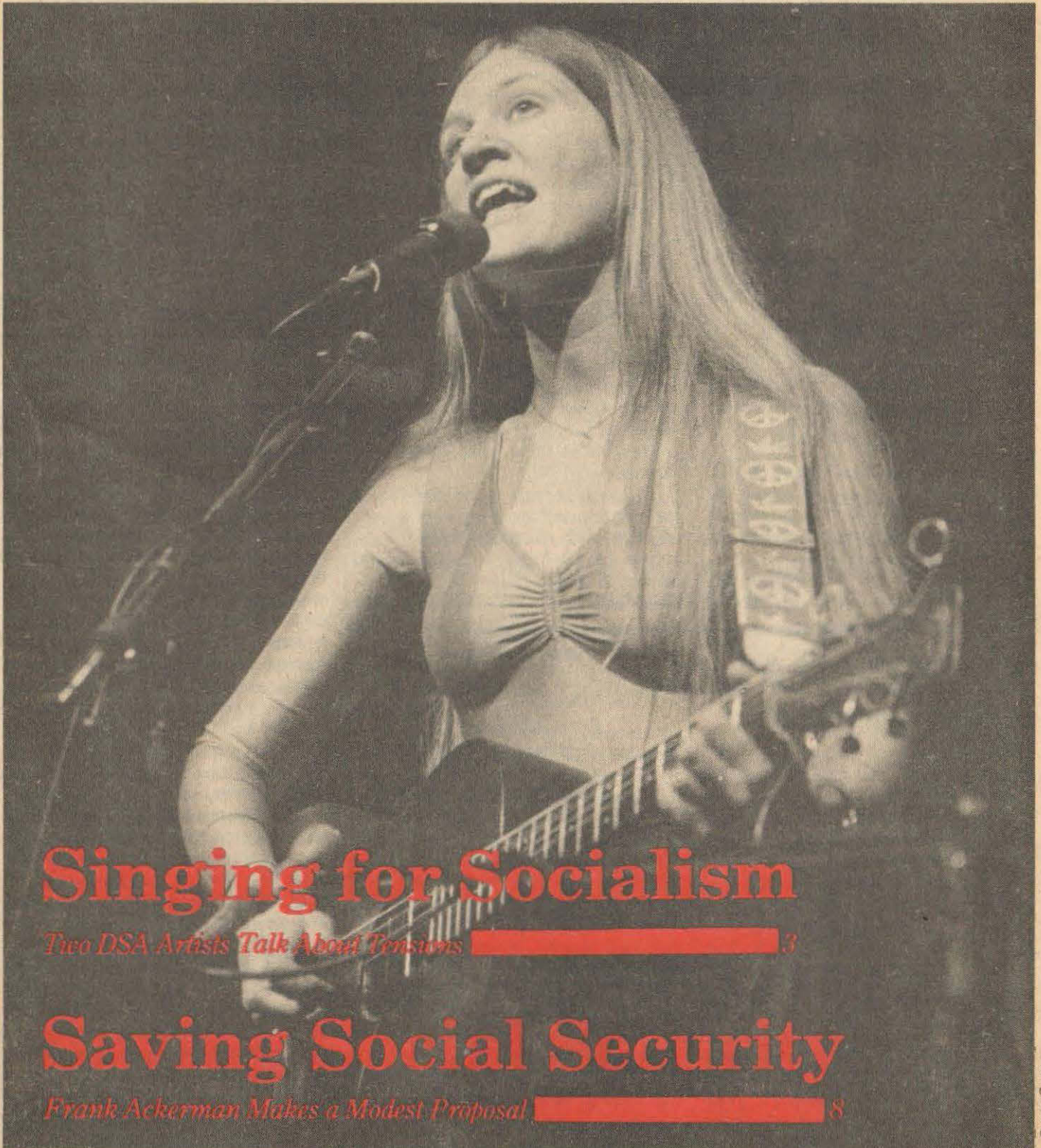


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Singing for Socialism

Two DSA Artists Talk About Tensions **3**

Saving Social Security

Frank Ackerman Makes a Modest Proposal **8**

LETTERS

Missing the Marx

To the Editor:

Thanks are due to you and to Michael Harrington for bringing us "Standing Up For Marx." (March 1983) I am puzzled about one thing: how can one write an article attempting to generalize the most important aspects of Marx's thoughts, including his "sustained and profound analysis that capitalism is a relationship" and his "self-critical method," and not once use the phrase "dialectical materialism"? Has this descriptive, exact, time-honored, and easily understood phrase become a dirty word?

Eleanor Richmond
San Diego, Ca.

Get It Straight

To the Editor:

I am an Israeli from Kibbutz Kerem Shalom, currently on a visit to the USA. I happened to come across a copy of the March 1983 issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT in which Jo-Ann Mort interviews Mapam Knesset member Elazer Granot. I would like to clear up two inaccuracies.

The first is that Elazer Granot claimed that Mapam voted against the original 25-mile invasion of Lebanon. This is not true, since Mapam abstained during voting in the Knesset on the government motion. This was an attempt by Mapam to remain within the so-called "national consensus" not to

criticize the war while the fighting continued...

The second inaccuracy in the interview is MK Granot's claim that Peace Now was founded during the period of Labor rule. Peace Now was formed in March 1978, ten months following Begin's election, in response to the Likud government's policy regarding Israeli-Egyptian relations. The army officers that wrote the officers' letter that preceded the first massive Peace Now demonstration addressed their letter to Prime Minister Menachem Begin. MK Granot's attempt to show that Mapam had a moral dilemma since it was active in the peace movement while also a participant in the government is an historical distortion.

Michael Argaman
Kibbutz Kerem Shalom

Ed. Note: We regret the errors.

Give Other Side

To the Editor:

While informative and interesting, Jo-Ann Mort's interview of Israeli Knesset member Elazer Granot, "Lonely Battle for Peace," partially illustrates a serious political problem within DSA on the Middle East question.

There is no point in criticizing Granot speaking favorably about an Israeli democracy exclusively established for him and other Jews, not Palestinian Arabs. There also is no point in discussing why the African National Congress of South Africa, the Azanian

Peoples Organization and other anti-apartheid freedom organizations support the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and equate Zionism with apartheid. In this writer's opinion, most DSA members would see these and other points as either anti-Semitic or irrelevant. This attitude, however, won't be so prevalent in the organization if DSA would seriously present the "other side" of the Middle East conflict in both its pamphlets and publications....

If DSA is serious about moving beyond a "white middle-class" perspective, then I suggest for the DEMOCRATIC LEFT to publish opinions by, and interviews of, Palestinian scholars and activists. The publication could start with an interview of Sami Esmail, a leading November 29 Coalition spokesperson.

Corbin Seavers
Berea, Ky.

On Nicaragua

To the Editor:

It was quite interesting to return home recently from my second trip to Nicaragua since the revolution to find the impressions of two other recent visitors recorded in the pages of the March issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT.

They certainly summarize my sense of things quite well. The main comment that I would like to add to this discussion is my unsettling feeling that Jeane Kirkpatrick's category of "moderately repressive" governments, which I have hitherto thought to be pure ideology, may have some relevance after all. Kirkpatrick, of course, used the category as an *apologia* for brutal clients of the U.S., but it may in fact have some virtue in describing Nicaragua, where the lot of the common folk is improving under a regime which has placed mild restrictions on civil liberties, human rights violations are tolerated while kept in check, and the institutional machinery for democratic processes (recourse to an independent judiciary, accountability of leaders, etc.) barely functions.

For Nicaraguans, this raises important questions concerning the nature and direction of the revolution. For us *Norteamericanos*, the practical questions are easier, since our government's efforts to destabilize Nicaragua both imperil the positive accomplishments of the revolution by requiring a diversion of resources into the military sector, and accentuate its repressive tendencies by creating a state of emergency in which progress toward greater institutional democracy becomes a secondary issue in Nicaraguan politics.

Richard Worthington
Albany N.Y.

DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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POLITICS AND MUSIC

by Jim Miller and Steve Cagan

A political movement that doesn't sing its heart out is a movement that probably can't explain itself in any other way, either. Bernice Regan of the SNCC Freedom Singers and Sweet Honey in the Rock testifies to the power of song in the Civil Rights movement, perhaps the most musical of all American mass movements: "...I sat in the church and felt the chill that ran through a small gathering of Blacks when the sheriff and his deputies walked in...Then a song began. And the song made sure that the sheriff knew we were there. We became visible, our image was enlarged, when the sounds of the freedom songs filled all the space in that church."

Recent movements have not been nearly so serious about collective music-making. But since the mid-1970s, a new crop of musicians, including Charlie King, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and Holly Near, have revived and even deepened the traditions of political songwriting, committed performing, and group singing.

Kristin Lems and Fred Small are two of the most accomplished singer-songwriters in this new wave. Both are socialists; both, DSA members; both, singers for the popular movements of the 1980s.

We talked to them to find out what it means to be a committed singer today—musically, financially, and politically. We especially wanted to get their ideas on how DSA could make better use of music politically.

Kristin Lems

Kristin Lems, based in Champaign-Urbana, Ill., has become virtually the official singer of the National Organization for Women [NOW]. Her songs were an integral part of the national drive for the Equal Rights Amendment. She has sung at a number of NOW conventions.

"I'm identified more as a 'feminist' than a 'leftist' singer because of my part in the ERA campaign," she says. "By being identified as a feminist singer, I've been able to do a great deal of political work among women."

