

PUBLISHED BY THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS OF AMERICA

# DEMOCRATIC Left

JUNE 1983  
VOL. XI, NO. 6  
\$1



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# OFFICE SPACE

**T**he August 27 March on Washington can strike a major blow for the "Jobs, Peace and Freedom" that are its goals and slogan. On the 20th anniversary of the great march led by Martin Luther King, Jr., we have an opportunity to reaffirm and, perhaps, rekindle the spirit of solidarity that made the civil rights movement of the sixties such a powerful force for change.

We can certainly blame the Reagan administration for major reversals on all three "fronts." Movement toward equality in hiring and promotion for racial minorities and women has been halted by the unemployment that hits those groups with discriminatory force. Escalation of the arms budget at the expense of all social uses of our national wealth, and escalation of the rhetoric of hatred, fear, and xenophobia emanate from the "bully pulpit" of the White House. And "freedom"—read equality—is undermined in practice and attacked directly by the symbolic replacement of the whole leadership of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission with pliant administration appointees.

But blaming Reagan only gets us so far. If the civil rights coalition had not itself fallen apart by the end of the sixties, Reagan might not have made it to Washington. The fault lies in ourselves, in the broadest sense—not in our stars—even our movie stars. And the new coalition of the eighties can be stronger and more durable than the old one—if we have learned some lessons from the past.

Since the sixties the feminist movement has become a massive force, and the anti-nuclear weapons movement is just reaching political maturity. We democratic socialists have begun to build an organization capable of offering more than good ideas and ideals to the general mass of political energy on the left. To bring these forces together—to take one further big step toward shared objectives, to give a strong message to the Congress and elected officials at all levels, to symbolize and inspire hope and determination where there has been despair and uncertainty—all these are the true reasons for devoting every hour we can to make a smashing success of the "Twentieth Anniversary Mobilization."

Many DSA locals have been working on this project. If you haven't already "plugged in" to a local coordinator, call civil rights groups or black churches in your city. Get people to sign up for transportation. See to it that every organization in which DSA members are active—unions, professional associations, peace or nuclear freeze groups, churches or temples, schools or colleges—are mobilized to get *their* members to Washington on August 27th. Most DSA members will be in there with the broader organizations to which they belong, but there will also be a strong presence of DSA in its own name. For more information, get in touch with the New York office.

Jobs, Peace and Freedom! August 27th in Washington, D.C.! Let's do it!

G.H.



## EUROSOCIALISM AND AMERICA

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## DEMOCRATIC LEFT

*Formerly Newsletter of the Democratic Left and Moving On*

**MICHAEL HARRINGTON**  
Editor

**MAXINE PHILLIPS**  
Managing Editor

DEMOCRATIC LEFT is published nine times a year (monthly except July, August and October) by Democratic Socialists of America, formerly DSOC/NAM. The editorial office is located at 853 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, N.Y. 10003, Telephone (212) 260-3270. Other national offices are located at 1300 West Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 871-7700 and at 3202 Adeline, Berkeley, CA 94703. Subscriptions: \$15 sustain-

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# OF TWO MINDS IN EUROPE

by Michael Harrington

In the two months I have been in Europe there has been constant discussion of the deployment of American cruise and Pershing missiles scheduled for later this year if the Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) talks between the United States and the Soviet Union fail to reach agreement.

