicaragua already has a higher and superior form of democracy. I listened hard for some recognition of the danger to their own socialist dream that these infringements upon democratic rights might entail. I heard none. For a party leadership that spoke a great deal about learning the lessons of history, their failure to worry about a highly centralized and authoritarian political structure was striking.

Although the Sandinistas appear sincerely opposed to military or political commitments to the Soviet bloc, everywhere we looked in Managua, we saw evidence that they sincerely identify with the Russian bloc and feel greater ideological sympathy with that form of socialism than with western European forms.

What were my deepest impressions? All my reactions were affected by the very tangible reminders throughout our visit of the horror of the years under Somoza—the bloodshed, torture, and disregard for this country the size of Iowa. One might have expected a bloodbath in return. It didn't happen. Against my better judgment at times, I was captivated by the enthusiasm and excitement of the people around the Sandinistas. (The party itself is tiny—no one apparently knows who its members are, so I speak of people "around" them, except for the few leaders known to be FSLN members.) They feel they are "in" on history, have a chance now to play a part in their country's future, to carry out their dreams. It would be criminal, they claim, to let such an opportunity slip

through their fingers. The third powerful feeling I had, however, was sympathy and compassion for that other set of political people who thought they had triumphed in the revolution of 1979 but who now find themselves outside the process. They had a different vision of what the Revolution would create, of what the right path would be to rebuild their country. After participating so gloriously in the overthrow of Somoza, they now find themselves once again the underdogs, outside the process of building their country's future. They do not possess the glamor of the winners (except perhaps for Violeta Chamorro, widow of the martyred editor of *La Prensa*). They remind us of what we don't want to hear. Throughout our stay I felt discomfited by my willingness to distance myself from them and their problems, to dine with the glamorous, while they stayed in their dingy offices with their missed opportunities. Power is attractive, and it was fun to meet with famous and romantic winners, to be treated as though we were important emissaries with a role to play in the triumph of the Revolution.

My rage over U.S. policy was confirmed and prodded by witnessing first hand what our policies have helped produce. The U.S. government provides wholehearted support to far more repressive and undemocratic regimes than the Sandinistas, even if every criticism we heard were multiplied tenfold. But, my socialist sympathies remain torn and divided—not divided between U.S. policies and the Nicaraguan revolution, but between the different forces that participated in the Nicaraguan revolution who are now in opposing camps. As an American socialist I am lucky not to have to decide what I would do were I a Nicaraguan. There are no doubt many strategies—even for those who view democracy as the heart and gut concern of socialists. It's tough enough to decide what I think is appropriate strategy for socialists trying to create change in the United States.

The most useful thing we can do to help Nicaragua is not to take on the burden of trying to make Sandinista ideology or the FSLN the new Messiahs of the socialist future, or the models for third world hopes. Instead we can *concentrate* on convincing our fellow North Americans that current U.S. policies are neither effective ways to help spread democracy, nor necessary for hemispheric security. Neither the arguments of the FSLN opposition, nor the ideology of the Sandinistas provide us with any reason to doubt the criminal effects of current U.S. policies with respect to Central America. ●

NEC member Deborah Meier is director of an alternative public school in East Harlem in New York City.

DSA RESOLUTION ON NICARAGUA AND U.S. INTERVENTION*

Whereas:

the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua represents for all Latin America a vital example of victory over imperialism and dictatorship;

the struggle of the Nicaraguans to seek their own sovereign road to peace, democracy, justice, and social transformation is crucial as an example to liberation movements everywhere;

the U.S. government has continued to support the successors to the dictator Anastasio Somoza by providing large amounts of covert aid to ex-Somoza and anti-Sandinista forces with the expressed aim of destabilizing the Nicaraguan government;

despite the severity of the destabilization efforts, the Nicaraguan government has instituted laudable reforms in agriculture, health, literacy, housing, promotion of popular culture, and has sustained its commitment to freedom of religion;

support for the Nicaraguan revolution does not lessen or weaken our support for political pluralism, freedom of the press, and self-determination of minority peoples;

our ability to maintain a productive dialogue with fellow socialists in Nicaragua on issues of democracy, human rights, feminism, lesbian and gay rights, non-alignment, and democratic socialism will be strengthened by an explicit extension of solidarity to Nicaragua;

DSA therefore embraces a position of strong support for the Nicaraguan revolution and for the struggles of the Nicaraguan people against the counter-revolutionary forces aided by the U.S. government, inside and outside Nicaragua.