But, she remarks, "I'm not sure the single issue movements of today are as responsive to the women's movement as the women's movement is to them. Various groups want me to sing at their functions as an identified feminist singer, but they don't



Fred Small

"We have come to rely on experts in music as we do in politics, economics, and science. We need to, and our audiences need to, reclaim that power to make music."

want feminist songs, only songs related to their cause, while women's groups want a broader range of song."

Kristin's current musical influences include musicians "in the networks" who are not well known, people such as Fred Small, The Mayday Singers, "who showed me that you can get people on their feet to a beat," and interpretive singers such as Chris Williamson. The "old timers," Pete Seeger, Phil Ochs, Malvina Reynolds, and Holly Near, continue as sources. Earlier, Harry Belafonte made a lasting impression, "because he's a consummate interpreter of *world* music and sings so well in so many languages." And classical music is still the music Kristin listens to, for form, structure, and coherent harmonic patterns.

Commercial music doesn't make much of an impact on her. New Wave lyrics seem to have political content, "but it all seems like sloganeering."

She has increasingly focused on writing songs that are accessible and singable by nonprofessionals. As a performer, she makes an effort to balance "sing-a-long" type songs with "performance" songs, usually singing the latter later in the program after both she and the audience have warmed up.

Kristin has come to believe that it is "painful and difficult to make a fulltime living when you have strong political beliefs. It's an even harder task for us than for other, non-political artists." She stresses, "If people who don't agree with us don't support us, we'll drown. We can't get by singing weddings and bar mitzvahs. Even if we were willing to do so, our reputation precedes us, so we don't get hired."

The miserable state of the economy is eroding her position as an artist. "I feel I'm running in place because of economic pressures. Programs and conferences which would have invited us have been axed and

Program Planning with Musicians*

To ensure that programs flow smoothly and effectively, musicians should be contacted as early as possible in the planning stage to work out potential problems and to meet whatever special needs may exist. The following is a general list of things that should be taken into consideration when planning with performing artists.

1. There should be a discussion between the musician and event organizers regarding the specific goals of the event and if a special focus would be helpful.
2. When planning posters, flyers, press releases and other means of promotion of events, organizers should list performers in the same way as other program participants.
3. Organizers should know exactly what equipment is needed by performer, i.e., chairs, microphone set-up, etc.
4. Performers need to know in advance the time of the soundcheck, at what time they are appearing on the program and how much time they will be allotted.
5. An appropriate introduction should be planned with the emcee.
6. Performers should be notified in advance if the program is to be interpreted into sign language; it is important for the performer to coordinate with the interpreter in order to have quality interpretation. If possible, artistic interpreters should be utilized with performing artists.
7. In planning the program order, organizers should aim for a balance between speakers and music. Message-oriented music should not be scheduled simultaneously with other activities such as registration, reception or money collections.
8. Event organizers should be aware that performers come to the stage with a prepared program. The effect of political musicians' contributions is often undermined by arbitrary demands for last minute changes.
9. Finalize all financial negotiations before the event.

*From "On the Use of Political Music and Musicians" by the Songs of Freedom and Struggle group.

even NOW is currently providing very little work because it is focused on internal development." Peace marches and rallies are the only growing source of work. She is looking forward to a musical review of her songs to be staged this year.

"I'm willing to play under bad conditions, like ERA rallies, so I get places with less money to offer, more controversy. I like that, but I don't like feeling shut out of the best conditions and better money. I'd like to complement my grassroots concerts with that." She is trying to move into the major folk clubs for exposure, but little pay.

Without bitterness, she notes, "There's a star system in women's music, based on economics just as in the established music world." Even *Off Our Backs*, probably the leading women's newspaper, has never written about Kristin, according to her, although they have promised a review soon. "Again, the star system..."

To make ends meet, she tutors foreign students. (Kristin speaks a number of languages, including Parsi and Dutch.)

"Sales on my two records are pretty good, but I derive no income from them; all the profits have to be put back into producing the next record." She hadn't done her taxes at the time of the interview, but she guesses she netted under \$10,000 from music last year.

Could there be a way of avoiding the fate of the solitary cultural entrepreneur, uncaptialized and controversial, competing in a slick multibillion dollar marketplace, without organizational support?

A cooperative effort with other artists might be part of the answer, but Kristin worries that "it might bankrupt me." She adds that she doesn't at all fear success. "I would love to have a best-selling hit record. I don't think it would hurt my politics."

As far as working with a political group, "the ideal relationship would be them paying me a salary, for which I would write songs, teach and sing." Kristin would like to work closely with DSA locals, although, to her chagrin, she hasn't done one DSA function since the DSOC/NAM merger. She doesn't believe in broadcasting her organizational affiliations at every concert, but she's willing to mention DSA to organizers of local events where DSA has not been included as a sponsor and to speak to the media about DSA. "I feel a political trust relationship with DSA locals."

"I've grappled with my role in helping to build DSA or NOW," she remarks, "and it isn't so clear. If there are disagreements, and there have been with NOW, I'm not going to deny them or stop presenting my point of view. The organizational building role I can carry out comes not from singing the line, but from a position of critical support within a context of basic agreement."

And what does she get out of being a DSA member? "New American Movement members in the pre-merger days were responsible for my political education. The general level of discourse—and I mean discourse, not rhetoric, but serious, intelligent exchange—was inspiring."

Fred Small

For over three years now, Fred Small has been leaving Boston to tour the country as a professional musician. Fred gave up a career as a lawyer in environmental law to sing and write songs for a living. Since that decision, he has sung at some of the largest demonstrations and built up a following across the country.

Like Kristin, he believes that the process of singing together is an empowering one. "We have come to rely on experts in music as we do in politics, economics, and science. We need to, and our audiences need to, reclaim that power to make music."

Fred considers himself firmly part of the folk music tradition. He cites Tom Paxton and Phil Ochs as his mentors. Behind these two, for Fred, is the figure of Woody Guthrie. "Woody Guthrie was a simple songwriter and yet a great one."

Fred thinks that his own songwriting is improving. "I cringe at some of the songs I wrote five years ago. Lyrically, a song like my recent one, 'Face at the Window,' is my most advanced, and yet, for me, to tell a story simply and well is the highest art."

One asset folk music has is that it is reproducible by nonprofessionals. "People can sing a song for themselves. A song such as Holly Near's 'Hay Una Mujer' gets picked up and sung widely."

In the same way, folk music lends itself to audience involvement at the concert itself. When Fred writes songs he plans them to be either "performance" or "singalong" songs. He and Kristin are particularly effective with powerful singalongs, a type of song deceptively simple in form but rarely done well.

Unlike Kristin's relationship with NOW or Charlie King's with the antinuclear movement, no one grouping thinks of Fred Small as its voice. "I sing for all of them. I have a symbiotic relationship with them: they are my audience and I help them organize."

The most important and well-organized audience for political singers today is the feminist audience. "I have many feminist fans," Fred observes, "but of course I cannot appeal to the feminist community the way a woman singer can."

He does sing on the folk music circuit, in coffeehouses, but finds obstacles there since the "folk music community is not nearly as politicized as it was fifteen years ago." But, thinks Fred, the climate is changing once again, largely due to the effect of the disarmament movement.

"Being a socialist profoundly affects the kind of songs I write, my perspectives and the material I choose to write about." But, he is careful to add, "my interest in my songs is primarily an interest in the human beings

portrayed in the songs. I don't think that you could divine some sort of organizational line from them."

Calling himself "not much of a theorist," he terms his reactions more intuitive than analytical. "In fact, I'm a member of DSA because of its tolerance for an intuitive rather than deductive socialism."

Some DSA locals, he feels, have been supportive of his music, either directly through sponsorship of concerts or through the intervention of DSA members in other organizations. "Much of this came about because of my appearance at the 1981 NAM convention. I also sang at the 1981 DSOC convention, in Philadelphia, but the NAM convention showcased music and so my singing there made more of an impression on people and they later brought me into their cities."

Fred just finished a five-week, 21-concert West Coast tour, which also included Pittsburgh, Houston, and Tucson. The tour was built up from DSA and disarmament contacts.

He observes that the audience varied from 300 in Pittsburgh to 20 in San Diego, "both organized by DSA locals." Because he had never before played Pittsburgh, Fred believes that his turnout there was attributable to an "extremely high" level of organization. "They filled the church I sang in, made a thousand dollars for themselves, and the concert was featured in both Pittsburgh dailies."

"The Heart of the Appaloosa," a new record by Fred, was just cut in Boston and should be out in June. Unlike his first album, it is overwhelmingly in an acoustic folk vein. Such a style is more to Fred's liking anyway, but the contrast with his more rock-influenced first album is also a result of a paradox in radio programming. "There are not many outlets for political music that sounds like pop. You can get some folk airplay on college stations with political material, but only with the tracks which sound like folk. I figured that I might as well go all the way with folk material if that was going to be the situation."

It has not been easy making a career of music. Singing fulltime meant a 75 percent cut in income from his days as a lawyer. Like Kristin, he hadn't done his 1982 taxes as of early April, but he does know that "it's a survivable condition now only because I don't have a family to worry about."

He, too, runs into cash flow problems with his record sales. "Things can be very tight," he says, but "it's not surprising, given that cultural workers like myself are on the margin of constituencies which are themselves economically marginal. Groups don't have enough money for part-time staff, let alone money for a wandering minstrel."

It's not easy to find a way out of this difficult situation. There just isn't a collective entity of political musicians which could support us financially, he muses. "It would be tricky to do in any event. Whenever you have collectivized production you have to make a conscious judgment about what deserves to be subsidized."