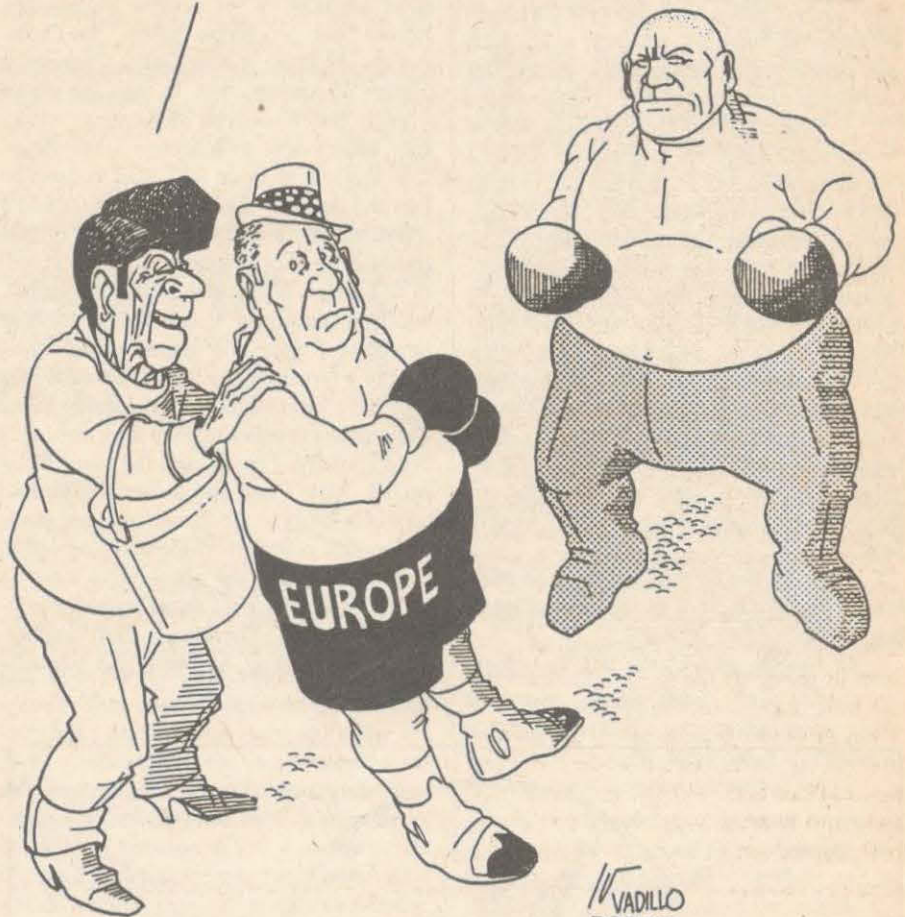
It is, I think, easier to state a political position on the question than to unravel the extremely complex issues it raises. For the Euromissiles are political, not military, in intention. That is, they do not add anything to the already sufficient ability of the United States to incinerate the Soviet Union. They are designed to assure the Europeans that, in the case of a Soviet attack, the United States will respond with weapons on European soil. If, the theory goes, only the ICBMs of the American nuclear "triad" are available, there is no guarantee that the U.S. will put New York and Washington at risk to save Frankfurt or Paris. Implicating this country in the European defense from the very outset, through the Pershings and cruises, will deter a Soviet attack. This theory, first argued by Helmut Schmidt in the seventies, led to the famous NATO "double track" decision of 1979—to simultaneously negotiate with the Soviets and to prepare for missile deployment if the negotiations were to fail.

Gro Harlem Brundtland of the Norwegian Labor Party and others have come up with what strikes me as the most intelligent short-run political response. Under Ronald Reagan the "double track" has actually been a single track, they argue. NATO had envisioned four years of negotiation and got two years under Carter followed by two years of anti-Communist rhetoric from Reagan. Therefore, one must oppose the deployment of the missiles now and push for serious negotiations from the United States. Strangely enough, Helmut Schmidt now seems very close to this position.

## European Debate

This line makes great sense, particularly when the Soviet Union under Andropov has moved somewhat, agreeing for instance to count warheads rather than launchers. That mode of calculation is desired by the United States, since it is planning to produce some "midget" missiles with one warhead each in order to disperse, and thereby make

CALL HIS BLUFF :  
SHOW HIM HE  
CAN'T FRIGHTEN US



*"What are the complexities that have led to so many differences within the European socialist movement on the Euromissile question?"*

less vulnerable, its nuclear arsenal. But what are the complexities that have led to so many differences within the European socialist movement on the Euromissile question? Why is it that, during almost two months in France, I have heard hardly a word of criticism from *any* political camp of the Mitterrand government's pro-missile position?

Let me state at the outset that, while still in basic solidarity with Mitterrand and the

French socialists, I disagree with them on this not unimportant issue. I very much want to understand why it is that people I respect so much have come to conclusions I cannot share.

To begin with, the French socialists think that the Soviet deployment of the SS-20s was a destabilizing action. I agree. Since they cannot hit the United States, they were, so to speak, designed from the start to give



rise to the fears expressed by Helmut Schmidt. Andropov's recent hints that he will station SS-20s in Eastern Europe if the INF negotiations do not succeed is an exercise in a game of nuclear "chicken." Those new missiles would not add significantly to the Soviet ability to destroy Western Europe. But that point cuts two ways: the Euromissiles, like the threat of additional SS-20s in Eastern Europe, do not increase the ability of the United States, or NATO, to destroy the Soviet Union, either. They, too, are part of a game of "chicken."