DSA resolves to join the Campaign for Peace with Justice in Central America and urges all DSA locals to join the local affiliates of the Campaign.

DSA resolves to establish a sub-committee on Central American Solidarity under the auspices of the DSA International Affairs Committee and urges DSA locals to select a local member as a contact person for this new sub-committee.

DSA resolves to work during the coming year on three specific solidarity efforts for Nicaragua:

1. to urge all locals to participate in a coordinated collection drive for basic necessities to be identified by the Nicaraguan government and shipped to Nicaragua through CARE;
2. to sponsor a Nicaraguan cultural tour to as many DSA locals as wish to participate;
3. to support the Dellums bill in the U.S. Congress cutting off all funds for intervention against Nicaragua.

*Adopted by the DSA National Board February 20, 1983.

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KuSasa is an independent journal of political analysis and discussion on South Africa by South Africans. Board of Advisors includes Bishop Desmond Tutu and Dr. Manning Marable. A DSA member is Editor and founder. Costs \$4.00 a copy. Write: Corbin Seavers c/o *KuSasa*, Boone Square Apartments, #8, Berea, KY 40403.

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RELIGIOUS SOCIALIST WEEKEND

April 15-17, 1983, Warwick, N.Y.

"Making Connections"

Cost: \$60, includes two nights lodging, meals, and registration. Send \$25 deposit to Institute for Democratic Socialism, Room 801, 853 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10003. Or send self-addressed, stamped envelope for more information.

MIDWEST/INDUSTRIAL HEARTLAND LABOR COMMISSION CONFERENCE

DSA labor activists are invited to a conference April 16-17 in Cleveland, Ohio. For more information, contact the DSA Labor Commission, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657, 312-871-7700.

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ON THE LEFT

by HARRY FLEISCHMAN

NATIONAL ROUNDUP

Alabama

DSAer Ken Bundrum of Jacksonville State University ran unsuccessfully for the Democratic nomination for state legislature.

California

Many DSAers participated in the Oakland Martin Luther King, Jr. march on January 15. The well-integrated crowd, estimated at 10,000, heard DSA members Representative Ron Dellums and Berkeley Mayor Gus Newport stress the need to "make the connection" between Depression level unemployment and bloated military spending. Other speakers included Alameda County Central Labor Council Secretary-Treasurer Dick Groux and Assemblyman Elihu Harris... The East Bay DSA celebrated Susan B. Anthony's Birthday at a Women's Party.

Illinois

Champaign-Urbana DSA members Susan McGrath and Jenny Putnam were reelected to the Champaign County Board and supporters Amy Kummerow, Shirley Stillinger and Marge Winkelhake made it a clean sweep for the Democratic party in District 9... *Downstate Left* editor Lou Peterchak has left for the Peace Corps in Paraguay... As we go to press, news comes of Representative Harold Washington's upset victory over Mayor Jane Byrne in the Democratic primary. Scores of DSAers rang doorbells and pounded the pavement for Washington, who will be Chicago's first black mayor. A major factor in Washington's decision to seek the job was an increase in black voters caused by voter registration drives. The number of registered black voters went up by 100,000 to 650,000 in the last year. Washington pulled close to 80 percent of the black vote.

Maryland

Baltimore DSAers are active in a neighborhood level project to combat violence.

Massachusetts

Fifty people turned out in Amherst last month to discuss "Labor in the Pioneer Valley" at the first open forum sponsored by the new DSA Pioneer Valley local. A DSA labor task force is being planned.

Missouri

Robert Picard of the Columbia local presented a paper on democratic socialism and the press at the national convention of the Association for Education in Journalism.