Fred is involved in a loose network of musicians called Songs of Freedom and Struggle, which has sponsored a yearly conference for the past six or seven years. Now, says Fred, the conferences have become a twice-a-year affair. Kristin comments that Songs of Freedom and Struggle has had trouble drawing in minority participants, but that a breakaway, People's Music Network, has been more successful. Fred notes that although the Songs network isn't usually considered part of the women's music movement, "it does draw in a lot of women, includ-

KRISTIN LEMS

Records: P.O. Box 2267, Station A, Champaign IL 61820. \$7 for discs or cassettes, including postage.

Booking: call (217) 384-3015.

FRED SMALL

Records: Acquifer Records, P.O. Box 566, Somerville MA 02143. \$8 for discs or cassettes, including postage.

Booking: call (617) 457-1496. Or write, 38 J Street, Cambridge MA 02139.

ing singers such as Betsy Rose, Cathy Winter, and Kristin."

About Kristin herself, Fred says, "I know she is helping me out. For instance, she did an interview for a Boston feminist paper in which she mentioned me as an influence. It was a real boost for me in my own hometown. That's exactly what we should be doing, talking up each other's work."

International Influences

One clear difference between Fred Small and Kristin Lems is in their sense of themselves as singers in an international context. Fred says that international developments are of interest, particularly the Latin American new song movement and reggae, "but you have to create in the idiom of your own audience. I would have to say that I am not greatly influenced by music from other countries. Part of the problem perhaps is that I only speak English." Fred's music reflects his concentration on the Anglo-American folk tradition, as developed by the urban protest singers.

Kristin, on the other hand, is an ardent

traveler and linguist who throws herself open to influences from a number of quarters, most notably Iran, where she taught several years ago. She sings a haunting song on abortion by the German left composer Hanns Eisler, for instance, and in general ranges much farther afield than most American singers.

Most of her international influences have come via *Sing Out*, the Weavers, and politically progressive and internationalist folk festivals in Winnipeg and Vancouver. "We tend to be a little parochial here in the U.S."

Kristin sang in Europe last summer and found that "Europeans are strongly resistant to being drawn into what they might see as a U.S.-based political music movement. There are big obstacles to cross-fertilization."

The Germans were drawn to U.S. protest music in the 1960s because they distrusted their own folk music, seeing it as compromised by the Nazi stress on folk culture. Now a revival of *some* German forms is underway. The Italians told her their tradition of political song is an old and continuing one and that they feel no need to import foreign forms.

Where both agree is on what DSA should be doing to integrate music with politics and organizational life.

Both would like to be made use of by DSA, nationally and locally. They suggest that DSA should sponsor regional tours by artists, with block booking by locals. Kristin points out, "this would save locals money, and if a regional itinerary were properly developed and publicized throughout the region, it could give DSA some visibility."

Fred mentions a song he was commissioned to write for the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union. "It even had the name of the union in it." The implication is that DSA could use its artists more directly to build up its own image.

Fred also praises the NAM-sponsored national tour by comic Robyn Tyler as a model to follow. He remembers, as well, that "last year there were plans for a grand DSA whistlestop tour of the country. I would be glad to plug into something similar in the future. I'd be more than willing to work as part of a team on a tour, trying to develop a unified program which would have a greater impact than simply a big-name speaker standing alone and speaking."

Holly Near's singing career, for instance, started as part of such a team. She sang to GIs in Asia with the FTA antiwar troupe and then with the national Indochina Peace Campaign tours in the early 1970s. Such events were mixtures of speeches, personal testimonies, theater, music and photography, which made for a potent impact.

But, says Kristin, up to now, "DSA hasn't taken music seriously as part of our

political work. Concerts always seem to be planned as afterthoughts. Fred illustrates some of the problems around DSA's use (or non-use) of musicians by citing the good experience he had with Pittsburgh DSA and contrasting it with a bad experience with another local's merger celebration. "I followed a speech by Mike Harrington. There was a bar at the back of the hall. After Harrington spoke, three-quarters of the audience got up and hit the booze and I ended up playing to a handful of people. It seemed like a case of bad planning."

Fred probably speaks for both artists

when he goes on to say, "many activists have the impression that information, the spoken word, is where you will find truth and guidance, and that the sung word is a frill. But I find organizers increasingly aware that music and the other arts are an integral part of politics at its most basic level."

We ignore that thought to our own disadvantage as socialists in America. ●

Steve Cagan is co-chair of the DSA Cultural Commission. Jim Miller until recently was co-chair of the DSA International Commission. Both are members of Cleveland DSA.

Cover photo: Kristen Lems

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Change and Tragedy at Sixteenth Congress

by Maxine Phillips

Fist-and-rose flags lined the driveway leading to the Hotel Montecoro. We enjoyed the pageantry, but every time we walked out and passed the national guardsmen lounging against their small trucks, we were also reminded that this Sixteenth Post-War Congress of the Socialist International had the potential for disaster. A white ambulance was present around the clock. Security guards lined hotel hallways and foyers. Most of the security measures, though, seemed less than what one would expect for the current, ex-, and soon-to-be heads of state attending the Congress. To American eyes, Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzales, campaigning Portuguese leader Mario Soares, Finnish Prime Minister Kalevi Sorsa, and others moved in what seemed to be unguarded openness.

When Mike Harrington and I arrived on Sunday to begin work with the Resolutions Committee, we asked other delegates how the meeting was shaping up. No one would predict a scenario for the items not on the official agenda: whether PLO moderate Issam Sartawi would attend as an observer and be allowed to address the Congress and whether SI Secretary General Bernt Carlsson would keep his job.

The invitation to Sartawi to attend as an observer had already meant headaches. Privately it was acknowledged that the Australian Labor Party had asked for a postpone-

ment of the meeting, originally scheduled for Sydney in late March, because it disapproved of the invitation. But SI President Willy Brandt wanted the meeting to take place this spring and pushed for the hasty rescheduling in the southern Portuguese resort town of Albufeira.

Brandt also wanted to foster dialogue on the Middle East. Throughout the week Sartawi's name would appear and disappear from the daily official list of delegates and observers. Rumors would circulate about whether he would be allowed to speak and whether Shimon Peres would lead a walkout of the Israeli Labor Party if that happened.

The conflict least likely to make it to the Congress floor was that between Brandt and Carlsson. Since their elections at the 1976 Geneva Congress, Carlsson, formerly the international secretary of the Swedish Social Democrats, had played a role second only to Brandt's in the resuscitation of the SI as it made good on its commitment to break out of the European ghetto and foster democratic socialism in the Third World. Carlsson had been particularly friendly to many of the newer and weaker parties in the movement, including our own. However, since 1960, the SPD of Germany and Brandt have felt that the SI Secretariat, located in London, was becoming too independent. Brandt wanted Carlsson to step down.

Questions on Latin America, the Middle East, and disarmament also occupied delegates. For Harrington and me, though, the most immediate question had to do with the conference resolution. Last fall Harrington had been named secretary of the Resolutions

Committee chaired by Thorvald Stoltenberg, former defense minister of Norway and his party's candidate for mayor of Oslo. As a small, weak "party," we were honored by this assignment. The committee charged Mike to write "socialist poetry," a cohesive statement about the conference theme, "The World in Crisis: the Socialist Response." It wanted to avoid the usual "Christmas tree" document on which everyone hangs a worthy cause, but which becomes quickly outdated as new crises arise and old ones fade away. How would delegates respond to this departure in style? (The shift from Australia to Portugal gave DSA an unexpected opportunity when the Secretariat, suddenly bereft of a pool of native English-speaking staff, asked us to send a staff aide for the Resolutions Committee. I joined others loaned from the Spanish, Portuguese, and German parties who, along with the tireless staff from London, kept the Congress machinery going.)

Sitting in the lounge amid delegates and tourists that first evening, we anticipated a week filled with some backroom battles, lots of interesting people, and days and nights of intense work on the committee before the Congress opened on Thursday.

As the other controversies eddied around us, we were caught up in shuttling from typewriter to translators to meetings, negotiating with various delegations to hammer out what Brandt began to call "The Declaration of Albufeira." Everyone agreed that it was well-written; everyone remained committed to the principle of a major comprehensive statement (separate committees were preparing detailed resolutions on the Middle East, Latin America, and disarmament). And there the agreement ended. Inside the meetings, the Northern European parties argued for a strong position on disarmament. Southern European parties, in particular the Portuguese, the two Italian ones, and the French, who offered a substitute resolution, pressed for less emphasis on nuclear disarmament and more on development and the Third World. Outside the meetings, different groups lobbied for more space for their cause. Delegations tracked me down in the copying room to inspect the latest draft and offer substitute phrasing. People buttonholed Mike in the lounge to say how concerned they were that a sentence on page 20 didn't have what they considered the right emphasis.

Although most of the suggestions could be incorporated into the draft, the major controversy concerned nuclear weapons. Parties that favored the Euromissiles faced off against those with anti-Euromissile platforms. Not only members were concerned. Before the Congress, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. had sent an official statement of its disarma-

ment position. The U.S. government had circulated a non-paper on disarmament (a document expressing the government's position that cannot be directly attributed).

The final resolution contained a carefully worded call for a nuclear freeze, for a halt to the transfer of nuclear weapons technology, and for nuclear free zones in several different areas of the world—a statement somewhat stronger than the separate disarmament resolution. The entire document called for coordinated efforts for economic expansion as the only method of ending the worldwide recession, and pushed strongly for the recommendations of the two reports of the Brandt Commission on North-South relations concerning a new international economic order.