Second, and much more seriously, France and Thatcher's Britain refuse to allow their independent nuclear forces to be counted on the Western side in the Soviet-American discussions. The British and French now have a total of 162 missiles with the capacity to hit 162 targets. They plan to expand their forces by adding up to 1,100 independently targeted warheads to their combined total. It is clearly impossible for the Soviets to accept the proposition that such a formidable nuclear force—more powerful than the American deterrent under Eisenhower in the fifties—is unrelated to the Western Alliance. The London *Economist*, a sophisticated hawk publication, makes much the same point, as does the chief of the West German General Staff.

Why are the French socialists so adamant? There are three factors that at least help to explain their attitude.

In France, one of the bitterest class

struggles during the Revolution was the fight for the right of the people to be in the army. The left (Jacobins) were for it; the bourgeois right was against it. More broadly, the myth of the nation in this country is leftist and there is a long, rich tradition of socialist military policy. Conversely, the pacifist tradition, which plays such a role in certain Protestant cultures (including that of the United States) has never been very strong here.

Secondly, the Socialist parties that are most adamant on the defense issues—the French, the two Italian parties, the Portuguese—all face, or have faced, Communist parties of consequence. In the case of the French, they have dealt with a party particularly subservient to Moscow, which flirted with Eurocommunism for a brief moment or two and then marched resolutely back into a Soviet ghetto. The Portuguese are up against the most resolutely Stalinist Communist party in Europe. The Italian Communist party, which is becoming a democratic socialist movement, does not constitute the same kind of a threat for the Italian Socialists, but they have had to fight even the Italian Eurocommunists in order to keep their own identity. Thus the French, and the other three parties, have a long and understandable history of hostility to the Soviets that arises out of domestic political considerations as well as from an analysis of the international scene.

Thirdly, there is a sense in which everyone in France is a Gaullist: Gaullist conservatives, moderates, Socialists and Commu-

Inspired by the women of Greenham Common, who have maintained a year-and-a-half long peace encampment at the site where the first cruise missiles are scheduled to be deployed in Great Britain, women in the U.S. will hold a peace encampment at the Seneca Army Depot in upstate New York. The Depot, now a storage site for the neutron bomb, is the departure point for weapons to be deployed in Europe. The encampment will run from July 4 through the Labor Day weekend. Women are invited to stay for as long or as short a time as they wish. For more information, write to the Women's Peace Camp, 713 Monroe Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

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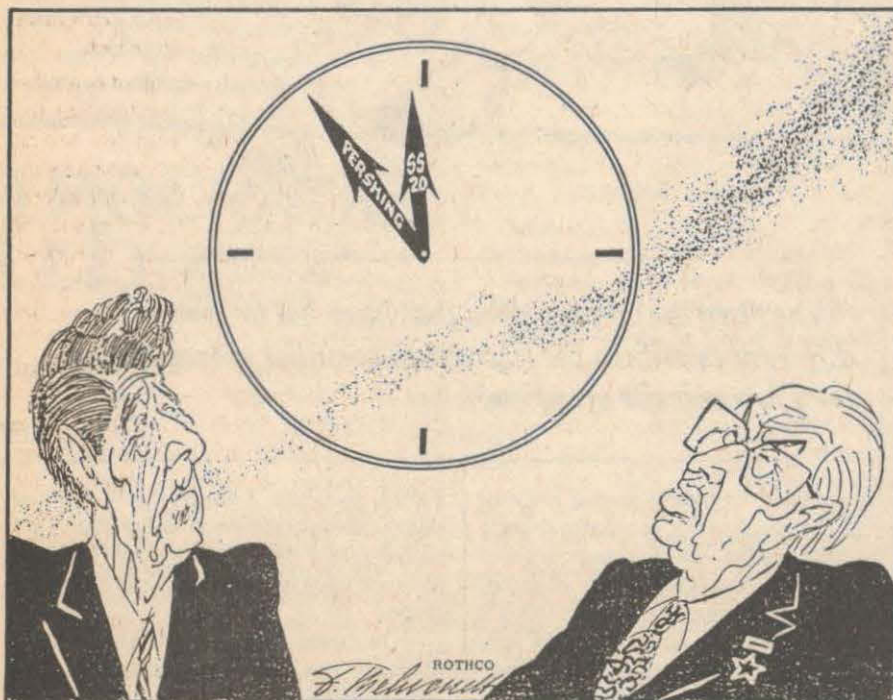
Mark the dates October 22-24 for local actions against deployment of the cruise and Pershing missiles.

nists. One must be very careful in translating that into the American. It was, after all, de Gaulle who took France out of NATO. This pervasive Gaullism, it must be understood, looks with suspicion at both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Other European socialist parties are, of course, at odds with the French. In April I spoke at the Congress of the Dutch Labor Party in the Hague. (It was, not so incidentally, the most feminist political meeting I have ever attended in terms of the roles women played. The new executive is half men and half women although there was no slate or affirmative action mechanism to produce that result.) I told them that we in DSA were very much part of our peace movement and regarded their opposition to Euromissiles not as "anti-Americanism" but as an act of solidarity with the progressive forces in the United States. But in talking to some of the delegates, I sensed two very different attitudes in this party, which is unanimously opposed to the Euromissiles.