New York

In a special guide to colleges in the metropolitan area, the *Village Voice* singled out DSAer Hugh Cleland, a history professor at Stony Brook who is active in the nuclear disarmament movement, as "outstanding" in the opinion of students. Cleland has just been appointed chair of the Suffolk Democratic party education and training committee by the county chairman, Dominic Baranello... Suffolk DSA is working with students, faculty and public employee unions to resist layoffs of state workers and increases in tuition and dormitory fees on State University of New York campuses... Deborah Mullaney of Westchester DSA, who participated in the DSA fact-finding mission to Nicaragua, spoke on it at the home of the Shatzkins in Croton-on-Hudson February 6 and was scheduled to speak at the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Chappaqua March 13.

Ohio

The third "Guns or Butter" Conference will be held on March 24, 25 and 26 with some 4,000 expected to attend in Cleveland, Akron and Youngstown. The conference is sponsored by many civic, labor, religious, education and peace groups from northeastern Ohio... An earlier Ohio Labor Conference on "Jobs Not Bombs" brought together nearly 250 trade unionists from 50 Ohio communities.

Pennsylvania

Philadelphia DSA is producing a democratic socialist platform for Philadelphia... It is cooperating with "Jobs With Peace Week," planned for April... Pittsburgh DSA now publishes the *Allegheny Socialist*, an attractive 10-page paper. DSA member Jon Robison is running for City Council in the May primary... Radical comic and DSA member Robin Tyler will be back in Pittsburgh April 29 with another helping of her unique social and political commentary.

Rhode Island

DSA vice-chair Barbara Ehrenreich spoke in February at the University of Rhode Island, Brown University, and to Greater Providence DSA on "Women in a Changing Capitalist Economy"... Youth organizer Penny Schantz also spoke at both universities last month... *The Great Swamp Gazette*, an alternative paper at the University of Rhode Island, highlighted DSA's winter youth conference.

Texas

"Crime: A Social Disease" was the topic of Houston DSA's February meeting. The panelists included DSAer Ben Levy, Associate Justice, First Court of Appeals; Peter Riga, Law Professor at South Texas College and Law, and Bob Weiss, Professor of Criminology at the University of Houston... Non-commercial radio station KPFT (90.1 FM) carries a Democratic Socialist program twice a month on Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 7 PM.

Vermont

A new DSA Youth Section chapter was organized at Castleton State College, following a talk by Penny Schantz... The Vermont Labor History Society, chaired by DSAer Bill Kemsley, heard Dr. Philip Mason speak at an ethnic dinner in Barre. The dinner, honoring those who settled and worked in Vermont from England, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Scotland and other European lands, featured minestrone, tortillas, golumbki, tourtieres, pickled beets, soda bread, flan and shortbread.

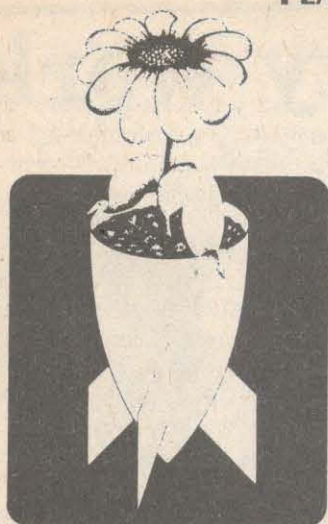
Washington

In Seattle, DSA members Mike Kasprzak and Michael Brunson initiated an ad hoc committee to protest the anniversary of martial law in Poland. One of the demands was "Stop Union-Busting, East and West!"

NEW LOCALS

DSA continues its rapid growth. At its February meeting, the National Board chartered new locals in Palo Alto, Marin County, Orange County (Irvine), and Davis in California; Cincinnati, Ohio; Richmond, Va.; and New Brunswick, N.J. It also chartered a Southern Illinois Tri-County Organizing Committee and another in Mahoning Valley, O. More than 2,500 new members joined in 1982.

PEACE TOUR '83



Leaders in the European and American peace movements will speak on campuses in March and April as part of a national peace tour sponsored by the DSA Youth Section in cooperation with National SANE and the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy. Among the speakers are: Joan Ruddock, National Chairperson, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament; Dan Smith, co-editor with E.P. Thompson of *Protest and Survive*; Michael Harrington; author and linguist Noam Chomsky; poet and theologian Dorothee Soelle; author and sociologist Bogdan Denitch; and Manning Marable, director of race relations, Fisk University. For a tour schedule, write to the DSA New York office.