In other matters, the Congress stood firm in its support for the FDR/FMLN in El Salvador, giving a warm response to Revolutionary Democratic Front leader Guillermo Ungo, and reiterated strong support for the Nicaraguan revolution's "original project" of pluralism, nonalignment and a mixed economy. Here, everyone except the Social Democrats-USA voted for an emergency resolution condemning U.S. policy towards Nicaragua. Commandante Bayardo Arce addressed the Congress and in a private conversation thanked DSA for its continued support of Nicaragua against Reagan's interventions.

The Congress adopted a Middle East resolution, carefully drafted by a committee headed by now prime minister of Portugal Mario Soares. It insisted on recognition of the right of the state of Israel to exist and on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, noting that only Palestinians could determine who their representatives were. It called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon.

The SI continued to grow, promoting two parties to full member status: Mapam, which will now vote in a labor alignment with the Israeli Labor Party, and Accion Democratica of Venezuela. Four parties were accepted as consultative members: the Puerto Rican Independence Party, for which DSA lobbied and against which the U.S. government had sent official letters to member parties in 1981; the Progressive Labor Party of St. Lucia; APRA of Peru; and the Working Peoples Alliance of Guyana, the late Walter Rodney's party.

During sessions and outside, Third World delegates circulated to make contacts and press their causes. Since the 1976 shift, the SI has increasingly been a place where Third World parties can be heard and can receive moral and material support. SI pressure helped free Kim Dae Jung of Korea, and at this

Congress, former Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit, recently released from prison as a result of SI pressure, was enthusiastically welcomed. For DSA, with fewer members than many Third World parties, the SI also serves as a link to a broad and representative community.

By Friday night, as we sat in a hotel courtyard enjoying regional delicacies and entertainment provided by the local tourist board, most of the issues that had loomed large earlier in the week seemed to have been resolved. Carlsson had declined to run for re-election and would return to Sweden as an ambassador-at-large. Various names for a successor had been floated and sunk all



DSA delegates to the SI, l. to r., Motl Zelmanowicz, Barbara Ehrenreich, and Michael Harrington.

week, but a consensus appeared to be forming for Pentti Vaeanaenen, international secretary of the Finnish Social Democrats. In conversation with a journalist we predicted (correctly) that Pentti would be the new secretary general and that probably some face-saving compromise would be worked out concerning Sartawi. One of our delegates looked up, noticed an armed guard on a roof and commented again that Sartawi was the last living member of a group of five Palestinian moderates. The other four had been assassinated over the past six years. Sartawi had survived three assassination attempts.

By Sunday morning all predictions were moot. Intimations of potential violence had become brutal reality. Sartawi's body lay in the hotel lobby while stunned delegates rushed through the rest of the Congress agenda with little dissension. Bernt Carlsson read the message Sartawi had been lobbying to present himself. In it, Sartawi praised the SI: "The persecuted and underprivileged peoples of Africa, Central and South America

and even Asia turned to the SI for help, and found in it refuge and succor." Only the Palestinians were forgotten, he claimed, in a plea for recognition of the PLO so that dialogue could proceed.

With Sartawi's death, Brandt's hope that the SI could be a place where dialogue between the PLO and progressive forces in Israel could occur seems dashed. The SI's continuing ambition to offer an alternative for Third World countries wishing to remain nonaligned could have more success. Vaeanaenen will take over as secretary general in June. It appears that SI headquarters will remain in London and that Assistant Secretary General Robin Sears, formerly executive director of the Canadian NDP, will remain on staff.

The bigger question is, what happens after Brandt? Most observers believe that this will be the septuagenarian leader's last term. No one of comparable stature seems available to succeed him. Can the momentum the SI has gathered in the past seven years be sustained after he leaves?

The 77-member federation is coping with growing pains as new parties join, and new movements within older parties, such as the peace, women's, and environmental forces, vie to be heard. Northern European parties are losing power, to be replaced by conservatives. In the South, where parties such as the Spanish and Portuguese have gained enormous ground after decades of repression, the most ambitious projects possible seem to be reforms that are fifty years overdue. The external tensions of the renewed Cold War and the overwhelming economic crisis give socialists little room to maneuver.

When Karl Marx addressed the inaugural convention of the Working Men's International Association in 1864, he exhorted workers from all countries to "stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation." Since then the International has died and been reborn several times. This incarnation is the longest lived and largest such association ever to exist. Its success has even encouraged such imitators as the Democratic International, a group of right-wing parties in the process of formation. After Sartawi's assassination, news reports focused on the lack of openings for peace in the Middle East. It's true that the Socialist International can't play a role now, that solidarity was strained at this meeting. But this latest manifestation of Marx's dream offers hope both to the parties in the Third World and to our own organization struggling to gain recognition in the First World, as it attempts to provide a place for us to "stand firmly by each other."

SOCIALIST SECURITY

by Frank Ackerman

The good news is that the latest changes are supposed to make Social Security financially sound for several decades. The bad news, evidently, is coming in several decades. When the massive "baby boom" generation retires, will Social Security go broke? That is, can people now in their 30s or younger actually expect to get Social Security checks someday?

"Solutions" to the problem are abundant. Conservatives generally favor destroying the nation's retirement system in order to save it. Increases in the retirement age are a favorite proposal; this year's reform upped the age at which you can get full benefits to 66 if you're now 40 or under, and 67 if you're now 23 or under. Conservatives also lean toward outright benefit cuts, such as the six-month delay in Social Security cost-of-living adjustments passed this year. As the Reagan administration loves to demonstrate, any social program can be made financially "sound" by gutting its benefit levels. If no one got Social Security till they were 84, the system's financial worries would of course be over.

Even farther out in right field, some economists have suggested switching the whole system to a pay-your-own-way plan, where you get back only what you put in (with interest). Social Security would thus become a giant public savings bank. This misses the point: Social Security is immensely popular in part because it redistributes income, because low- and moderate-income workers can expect to get back *more* than they would on the savings bank approach.

Liberals, on the other hand, favor raising taxes to maintain benefit levels. Opinion polls suggest that this is one case in which large numbers of people favor tax increases over benefit cuts; cutting Social Security is even less popular than raising taxes. The latest reform in Social Security finances did feature an acceleration of planned future tax increases. In theory, future problems could be solved by ever-higher taxes. But this solution ignores the dilemma of the fiscal crisis, which has defeated liberal programs and spending patterns in so many other areas. Tax increases lead to tax revolts and meat-

cleaver-style cutbacks, if not in Social Security then in other, less universally popular social programs.

Fortunately, there are other alternatives. Better management of the economy, and a restructuring of retirement programs and financing, could lead to lower costs without any loss of benefits. There are four elements to such an alternative: one dealing with the health of the economy as a whole, and one for each of the three major Social Security benefit programs (basic retirement and survivors payments, Medicare, and disability).

Like the Rest of Us

Social Security finances look bad because too little has been paid into the system and too much paid out. There is nothing mysterious about this; you may have noticed the same problem in your own checkbook, for instance. Moreover, Social Security's financial troubles have the same causes as many people's money woes: unemployment and inflation. For Social Security, unemployment lowers tax collections; no one pays Social Security taxes when they are out of work. Inflation, on the other hand, raises benefit costs—both because benefit checks are adjusted to keep up with inflation, and because Medicare costs keep rising.

In other words, stagflation, the ugly combination of unemployment and inflation, caused the short-run crunch on Social Security funding. Back in December 1977, the Carter administration proudly predicted that Social Security finances were secure for several decades. This prediction was based on the assumption that inflation would stay under 5 percent annually. Wildly different projections of future financial problems can be obtained simply by adjusting the assumed rates of unemployment and inflation up or down.

Thus, full employment and price stability would do wonders for Social Security financing. A bad enough recession and/or inflation, however, would eventually bankrupt the system, no matter what else is done to save it.

How Many Dependents?

Beyond full employment and price stability, what can be done to bolster Social Security? In particular, can the program costs be reduced in a noncoercive manner while leaving people feeling as well off as before?

The largest of the three benefit programs provides the basic old age and survivors payments. It is here that the long-term crunch is often said to be inevitable. On al-



most any projection, the fraction of the population reaching retirement age will shoot up after 2010, as people born immediately after World War II turn 65. At that point, the doomsday scenario suggests, the Social Security burden per worker will shoot up as well, leading to unacceptable tax increases and/or benefit cuts.

However, this is a simplistic view of the burden on the working population. Clearly, retired people are ultimately being fed and clothed by those who are currently working. But so are many other people—children, for instance, and any adults who, voluntarily or involuntarily, are out of work.

The broader question is: how many total dependents per active worker can we afford? And how many will we have in the dreaded years beyond 2010? Remarkably enough, the standard Census Bureau projections imply that there will be *fewer* dependents per worker throughout the next century than there were from 1950 to 1970.

Year	Dependents per worker
1950	1.51
1960	1.65
1970	1.51
1979	1.23
2000	1.20
2025	1.33
2050	1.33
Long-run limit	1.34

Notes: Future projections based on Census Bureau Series II-X population estimates ("zero population growth" birth rate, no net immigration, slight improvement in life expectancies), and on continuation of the 1979 pattern that the number of workers is about three-fourths the number of people aged 18-64. See Ackerman, *Reaganomics: Rhetoric vs. Reality*, p. 97-98, for more detail.

In 1960, when the "baby boom" generation was not old enough to work, there were 1.65 dependents per worker (or 5 for every 3 workers); 65 years later, when the baby boom folks have retired, there will be only 1.33 dependents per worker (or 4 for every 3 workers). If we could afford the baby boom's childhood, we can afford its retirement.