There are those who, on the basis of a moral political argument, are opposed to *any* new missiles anywhere in Europe. If the Soviets and the Americans were to cut a deal reducing the number of SS-20 warheads but permitting some cruise missiles to be deployed, this tendency would oppose it. On the other hand, there are those who are against the Euromissiles from within the framework of a commitment to a negotiated, bilateral reduction in nuclear arms. For them, such a Soviet-American deal would be a progressive step forward.

The great virtue of the Norwegian Labor party position, I think, is that it opposes the deployment of the missiles this year—and for two more years—in a way that does



A Clock in Geneva



not split the movement. Since there will be a mass peace offensive this fall, I think that is most important.

The Europeans opposed to the missiles are, rightly, concerned that there is something else implicit in the whole strategy: the assumption that there can be a limited nuclear war—or even a limited conventional war—in Europe. That was an underlying premise of the Schmidt proposals in the seventies and I think it is basically wrong. American troops would be killed on the first day of such an attack. It is preposterous to think, particularly given the tremendous number of battlefield nuclear weapons already in place,

that such a war can be limited to the “mere” destruction of Europe and a good part of the Soviet Union.

The missiles must be opposed, not the least because the Pershing is a first strike weapon and the cruise has the potential for making future negotiations impossible (there is no way of verifying whether such a missile is nuclear or not). But the point is to find a politics for that opposition. I think the Norwegians—and Helmut Schmidt—may have done that. ●

*Michael Harrington is on sabbatical in Europe for five months.*

## ITALY

# Comiso Leads to A New Spirit

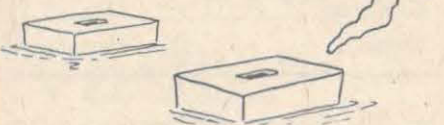
by Joanne Barkan

**I**f you wanted to counter Soviet SS-20 missiles, where would you put your own intermediate range missiles? There are a number of obvious choices, but Sicily does not appear to be one of them. From Sicily, your likely targets would be North Africa and the Middle East, not the Soviet Union.

Yet in August 1981, the Italian government announced that Italy's share of the new cruise missiles for Western Europe would be deployed in Comiso, a town near the southern coast of Sicily. The political forces responsible for the decision were the Christian Democratic party (38.3 percent of the vote in the 1979 elections) and the Socialist party (9.8 percent). The minister of defense was a Socialist.

The Comiso decision, as well as growing concern about a new generation of missiles in Western Europe, ignited the first mass protests against deployment in Italy. These quickly developed into a substantial peace movement. Unlike its counterparts in Britain and West Germany, the Italian movement receives little attention from the U.S. press and is much less known here. The traditional unswerving and loyal support of the Italian government for U.S. foreign policy may account in part for the lack of media interest and the assumption that Italy's support can be taken for granted. What is not yet clear is whether the peace movement will be able to throw that assumption seriously into question.

In April, the national government fell again. Italians will vote for a new parliament



on June 26 and 27. The governmental crisis was precipitated by the Socialists, who believe that their popularity is peaking and hope to increase their share of the vote before it's too late. Since most Italians are weary of the frequent elections and the inconsequential reshufflings of government coalitions, the campaign may not generate much passionate debate. The Communists (30.4 percent of the last vote) are trying to make the Euromissiles a serious election issue. They want to postpone deployment to give arms negotiations a chance to succeed.

The relative strengths of the parties and the personalities chosen to fill cabinet posts may influence the new government's position on the Euromissiles. As the December deadline for deployment in Comiso approaches, there will be more mass demonstrations and direct action in Italy that the new government—whatever its composition—will have to confront.