RESOURCES

Labor Commission

A new outreach brochure, "Labor Is a Power in the Land," has been published by the DSA Labor Commission. This attractive brochure, for use with labor activists, is available in bulk from the Chicago DSA office, 1300 W. Belmont Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657.

The *DSA Labor Memo* reports that a Midwest/Industrial Heartland regional meeting for labor activists is scheduled for April 15-17 in Cleveland... A DSA Labor Directory is planned to encourage communication within DSA. If you want to be included, send a note including address, phone, union and a brief statement about your work to the Chicago DSA office.

Italian Views

Politica internazionale is the English edition of the bulletin of the Italian Institute for Relations with Africa, Latin America and the Middle East (IPALMO). It contains selections from IPALMO's monthly Italian edition and appears twice a year. English edition editor Herbert Festoff was a founding member of Berkeley NAM. He writes that subscriptions are available at \$7 per year from IPALMO, Via del Tritone 62/B, 00187 Rome, Italy.

Worker Co-ops

The Industrial Cooperative Association works to help preserve jobs through creating worker-owned enterprises. It has established a million-dollar loan fund for low-income worker coops and supports the rights of workers to control their work-

places democratically. For details write to Steve Dawson, ICA, 249 Elm Street, Somerville, MA 02144.

State Agendas

Ways & Means, which reports on innovative approaches to state and local government, presents an agenda for states and cities on small business, plus ways enterprise development creates jobs. For details, write Conference on Alternative State & Local Policies, 2000 Florida Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Socialist History

A Center for Socialist History has been established as a non-profit, tax-exempt group to promote research and publication in the history of socialism. It publishes the *CSH Interbulletin* which covers activity in the field of socialist history both in the U.S. and abroad. Subscriptions are \$10 for four issues. For details, write Richard Broadhead, Executive Director, Center for Socialist History, 2633 Etna, Berkeley, CA 94704.

FDR and the New Deal

The Illinois Labor History Society, Box 914, Chicago, IL 60690, has produced a slide/cassette package surveying New Deal responses to the social and economic crisis of the Great Depression. Packaged in carousel form, with 131 images plus audio cassette, it runs 22 minutes. Cost - \$100. Rental \$20 per showing, plus \$2 postage. Useful for organizers in community situations.

IN MEMORIAM

Olive Golden, life-long socialist and charter member of College Teachers Local 1600, AFT, feminist and anti-war activist and Chicago DSA member, died recently.

Farewell to *Mary Farquharson* of Seattle, long-time peace activist and Socialist Party member. She was the first woman to serve in the Washington State Senate, fought against forced relocation of Japanese Americans in World War II, helped found the first Planned Parenthood clinic in Seattle, and led an initiative to abolish capital punishment in the state of Washington.

Richard Parrish of New Jersey, a leader in the Negro American Labor Council and former assistant treasurer in the United Federation of Teachers, died last month after a long illness. Parrish ran for several offices on the Socialist Party ticket.

HUMAN EVENTS 'EXPOSE'

The right-wing Republican Washington news sheet, *Human Events*, has found a new cause for alarm. "Two Republicans who should know better," it thunders, "have gotten themselves mixed up with a radical group promoting Socialist-oriented solutions to the problem of world hunger. Sen. Robert Dole (R. Kan.), who was once regarded as a hard-line conservative, and Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R. NY), a moderate, have teamed up with two liberal Democrats—Sen. Patrick Leahy (Vt.) and Rep. Thomas Downey (NY)—to sponsor and work with congressional "fellows who will focus on issues relevant to eliminating world hunger." The group in question is World Hunger Year (WHY).

Human Events "reveals" that WHY's magazine, *Food Monitor*, is edited by Jack Clark, former co-editor of "the openly Socialist journal, *Democratic Left*" and that "World Hunger Year was founded in 1975 by Harry Chapin, the later singer/song writer... Whether Rep. Gilman and Sen. Dole disassociate themselves from the group," warns *Human Events*, "will determine if they have the ability to recognize and correct their mistakes. For Sen. Dole, an aspirant for the presidency, the decision could be a crucial one."