Still, there will be pressures to cut costs of retirement benefits. The money spent on the dependents of 1960—the public funding for education, and private expenditures for childrearing—will not be automatically transferred to the elderly. Thus reductions in benefit costs will remain an important goal.

The conservative solution of raising the retirement age certainly reduces costs: it forces each of us to work and pay taxes a little longer, and to collect benefits for a little

less of our lives. But the advocates of this approach, generally economists and politicians, are not themselves engaged in physically demanding occupations. Among blue-collar workers and others in stressful jobs, early retirement is very popular. James Schulz notes in *The Economics of Aging* that at General Motors, after the UAW won a good pension plan, the average age at retirement dropped from 70 in 1950 to 58 in the late 1970s.

A more humane approach would seek voluntary ways of getting more people to work. (Strange as it may seem at this time of double-digit unemployment, the long-run economic problem of Social Security is one of finding more workers to support all those retirees.) In Sweden, for just this reason, employers are required to offer employees in their late 50s or 60s the option of reduced hours of work at the same hourly pay rate. This makes it possible for many more people to choose to keep working.

Even more could be done: new jobs could be created, often for less than 40 hours a week, specifically for older workers. To

cite just one example, many people in their sixties and seventies could make good child-care workers. Some would certainly enjoy this chance to use their skills, and it would free younger parents to go to work, raising the number of people working and paying taxes still further.

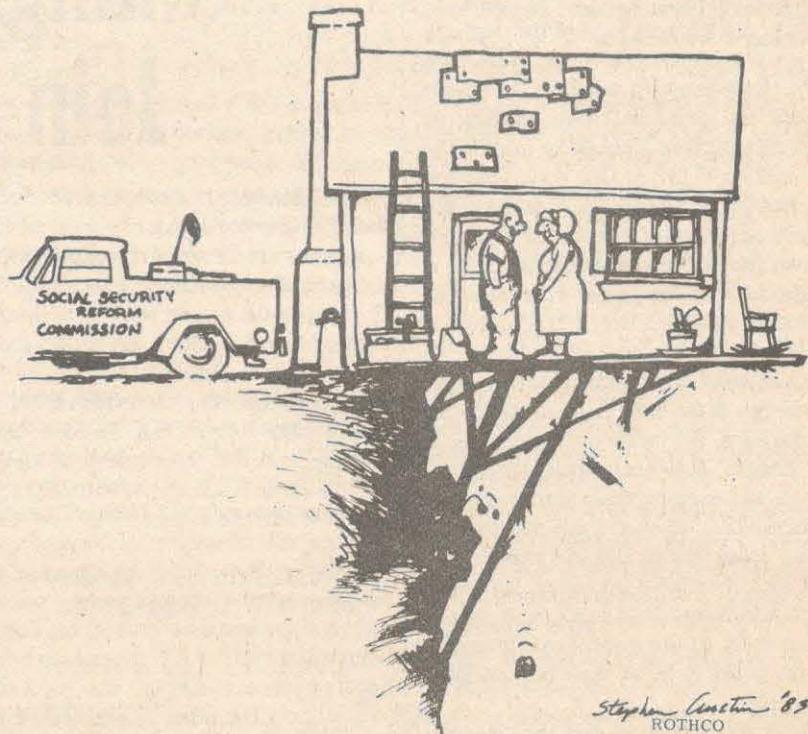
High Price of Health

A second major Social Security benefit area is Medicare, which covers most health care for retired people. The problem here lies not only in the increase in retirees after 2010, but in the continual escalation of health costs.

The U.S. now spends over one-tenth of its gross national product on health care, more than any other country. Yet the results are dismal. The infant mortality rate, for instance, is higher here than in Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as at least a dozen European countries.

The solution, in this case, is socialized medicine—a solution already adopted by every industrial country except South Africa. A complete public takeover of the health care

"As the Reagan administration loves to demonstrate, any social program can be made financially 'sound' by gutting its benefit levels. If no one got Social Security till they were 84, the system's financial worries would of course be over."



"We did a great patching job, Ma'am. Probably hold you for another 30 years."

system would allow cost-cutting in two major ways. First, doctors' salaries, while still amply above average, could be well below the levels of today's extortionary fee schedules. Straight salaries instead of fee-for-service payments would eliminate the present incentives for doctors and hospitals to order needlessly complex tests, equipment, and operations.

Second, a unified system of free or nominal-fee health care for all would eliminate layer upon layer of bureaucracy and paperwork currently required to prove someone is financially eligible for treatment. Vast bureaucracies already administer most health care: government programs pay for two-fifths of all medical care, government and health insurance companies between them pay for two-thirds. A single health care administration, which did not have to keep records on patients' financial status, would be simpler, not more complex.

Iron Lungs, Steel Hearts

The third, and smallest, Social Security program is disability insurance. To qualify, you have to have been working for five of the last ten years; and you have to have a disability that has prevented you from working for the last five months, and will prevent you from working for the next twelve months or more. However, the disability need not be caused by work. Three million people are now receiving benefits. Blacks are more likely to be disabled than whites; in either race, the most frequent recipients are older, poorly educated men.

After the present form of the disability program was created in 1960, costs rose rapidly. Ever-growing numbers of people qualified, and payments were climbing by more than 8 percent annually for most of the 1960s and early 1970s. One could conclude from this that astonishing, and perhaps growing, numbers of people are disabled. However, the more popular interpretation in Washington was that people were cheating, and that it was time for a crackdown on eligibility standards.

As in many other social programs, cutbacks began in the later years of the Carter administration, then were made much worse under Reagan. Many new applications were rejected, and existing cases were reviewed and disqualified, all with more attention to program costs than to people's health. Horror stories inevitably appeared, as steel-hearted administrators threw people off the disability rolls. At one point, a man in an iron lung was declared fit for work and ineligible for benefits.

After publicity about this and other absurdities, the administration decided that examiners must actually see recipients before

ruling them ineligible. Perhaps the most grotesque errors are now being prevented. Still, people are being thrown off disability so arbitrarily that, in New York at least, half of those who appeal win reinstatement; for those who contact a Legal Aid lawyer before appealing, the proportion rises to almost four-fifths.

A better approach would focus on understanding and preventing the sources of disability. Though disabilities need not be work-related, they often are. One state has far and away the highest proportion of disabled people: West Virginia, where there are 7 disability recipients for every 100 workers. This is at least a strong hint that coal mining in particular is a hazardous occupation, and that more money spent on mine health and safety might have big payoffs in reduced disability costs.

The next highest states, ranked by disability rates, are all in the Southeast. The explanation is less obvious, but could include lack of preventive health care for blacks and low-income whites, farm-related accidents, or industrial accidents related to lax government regulation and the absence of union protection in the area. Disability is a serious problem in all parts of the country, but it does have wide variations in frequency by state as well as by age, race, and sex—all of which should make it easier to isolate its causes. Then the government could save money by

preventing future disabilities, rather than by harassing past victims.

In summary, the long-run problems of Social Security are vast, but not impossible to solve. Despite the expected surge of retirees thirty years from now, the overall burden of dependents per worker may never again be as high as it was in 1960. Social Security finances can be saved, without additional pressure on recipients or taxpayers, if four major changes are made. First, full employment and price stability are important to Social Security funding, as to the rest of us. Second, basic retirement costs can be reduced without benefit cuts if new jobs are created specifically tailored to older workers. These will lead to more voluntary postponement of retirement. Third, Medicare costs can best be controlled by socializing and reorganizing our health care system. Finally, disability costs can be cut by strict occupational health and safety measures, preventive health care, and other programs designed to reduce the actual rate of disabilities.

None of these changes will be won overnight; but it appears that we have thirty years to work on them. With these changes, the benefits now provided by Social Security will be secure for the twenty-first century. ●

Frank Ackerman is the author of Reaganomics: Rhetoric vs. Reality (South End Press).

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REVIEWS

by Maurice Isserman

Abraham Went Out: A Biography of A.J. Muste, by Jo Ann Ooiman Robinson. Temple University Press, 1982. 341 pp. \$22.50.

Breaking Bread, The Catholic Worker and the Origin of Catholic Radicalism in America, by Mel Piehl. Temple University Press, 1982. 296 pp. \$19.95.

Once every year in the 1950s the U.S. government staged a nationwide civil defense drill. In some states, including New York, failure to take shelter during the drill was a crime punishable by up to a year in prison. The government wanted to persuade Americans that a nuclear war with the Soviet Union was not only survivable, but winnable: the head of the civil defense program declared that "the balance of victory may well rest with the nation whose population can best manage the effects of atomic attack by getting up off the ground organized and ready."

While the overwhelming majority of the population trooped obediently into air raid shelters, or crawled under desks or work benches where shelters were not available, a small group of pacifists in New York City decided they could no longer participate in this deadly farce. On June 15, 1955, the day set aside for the drill, 28 people, including Dorothy Day of the Catholic Worker movement, and A.J. Muste of the Fellowship of Reconciliation sat down on benches in City Hall Park with signs reading "End War... The Only Defense Against Nuclear Weapons." They were all arrested and jailed. Using the peculiar logic of the times, the judge who first heard their case told them they were "guilty of the murder of three million people" in the hypothetical Soviet attack on New York City. Given the prevailing war hysteria, Day, Muste and their friends had performed a brave act of moral witness, but it seemed like a futile gesture politically. Over the next few years, every time the annual air raid drill rolled around, the same small band, their numbers augmented by a few new recruits, turned out in City Hall Park and were led off to jail. But in 1960 over a thousand people turned out, and the following year more than two thousand. The police stopped enforcing the law, and soon after the drills were abandoned altogether.