One of the parties participating in the current election campaign is the Party of Proletarian Unity (PDUP). Despite its small size (six deputies in the last parliament), PDUP has been a strong and consistent voice against deployment of the cruise missiles. Luciana Castellina, a party leader, is a spokesperson for the Italian peace movement and a well-known peace activist in Europe. When she was in New York to speak at the recent Marx

Centennial, DEMOCRATIC LEFT met with her to discuss the composition, politics, and significance of Italy's peace movement.

Castellina began her political career in the Communist party in 1947 where she remained until 1969 when the left grouping, *Il Manifesto*, was expelled. For many years, she was a leading journalist with the newspaper *Il Manifesto* and is now a member of both the Italian and European parliaments. She is also an editor of the weekly *Pace e Guerra* (Peace and War).

**JB: The Italian peace movement grew up somewhat later than the other peace movements in Europe. When and how did it develop?**

LC: You're right that the Italian peace movement is the last child of the European peace movements. This was probably because Italians did not fully realize the danger of war. They considered themselves peripheral. The first time they became aware was in August 1981 when the decision was made by the Italian government to deploy the cruise missiles in Comiso, Sicily. This was exactly the same period in which there were serious incidents in the Mediterranean [between the United States and Libya]. It became clear that war was not a danger only in Central Europe, along the Elba River. War could develop out of incidents in the Third World, in the Mediterranean, and jump back into Europe. Comiso could be a bridge.

The movement then developed in a very spontaneous way, not at all like the peace movement of the 1950s, which was very structured and led by political parties and trade unions. The new peace movement arose outside the institutionalized left.

In the beginning, a group of organizations took the initiative to put together the first major demonstration, which was held on October 24, 1981. These organizations included New Left groups, the youth federation of the Communist party, and leagues of conscientious objectors, and nonviolent groups, which are very small groups. We didn't expect all that many people for the demonstration, but 500,000 showed up!

**JB: Who exactly is in the Italian peace movement?**

LC: Most of the people are members of the left parties, but there are also many young people who had dropped out of politics for five or six years after the post-1968 disillusionment. There are also many teenagers who have never been political before. Like the peace movements all over the world, the Italian movement is a movement of young people.

**JB: What about women? What is the relationship to the feminist movement?**

LC: There are a lot of women in the peace



movement. In fact, looking at the peace activists, the network of peace committees, I would say that women are a majority. But the feminist organizations as such decided not to get involved because they see the peace movement as a male movement. This attitude might be changing, but until now they've considered war a male issue and see peace as being discussed in a male way too. The feminist groups haven't yet found their own way to discuss peace.

**JB: If many of the peace activists are members of left parties, do they share the positions of their parties on peace issues?**

LC: The party and trade union members who are active in the peace movement have a different position from that of their organizations. The movement is more radical, more unilateralist, much more anti-bipolar. It's a movement that doesn't want to be reduced to just pressing the two superpowers for negotiations. The movement wants to be a protagonist, with its own position. It is against deployment of the cruise and Pershing missiles even if negotiations fail.

**JB: In the United States, we hear contradictory reports about the involvement of the Italian Communist party in the peace movement. Some say that the party is a major supporter and organizer. Other reports indicate that the party is not putting its full weight behind the effort to stop deployment in Italy.**

LC: If you asked people at a demonstration which party they belong to, 80 percent of them would say the Communist party. So at that level, the party is very much involved. But it looks at the problem differently. It sees a bipolar world, divided by two superpowers, and it can't see anything else. Peace for the Communist party is an agreement between the two superpowers. The party wants the peace movement to exercise pressure on the superpowers. But the movement believes that the division of the world into blocs must be overcome, dismantled and that we can't rely on the two superpowers for peace. Some people say the peace movement is much more neutralist than the Communist party. I would use the term nonaligned. The peace movement argues for a non-aligned Europe. You won't find anything in the official position of the Communist party like this. They consider themselves part of NATO. People call the peace movement utopian. But all movements that want to change the world are utopian.

**JB: What about the role of the Italian Socialist party?**

LC: The Socialist party is in the government, and the minister of defense who made the decision to deploy is a Socialist party mem-

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ber. The Italian Socialists' position is not the position of the great majority of socialist parties in Europe. For example, the British, Dutch, Scandinavian, and Belgian parties are against deployment. Even the German Social Democratic party is firmer against deployment than the Italian.

**JB: What is the political significance of the Italian peace movement? How does it fit into and alter the political make-up of the country?**

LC: The peace struggle is the ground of a repoliticization of the new generation. And this is happening in a very interesting way. The people who are active in the peace movement are also those who are active in the ecological movement. They bring a new way of thinking into politics which could be the basis for a new strategy for the left. We don't believe it's possible to revive the old model of industrial development. We want a new way of life, a new quality of life. The young people have new needs which are not the traditional needs and values of the labor movement. Peace is one of these.