Reports have it that Dole's and Gilman's staff people were laughing about the piece the day after it came out.

DSA Begins Minority Work

by John Spearman

American Socialism and Minority Movements—Uneasy Alliance," was the title of the recent West Coast minorities conference (see box), but it also serves to describe the state of affairs as DSA begins to focus on expanding beyond its white, middle-class base into minority communities.

After much preparatory work, the first step was taken on October 2 in New York City when about 30 black, Latino, and Asian-American DSA members and friends met to discuss what DSA must do if it is to build deep ties with the various minority movements. Initiated by National Board member Lillie McLaughlin, DSA Vice Chair Manning Marable, and Hispanic Commission Co-Chair Rafael Piroman, the meeting ended with a call for the formation of an Afro-American Commission, an Asian-American Organizing Caucus, and a National and Racial Minorities Coordinating Committee. The Hispanic Commission was already in place, and since October a Native American member has begun working with the Coordinating Committee to establish a native American Commission.

Another conference is being planned for June 5 in Nashville, Tennessee, immediately after a conference on "The Arms Race vs. Human Needs—Dialogue on Jobs, Peace and Justice."

Even though DSA is overwhelmingly white, it has a number of minority members in influential and highly visible positions in many important areas. Members such as Representative Ron Dellums, New York State Labor Commissioner Lillian Roberts, District of Columbia City Council member Hilda Mason, and Berkeley mayor Gus Newport are well known in the political arena. Members such as Ed Vargas, president of the Hartford, Conn. Central Labor Council, Jose LaLuz, organizer for the Connecticut AFT, William Lucy, secretary-treasurer of AFSCME, Manning Marable, director of race relations at Fisk University and a syndicated columnist, DSA Vice Chair Michael Rivas, theologians Cornel West and James Washington and others in unions, religious, and academic settings give us a tremendous potential for organizing. Up to now, that potential has not been tapped.

The most important reason for DSA's failure in this area has been its lack of con-



Manning Marable and Lydia Tom at National Commission Meeting.

sciousness of the importance of the various movements of the oppressed in the fight for socialism. Given DSA's historical and political roots and social composition, this is not surprising. Both predecessor organizations recognized the problem and need, but NAM's anti-racist commission and DSOC's

Hispanic Commission, though positive efforts, were inadequate. The new committees will develop programs of action and recruitment as well as political positions on a wide variety of issues. In addition, they will work within DSA to strengthen understanding of minority movements.

West Coast Conference

by Manning Marable

In January 29-30, about 150 Latinos, Asian-Americans, Afro-Americans, and Native Americans attended a DSA-sponsored conference in San Francisco, "American Socialism and Minority Movements—Uneasy Alliance."

At the opening plenary Latina activist Delores Delgado-Campbell; Hispanic Commission member Delfino Varela; Angie Fa, a Youth Section activist; Native American historian Jack Forbes; DSA chair Michael Harrington; and this writer challenged DSA and the attendees to make the alliance real. Lively discussions in afternoon workshops were followed the next day by an internal discussion that focused on efforts to develop more constructive DSA programs for reaching minority communities. Recommendations from the West

Coast meeting went to Hispanic and Afro-American Commission members before last month's board meeting in New York City. At that meeting, most of the West Coast agenda items were adopted by the board. These included a commitment by DSA to hire by 1984 a national staff person who would be primarily responsible for minority organizing; an allotment of \$3,000 to the commissions for use in developing a journal for minorities that would be edited by members of the coordinating committee; appointment of six people of color to serve as nonvoting members of the NEC between March and October of 1983. Minorities also intend to urge the national convention in October to adopt a specific quota for nonwhites in the NEC. ●

Manning Marable is a vice-chair of DSA.

Gretchen Donart

One of the most striking facts about minority movements, irrespective of their political leanings, is that as a whole they are more concentrated on the left than the general American political spectrum. For example, the Black Congressional Caucus and even the NAACP, which are center forces in the context of the black liberation movement, have to be considered more to the left within the context of overall American politics. This was true of the civil rights and black liberation movements of the recent past, and of the later Puerto Rican, Chicano, and Native American movements.