A small victory, but not an insignificant one. The air raid drill protesters challenged the credibility of the civil defense program, helped reopen the debate on nuclear weapons, and attracted scores of new recruits to the peace movement (some of whom would play a crucial role in the early days of anti-Vietnam War protest). Over the years the pacifist movement in the United States has been far more successful than the socialist movement in transforming the private concerns of the left into public issues. A more recent example can be seen with the antinuclear power protests. Only a decade ago the nuclear power industry enjoyed overwhelming popular confidence: it was to be America's source of cheap, clean, safe power. In the mid-1970s a pacifist-led antinuclear group began staging annual sit-ins at the construction site of a nuclear power plant in Seabrook, New Hampshire. The first year only about a dozen people were arrested. The following year

there were over a hundred arrests; the third year over a thousand. By the end of the decade (helped by a little accident at Three Mile Island) the future of the nuclear power industry was up for grabs. Thousands of people active in the disarmament movement today were first drawn into political motion by the example set at Seabrook.

Two new books from Temple University Press, Mel Piehl's *Breaking Bread* and Jo Ann Ooiman Robinson's *Abraham Went Out*, make an important contribution to our knowledge of the role of pacifism in American political life, building upon and updating older efforts like Lawrence Wittner's *Rebels Against War*. Both books are sympathetic to, yet critical of their subjects, indicating the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the pacifist tradition.

Muste and Day were a couple of complicated characters. Muste, the embodiment of the uncompromising Calvinist Protestant conscience, wandered all over the religious and political map: from the Dutch Reformed Church of his parents, to the Congregationalists, Quakers and Presbyterians; from being an independent radical sympathetic to the labor movement, to being the head of his own "vanguard party," to an unhappy alliance with the Trotskyists, and finally to the pacifist movement. Day, the child of Protestant parents indifferent to religion, plunged into the Bohemian radicalism of pre-World War I Greenwich Village, suffered through a decade of personal and political aimlessness after the war, converted to Catholicism and became the founder of the Catholic Worker movement and the most influential leader of Catholic radicalism in America. Both Muste and Day were involved in a personal quest for spiritual solace; both were able to translate their private concerns into effective political action.

Muste was at his best working in coalition: bringing together diverse groups, persuading them that they had more to gain by working together than remaining at each other's throats. At the time of his death in 1967 at the age of 82, he was a leader of the Spring Mobilization Against the War in Vietnam, which was to bring some 300,000 people into the streets of New York City.

Day left a different sort of legacy. She put her stamp on a small, intensely committed community of activists. The Catholic Worker movement, which published a newspaper, ran shelters and soup kitchens for the poor, and attempted to make the teachings of the Catholic Church a force for revolutionary change, faced a dilemma not unknown to more secular groups of the left. As Piehl notes:

Efforts directed at maintaining the group's own hold on the ideal tend to turn it inward toward sectarian withdrawal, while attempts to present the ideal to others become entangled in social and moral complexity, thus eroding the purity of the original vision.

Day's particular organizing genius lay in her ability to maintain the Catholic Worker's sense of spiritual community, while still being able to keep her disciples engaged with the outside world. She influenced a generation of young Catholic activists, a number of whom can now be found in and around DSA.

The trouble with the pacifist movement, as both Robinson and Piehl's accounts suggest, is that it never learned how to consolidate its political gains. Pacifists are terrific people to have around in

Continued on page 15.

ON THE LEFT



by HARRY FLEISCHMAN

NATIONAL ROUNDUP

Alaska

Members of the Democratic House minority in Alaska wear a red rose or carnation when the House is in session, writes DSAer Niilo Koponen, a new representative. The tradition goes back to Bob Bartlett, Alaska's delegate to Congress in territorial days, who was a left Democrat. The Democratic Legislative Committee has had enamelled rose pins made up and is selling them for \$10 to fund the next campaign. Being in a minority is no fun, but good training, says Niilo. He reports that Juneau and Fairbanks DSA are both planning May Day celebrations.

Connecticut

An East Coast DSA labor conference will be held in Hartford June 25 to discuss unemployment, ways to stem corporate assaults, build unions, and expand the socialist presence in unions.

Illinois

Hundreds of DSA members in Chicago worked actively and successfully in Harold Washington's mayoralty campaign. Special kudos to Roberta Lynch, who did a great 20-hour-a-day job on the lakefront wards. The Debs-Thomas dinner May 7, honoring Joyce Miller, will also be a victory party, with Harold Washington and Ron Dellums as speakers.

Kansas

DSA NEC member Carl Shier spoke at the University of Wichita last month on "What Happens After Reaganomics—Labor and the Future."

Massachusetts

Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale won the straw ballot at the state Democratic convention with 29 percent of the vote. AFL-CIO delegates scored second, with 25.6 percent voting for "jobs" instead of an individual. Senator Alan Cranston of California polled 16.9 percent, after

speaking to many delegates, including 60 members of a DSA caucus... The *Boston Globe* last month gave a full page to a story on Mike Harrington, "U.S. Socialists find ripe pickings in the rhetoric of Reaganomics." The article also quoted Peter Dreier, who reported that Boston DSA now has 450 members.

Michigan

One April municipal election brought an Epton victory and a Republican mayor, says *In These Times*, "but the city wasn't Chicago and the Epton isn't a Republican"—he's the DSA son of Chicago mayoral loser Bernard Epton. Jeff Epton, a 35-year-old veteran of the anti-war movement, won an Ann Arbor city council seat. There are now three socialists on the city's 11-member council. In Ypsilanti, DSA-supported socialist mayor Pete Murdock was elected and three socialists are now on the city's 11-member council. DSA-PAC gave active support...

Margot Duley-Morrow, president of Michigan NOW, spoke to Ann Arbor DSA on "The Gender Gap and Feminist Politics," urging feminists and socialists to work together. DSA vice-chair Manning Marable spoke in April on "Nuclear ARMs and Defense Spending: the Social Costs and Racial Implication"... Speaking in a crowded University of Michigan Law School Auditorium, DSA's Irving Howe delivered three lectures on "American Socialism: Its Rise and Fall." He advised listeners to work alongside the two-party system, raising issues for it to pick up. He likened the Democratic party to a "tent," covering even us... Michigan DSA holds its second biennial convention May 7 in Detroit... DSA member Jordan Rossen has

IN MEMORIAM

Yetta Riesel, an active socialist in the '30s and '40s who later worked in the Newspaper Guild's collective bargaining department, died in March at the age of 66. She was a member of the national committee that planned the formation of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and was the Guild's first full-time equal rights coordinator in 1973. Survivors include her brother Victor Riesel of New York, the syndicated columnist.

been named UAW General Counsel, succeeding John Fillion, another DSA member, who becomes Special Counsel.

Montana

The *Helena Independent Record* and the *Billings Gazette* gave excellent coverage to the formation of the Helena DSA local and a talk by Western Coordinator Jim Shoch. More than 40 people attended the meeting.

New York

The April *Ithaca Socialist* reports that DSAer Jean McPheeters is the new chair of the Tompkins County Democratic Committee. DSAers Charlie Rock and Steve Emerman were recently seated on the committee... DSAers are cooperating with UAW Local 2300 in organizing Cornell University clerical and technical workers... Deborah Meier, co-chair of DSA's fact-finding mission on Nicaragua, spoke to Local Nassau in March at Nassau Democratic County Committee headquarters, and Mitchell Cohen, editor of *Jewish Frontier*, spoke in April on "Is Peace Possible in the Middle East?"

The Socialist Scholars Conference: What's Left?, in honor of Marx's centennial, held in New York at Cooper Union April 1-2, was a smashing success. Over 1,400 registered for a day and a half of intensive, crowded discussions on socialist theory and politics. Major panels on feminism, race and class, state and democracy, overflowed. The plenary included Michael Harrington; Luciana Castellina, European Parliament member and leader of the Italian peace movement; and Jean Pierre Cot, French Socialist leader; and Oscar Brand singing labor songs. Among the many speakers, Representative John Conyers appeared as a surprise guest on the panel on the economy. The conference was organized by the City University of New York DSA faculty and grad student clubs with support from a wide range of left and socialist journals. Next year's conference will take place in New York on the theme, "Encounter with America," under the same sponsorship...

More than 450 people turned out last month for the DSA tribute to Ruth Messinger, NYC council member... The New York Local is working with a coalition of unions and social agencies in a drive to register 50,000 new voters in May and June. The campaign was sparked by Richard A. Cloward and Frances Fox Piven...

DSA members, working with radio station WBAI, are providing 14 hours per month of regularly scheduled programming... A May Day Bash of the Kings County branch was held April 30 at the home of Sy Posner... DSA joined with NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group) and others at Stony Brook for a Reaganville Tent Camp during Jobs with Peace Week. Suffolk DSA leader Hugh Cleland spoke on the "War Economy and its Effects on America's People" at Reaganville and over WUSB...

More than 140 religious socialists and leftists from as far away as San Diego and Saskatchewan gathered at a retreat center in upstate New York April 15-17 for the first conference sponsored by DSA's Religion and Socialism Commission. Originally planned as an East Coast event, the conference drew several Midwesterners and Southerners. About half the participants were DSA members; others registered after seeing small classifieds in progressive religious publications. Although the incessant rain and snow (on April 16!) that forced closing of local roads led to snide comments about certain forces being arrayed against the conference, most people were so intent on meeting each other that they hardly noticed. The conference theme of "Making Connections" was carried out on a practical level as activists compared notes and learned what people in different denominations and religions were doing. Conference speakers drew connections between religion and socialism, private morality and public policy and liberation theology and post-Enlightenment thinking. Exchanges were sharp, but, as someone jested, "We didn't have to mop up any blood." A more detailed description of the debates will run in the spring issue of *Religious Socialism* (available for \$1 per copy or \$3/year from 1 Maolis Rd., Nahant, MA 01908). Enthusiastic Midwesterners volunteered to hold a conference next year, and plans are underway for a Commission event at the DSA convention in October.

North Carolina

Bogdan Denitch spent two days at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and spoke at four meetings. The DSA local is working to get the UNC to divest itself of investments in South Africa.

Ohio

A Midwest DSA Labor conference with workshops on deindustrialization, multinationals, unemployment and ways to stem

corporate assaults and build unions brought more than 50 activists to Cleveland last month... A recent issue of *The Cleveland Beacon* featured articles on politics of housing and an interview with Sandy Buchanan, Ohio Public Interest Campaign Cleveland director, on its class-action suit against area supermarket chains for price-fixing. The suit forced the chains to mail \$20 worth of food certificates to one million households in northeast Ohio.

Pennsylvania

Ruth Messinger, NYC councilwoman, keynoted a day-long electoral workshop sponsored by Philadelphia DSA. Representatives from the campaigns of David Cohen, whom the local has endorsed for reelection as councilman at large, and W. Wilson Goode, black former city manager, who is running against Frank Rizzo in the Democratic mayoralty primary, were invited to the conference to give updates on their campaigns... Dick Greenwood, special assistant to Machinists' President William Wimpisinger, came to Pittsburgh in April at DSA's invitation to meet with labor, community and peace activists on jobs with peace...

Texas

Sanford Gottlieb, executive director of United Campuses to Prevent Nuclear War, spoke for DSA at the University of Houston last month... DSA helped organize Human Fellowship Day at Hermann Park, a coalition against the Ku Klux Klan, which marched that same day in downtown Houston.

Wisconsin

Our latest DSA elected official is Charles Uphoff, elected to the Board of Supervisors of the rural town of Fitchberg.

INTERNATIONAL ELECTIONS

Recent elections abroad have been a mixed bag for socialists. The Social Democrats failed in their recent bid to topple the Center-Right coalition in West Germany and the Austrian Socialists failed to achieve a majority in their election, although they retain the chancellor's post. At the same time, the Australian Labor Party swept to a stunning victory over the Liberal-National party coalition government, winning 74 seats in the 125-seat House, a gain of 22 seats. The Portuguese Socialists won a victory and the British Columbia New Democratic party is expected to win in the May 5 elections.

FIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY

The Workers Defense League, in cooperation with the North Carolina AFL-CIO, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), farmworkers and civil rights groups, is mounting a campaign for a N.C. anti-slavery law. The state never passed a law on involuntary servitude, contending that the question was settled with the end of the Civil War. Those familiar with the debt-bondage systems still persisting know that such a law is needed. The state's grower-dominated study commission recommendations fall far short of the farmworker advocacy groups' demands for needed reforms. The WDL's Southern staff member, Chip Hughes, has been assigned to build an effective coalition to support passage of a favorable reform package for farmworkers.

SOLIDARITY

Seventy artists, intellectuals, unionists, civil rights and political leaders joined in a Campaign for Peace and Democracy East and West to defend Polish Solidarity leaders on trial. In a *New York Times* ad, Chair Edward Asner and the others protested plans to put on trial former members of KOR, the Workers Defense Council, as well as Solidarity leaders. Among the ad's signers were State Senator Julian Bond, Congressman John Conyers, Robert Meeropol, Paul Robeson, Jr., William Wimpisinger, Michael Harrington and Gloria Steinem. The group warned that sentencing of the Polish unionists "would be seized on by the most reactionary elements in our own society to justify their own retrogressive social and Cold War policies."

The Polish government's attempt to mask its anti-Semitism by promoting a 40th anniversary commemoration of the Warsaw ghetto uprising was foiled when socialist Marek Edelman, the last surviving leader of that heroic episode, refused to participate. Edelman, a cardiologist in Lodz and a Solidarity activist, told the Communist regime, "Don't use me to cover up your shame."

"Forty years ago," he said, "we did not fight merely to survive—we fought for life in dignity and freedom. To celebrate our anniversary here, where enslavement and humiliation are now the lot of the whole society, where words and gestures have become nothing but lies, would betray the spirit of our struggle."

ORGANIZER'S DIARY

On the Road with Penny Schantz

After visiting nearly fifty DSA locals and campus chapters in February, March, and early April, I feel like a traveling salesperson for socialism. What follows gives a slight flavor of life on the road and growth throughout the country.

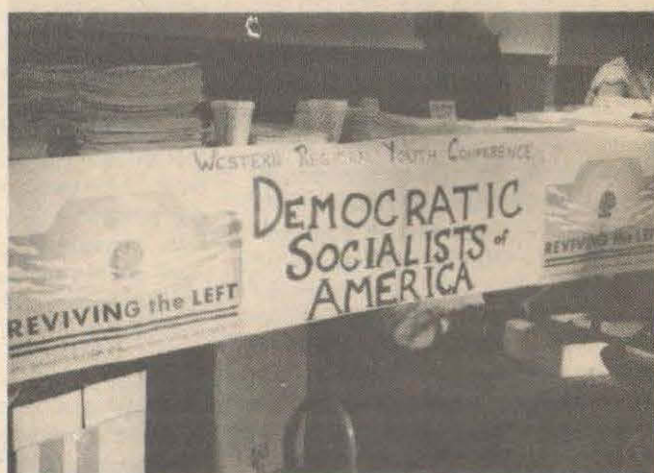
DALLAS "A-ma-zing grace...how sweet the sound" rings through the halls of a Methodist church where I attend a peace vigil and service. The next morning it's off to Austin where the local activists take me to a CISPES [Committee in Support of the People of El Salvador] picket line protesting U.S. intervention in El Salvador. A DSA member is a main speaker. Then it's off to the U. of Texas. The bus ride the next day from Austin to Houston is scenic but depressing. I see two hobos along rail tracks, complete with stick with bundles. Meeting our Houston local softens the depression: They're involved in the AFL-CIO organizing drive, the freeze, and electoral work while still holding regular outreach meetings at the U. of Houston campus.

It's back to N.Y.C. for a few days and then off to New England. Our Bangor, Maine local (many of whose activists are faculty) holds a follow-up organizing meeting to Michael Harrington's visit at the U. of Maine-Orono. A light snowfall gives the ride through New England a storybook character. We get a chapter off the ground at the conservative Bowdoin College campus. I pass through New England church steeples to the docks of Portland, where our local is working to achieve state power through its work in the legislature. It's a diverse group—a carpenter, a fish cutter, a nurse, a professor, a state representative, and more. We have a terrific discussion on feminism. The following day in the middle of the conservative Vermont there's hope for a chapter at Castleton College in Rutland. It's on to Pioneer Valley, Massachusetts, where our new local elects several DSAers to the Democratic party issues convention. I meet with a group of students at Amherst College, who end by forming yet another chapter. That evening, a pizza and beer dinner with a group of feminist activists at Smith College is inspiring. We discuss why we're socialists and feminists, bridging the gap between our generation and feminist activists from the sixties.

Shifting gears 180 degrees, the next meeting is at Holy Cross, where the anti-abortion position is dominant. The chapter has the blessing of the chaplain at this Jesuit College, which is Mike Harrington's alma mater. It's off to Boston and a stretch of bad weather that's to follow me across the country. At MIT a group of graduate students wants to form a DSA chapter...there's a meeting of over 40 at Tufts U...and a blizzard forces cancellation of the Brandeis meeting. The next day is a double header at the University of Rhode Island and Brown U. Brown activists are playing a critical role in the Brown and Sharp Machinists strike. Recovering from pepper gas and mace attacks by Providence police, they hold a major event with Barbara Ehrenreich and get a feminist study group off the ground.

The next evening I'm back in N.Y.C. at a Columbia U. meeting with Stanley Aronowitz. Meanwhile, Peace Tour '83 Coordinator Jason Kay is hard at work getting an NYU chapter off the ground.

CALIFORNIA Three days later I have the pleasure of heading out early with DSA Western Regional Coordinator Jim Shoch to our latest boom country. We arrive on the Stanford campus to make final preparations for the first DSA Western Regional Youth Conference. Little did Jim know 15 years ago that he'd be helping organize a democratic socialist youth conference at his alma mater! The conference is a smashing success and it's time for followup.



Sandra Chelnov

DSA Vice Chair Trudy Robideau greets me at the San Diego airport (I'm on short leave from Greyhound). The next day several folks join DSA, a chapter is formed at San Diego State University and they're off and running.

Much to my surprise my route follows Queen Elizabeth's as she tours California's flooding cities. Dedicated U.C.-Irvine and Orange County DSA activists float their way to a DSA meeting. The next day I was delighted to attend an initial DSA meeting at Loyola-Mary Mount College in Los Angeles. Only a few days had passed since the youth conference and 15 eager activists turn out (11 of them Chicano). That evening I meet with local activists to discuss building a youth section in Los Angeles. Ben Dobbs and I head to Whittier College, Richard Nixon's alma mater, where there's hope for growth. A meeting at U.C.L.A. with a group of graduate assistants who hope to form a teaching assistants union is also encouraging.