Unlike the situation in American politics in which DSA operates, the "right" wings within these movements are weak, and, in some cases, nonexistent. Among Afro-Americans, the Thomas Sowell and Carl Rowans carry little real influence. On the other hand, the left forces within these movements exert, to varying degrees, ideological, political, and practical influence on the center forces. As we continue in a period of economic crisis, stepped up government repression and racially motivated violence, we can expect to see again the rise of left influence in these movements. DSA cannot afford to write off or attempt to wish them away.

Alienation from the present political and economic system is growing among people of color. We can make alliances with these communities. Given the histories, leadership and characters of the socialist and minority movements, this will not be a painless process, but it can be a constructive one. ●

John Spearman is a union organizer and DSA member who is active in the black community in Brooklyn, N.J.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contacts for the commissions and committees are:

Afro-American: Cornel West, Union Seminary, 3041 Broadway, NYC 10027

Hispanic: Jose LaLuz, 205 Westerly Terr., E. Hartford, Conn. 06118 or Rafael PiRoman, 17 E. 7th St., 4B, NYC 10003

National & Racial Minorities Coordinating Committee: Manning Marable, Race Relations Institute, Fisk University, Nashville, Tenn. 37203

For a copy of the founding statements of these groups, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the New York office of DSA, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, NYC 10003.

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JIMMY HIGGINS REPORTS

The '60 Minutes' show on the National Council of Churches and World Council of Churches tried to give the impression that some good moderates with the Institute on Religion and Democracy (IRD) were battling extreme left-wing views within the churches. Trouble is, according to some excellent research by Steve Askin of *The National Catholic Reporter*, the IRD moderates got their funding from some very immoderate places. Six foundations (Sara Scaife, Smith Richardson, Earheart, John M. Olin, Ingersoll, and Shelby Cullom Davis) have put up \$479,500 of the \$533,002 the IRD has spent since its founding in 1980. That's 89 percent of its total budget, and those six foundations read like a *Who's Who* of the New Right and far right funding sources. The Heritage Foundation (set up by the Coors family fortune) has been amply endowed by two of these same funds; the tax-exempt arm of the National Right-to-Work Committee receives some of its strongest support from among these foundations. IRD talks about being the moderate force, against right and left extremes, against the political use of religion. But its angles are far from pure. For another angle, see the March 21 issue of *Christianity and Crisis*, which goes into detail about these latest machinations of the IRD, as well as the real ways the NCC could be changed.

Funding aside, IRD is pushing some questionable ideas. Central to the project of these so-called religious moderates is the exposition and defense of a theory of democratic capitalism. A perceptive and eminently fair examination of that theory from a democratic socialist perspective is provided by Peter Steinfels in *Commonweal* (January 14 and February 11). Steinfels examines the writings of Michael Novak and Robert Benne on democratic capitalism and covers the arguments of relevance to all of us, religious or not.

Spendthrifts? Our esteemed Secretary of State informed us on February 24 that, per capita, Americans spend \$43.91 per year on security and economic assistance programs in the developing world, \$104 for radios and televisions, \$35 for barbershop and beauty parlor visits. Secretary Schultz stressed that he was not belittling our buying habits. But he failed to point out that our television and radio purchases don't kill Salvadoran peasants. When he can say the same about how he's spending our tax money in aid, then let him lecture us on the U.S. moral obligations to the poor of the world.

Speaking of El Salvador, the Administration's all-out push for massive new support to the far-right government there will not receive support from the U.S. labor movement. Often an ally of the hardliners on foreign policy, the AFL-CIO has come out clearly for a cut-off in all military aid to the Salvadoran government. In an early February press conference at AFL-CIO headquarters, Salvadoran unionists joined William C. Doherty, Jr., the executive director of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), as he called for the aid cut-off. "There is no conscionable way we could see money provided by workers and taxpayers of this country going to the army of El Salvador when it refuses to prosecute its own personnel for the killing of our citizens," Doherty said. He was referring to the murder of AIFLD representatives Michael Hammer and Mark Pearlman and Salvadoran peasant leader Rudolfo Viera in January 1981. Two army corporals who carried out the murder may be tried, but the influential lieutenant, captain and businessman who allegedly gave the order will not face charges.



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