Northward to an organizing meeting at U.C.-Santa Barbara, where a month later more than 200 folks would turn out for Peace Tour '83 participant Joan Ruddock. U.C.-Davis, my next stop, has a dynamite group that joined forces with the Davis local to form a campus/community group. They draw over 300 people to hear Daniel Ellsberg and my meeting receives top billing with Tom Hayden's in the campus paper.

On to CSU-Chico and the best socialist T-Shirts, buttons and entrepreneurial efforts in the West. The local keeps growing. A meeting at San Francisco State provides hope for a DSA faculty chapter emerging. That night I meet with East Bay local activists

to map out a strategy for organizing the Berkeley campus. Meanwhile, they're busy with city council elections and mobilizing for hearings on the feminization of poverty in Sacramento. Apologies to Sonoma DSA. My luggage was stolen on the rapid transit system and I missed the meeting—an occupational hazard. The final stop in California is with surf city socialists in Santa Cruz. We sell roses at the International Women's Day event and a new chapter is formed at U.C. -Santa Cruz.

DENVER There's a blizzard (what else?) and the university is closed. Nevertheless, core activists plunge through the snow and we discuss building upon their Peace Tour event. The next day at the U. of Colorado in Boulder, deep in Coors country, we have a terrific discussion on democratic socialism and developing their El Salvador support work.

It's back to New York, where on Long Island our C.W. Post U. contact runs for president of the student government on a socialist platform. The following week at a Princeton/Mercer County, N.J. spaghetti dinner we discuss chapter building. The Socialist Scholars' Conference in N.Y.C. is a tremendous boost and the CUNY DSA Faculty group gives us even more Youth Section leads.

On a swing of upstate N.Y., I visit our new chapter at the State University at Binghamton, have several beers with Rochester DSAers, then go to my own alma mater, Cornell. The files from six years ago are still there, but things have changed. Now the head of the Democratic Party is a DSA member; we're heavily involved in divesting Cornell's funds from South Africa; there is a local Solidarity Day and support for the UAW, which is organizing the Cornell campus. The final stop is the State University of New York at Albany. The local is co-sponsoring a Jobs with Peace rally with the Albany Federation of Labor and Noam Chomsky will appear at SUNY as part of the Youth Section's peace tour. The ground work is being laid for the "Albanian road to socialism."

Next week it will be back "home" to the Midwest—more Burger Kings, more couches, more beers, more rides on the dog and, we hope, more growth. ●

Penny Schantz is the National Youth Organizer of DSA.

Reviews

Continued from page 11.

the early stages of movement-building: brave, principled, and with a flair for the dramatic (the point of moral witness, after all, being to stand out). When it comes time to build institutions, and maneuver in the real world of power and politics, they tend to be less successful. A number of Catholic Worker supporters, like John Cort, withdrew from the movement in the later 1930s because they felt that it was not sufficiently realistic in its agrarian approach to the problems of industrial unionism, then being militantly promoted by the CIO. A.J. Muste continued to be a central figure in the mid-1960s when the antiwar movement emerged as an important force in American politics, but in doing so faced criticism from more traditional pacifist groups.

Breaking Bread and Abraham Went Out make it clear that Dorothy Day and A.J. Muste were not saints. They were tough, dedicated, sometimes cantankerous people, who did not have all the answers, but who still have much to teach those who would follow in their path. ●

Maurice Isserman teaches history at Smith College. He is the author of Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War.

WE HAVE A DREAM

*Eighth Annual IDS Youth Conference
August 24-27, 1983, Washington, D.C.*

Dedicated to the building of a socialist youth movement and a multi-racial movement for peace and social justice in the tradition of Martin Luther King. The conference will adjourn on Saturday, August 27, to join the 20th Anniversary March on Washinton for Peace and Justice. For more information, write: Institute for Democratic Socialism Youth Conference, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, NYC 10003.

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ECONOMICS, PEACE AND LAUGHTER

Cultural and Economic Themes in the Movement for Peace and Justice. The Third Annual Southern Socialist Conference, May 28-29, Atlanta, Ga. Among the speakers: Barbara Ehrenreich, Manning Marable, Stanley Aronowitz, and Leo Casey. Write to Atlanta DSA, P.O. Box 89036, Atlanta, Ga. 30312.

THIRD WORLD PEOPLES CONFERENCE ON JOBS, PEACE AND FREEDOM

June 3-4, 1983, Fisk U., Nashville, Tenn. "The Arms Race vs. Human Needs: A Dialogue on Jobs, Peace and Freedom" will be the first conference on these issues called by a black university and planned for black, Latino and Asian-American participants. Registration: \$10. Low cost housing. Contact: Dr. Manning Marable, Race Relations Institute, Fisk U., Nashville, Tenn. 37203. Phone 615-329-8577.

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.

DSA FIST-AND-ROSE BUTTONS. Single button 50¢ postpaid. Bulk orders for DSA Locals: 25¢ apiece. Send to DSA, 1300 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL, 60657.

Has your local ordered bundles of DEMOCRATIC LEFT to distribute at meetings? For 10¢ a copy you can advertise DSA and its work. Minimum order 25 copies. DSA locals only. Send order to DL, 853 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

MAGAZINE SAMPLES

Free listing of over 150 magazines offering a sample copy - \$.50 a sample. Send stamped self-addressed #10 envelope to: PUBLISHERS EXCHANGE, P.O. Box 220, Dept. 261, Dunellen, NJ 08812

ALTERNATIVE JOB & INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES! The environment, foreign affairs, women's rights, media, health/education, community organizing, and more. Send \$3.00 for latest nationwide listing. COMMUNITY JOBS, Box 607, 1520 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Read SOCIALIST STANDARD. Our goal: a democratic socialist movement with a clear program, based within the Democratic Party and labor movement. Articles by Frank Wallick, Ruth Jordan, reports on local organizing. \$5 per year, Box 9872, Dept. A, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

JIMMY HIGGINS REPORTS

New Teamster prexy Jackie Presser is "the worst possible choice," according to dissidents in Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU). Presser, the Cleveland vice president who succeeds President Roy Williams [convicted for attempted bribery], never stood for election to office in his own local. Rather, he inherited his leadership position from dad, Bill Presser, thrice-convicted Ohio Teamster leader. The younger Presser brags that union service has made him a millionaire. With a 1981 salary of \$353,000, he's not hurting financially. The \$225,000 salary as top Teamster leader is expected to be added on to his current take. Contrast such high finances with the salary of UAW leader Doug Fraser: \$69,000. TDU sources call Presser accommodating to the bosses on contract issues. Recently "to save jobs," he advocated that every Ohio Teamster covered in the national Master Freight agreement take a \$1.25 an hour cut in pay. TDU points out that such a move would have destroyed national bargaining and led to regional wage-cutting competition; even Williams vetoed it. Presser brings one asset to his new position; he's never been indicted. FBI informants like "Jimmy the Weasel" claim that he's tied in to the mob, though proof is lacking. His Ohio district is currently under investigation for keeping no-show employees (including Presser's relatives) on the payroll. And TDU claims he got away with borrowing \$1 million from the Central States pension fund without repaying the loan.

Peace dividend. SANE and the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy estimate that if a bilateral nuclear freeze were adopted soon, American taxpayers could save more than \$84.2 billion over the next six years. Investing that money in solar energy, housing, mass transit and other civilian needs could net half a million new jobs. Labor support for the freeze and union uneasiness about the bloated military budget continue to grow. Mine Workers President Richard Trumka has voiced concern over a "massive military increase at the expense of essential domestic programs." The Cement, Lime, Gypsum and Allied Workers Union (CLGAW) has come out for the freeze. CLGAW President Thomas Miechur, speaking for the union, charged that "the continuing nuclear arms race is dangerously increasing the risk of a nuclear holocaust

either by accident or design." CLGAW joins a list of labor union freeze supporters that includes the Auto Workers, Steel Workers, Machinists, Clothing and Textile Workers, AFSCME, Newspaper Guild, AFT, NEA, and Food and Commercial Workers.

Census figures show a move away from metropolitan areas and rural America over the last decade. And there is a new fascination with the more traditional residents of our countryside as the left rediscovers populism, and everyone rediscovers the struggle of the family farmers. A lively tabloid newspaper entitled *ruralamerica*, edited by Doyle Nieman and Deborah Bouton, provides an invaluable resource in understanding rural roots and the rural renaissance. Richard J. Margolis' essay in the March-April edition proves particularly insightful. Margolis writes of the sticky problem of populist anti-Semitism. He doesn't romantically wish the problem away, and he doesn't simply treat the "homegrown radicals" who spout the rhetoric of anti-Semitism as enemies. "As a Jewish pluralist, I remain troubled, but as an American progressive, I forgive my farmer for his populist trespasses—forgive but not condone," Margolis writes. Read the whole essay *and* a wealth of other material on farm struggles, small town communities, etc. It's well worth the \$10/year subscription price (Rural America, 1900 M St. NW, Washington D.C. 20036).

The April *Sojourners* reported that the American Friends Service Committee had nominated an Israeli and a Palestinian for the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize. The two had been pioneering in the effort to get Palestinians and Israelis to meet to talk about the problems and the prospects for a settlement. By the time *Sojourners* reached its readers, the item was dated. The Palestinian, Dr. Issam Sartawi, had been assassinated by an extremist Palestinian rejectionist group during a Congress of the Socialist International in Portugal [see p. 6]. The Israeli nominated by the American Friends is retired General Matti Peled, who heads the Council for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.



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