The interaction between the old left and the new ideas is the basis for rethinking a strategy for change in Europe. The peace issue makes other issues clearer. An example of this is democracy. How did the movement start? When people discovered they were living in a forest of missiles. Nobody had told them. Immediately questions arose

about what sort of democracy this is if we don't have any control even over a fundamental issue like death and life. So the demand for more direct democracy arose. You see, through the peace struggle, a lot of the typical, traditional issues of the left, which had been abandoned for a long time, are coming up again.

**JB: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Italian peace movement?**

LC: Our movement is very clever at organizing huge demonstrations, probably the biggest in Europe. But it's not very good at the everyday work, at getting out information and reaching people on a door-to-door basis. Our German and British friends are much better at this.

**JB: Given the line-up of parties in the Italian government and the short time remaining before the deployment deadline, what do you think will happen in 1983? What are the possibilities in political terms?**

LC: First of all, there's a remark to be made which isn't a good comment on my country. The Italian parliament is the only parliament which has discussed deployment only once! And that was in December 1979 when it was decided to accept the modernization plan for NATO. In all the other parliaments in Europe, the issue has been discussed many, many times. Of course, this deficiency in



Italy is the responsibility of the parties in the government, but it is also the responsibility of the major opposition party, which is the Communist party. So the peace movement is collecting signatures to get parliament to re-discuss the issue.

What will happen in political terms? I think we can achieve an intermediate goal, which is to ask for a postponement of deployment, a temporary halt to give the negotiations a chance to succeed. This compromise might be accepted by the Communists and our small party and at least a part of the Socialist party. The peace movement, of course, will not accept any compromise on the actual deployment. Even just one cruise or Pershing is too much.

**JB: How does the peace movement in the United States relate to or affect the movement in Europe?**

LC: The development of the peace movement in America was of major importance to Europe. European young people have a deep love/hate relationship to America. To discover that there was another America, that there was a peace movement that could have a dialogue with the European peace movement was an enormous help. We have to do a lot of political work to increase people's awareness. We have seen that when we say to people, "Look, even in the United States, they are against the Euromissiles," it is very encouraging. It helps people understand that just because we are fighting against the cruise and Pershing doesn't mean that we think the SS-20s are good.

*Joanne Barkan, a member of the DSA National Executive Committee, is finishing a book on the postwar labor movement in Italy.*

## FOREIGN AID

# Good Money After Bad in Salvador

by Jack Clark

Responding to President Reagan's televised address to a joint session of Congress in April on Central America, Senator Christopher Dodd said that there would be no revolution in Central America if it weren't for the hunger and poverty there. A few days later, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Jeane Kirkpatrick charged that Dodd's rebuttal was "demagogic." Ambassador Kirkpatrick pointed out that about two-thirds of the administration's package of aid to El Salvador consisted of economic assistance. The administration, according to Kirkpatrick, is addressing the very problems Dodd and other Reagan critics claim to be concerned about. Finishing off her criticism of Dodd with a rhetorical question, the Ambassador asked: "He isn't against economic aid, is he?"

For Senator Dodd, for all the critics of Reagan's Central American policies, the answer to Kirkpatrick's rhetorical question should be a resounding yes. You're damn right we're against this package of economic aid in this context.

Let's take a closer look at these numbers. Of the total \$377.82 million proposed for El Salvador, \$136.3 million (or a little more than a third) is allocated to military

assistance. A maximum of 64¢ of each dollar goes to nonmilitary purposes.

That 64¢ translates into \$241.52 million in economic aid, of which \$164.4 million, or 43½¢ of each tax dollar, goes directly to the bankers in El Salvador. The largest chunk of nonmilitary assistance is for the Economic Support Fund (\$140 million proposed in the current aid package, up from \$40 million in 1982). ESF money goes into the government's central bank and serves some of the same purposes as International Monetary Fund aid in bolstering up balance of payments. In this case, of course, the bolstering up is aimed at keeping a shaky regime afloat during a prolonged civil war.

What's left to address problems of hunger and poverty in El Salvador? According to the Washington, D.C. Center for International Policy, there are several programs run by the U.S. Agency for International Development

that fall into the category of aid directed toward meeting the basic human needs of the poor. Among these are direct food aid (not food to the government for resale), rural development projects, a program for a housing investment guarantee (to promote low-income housing) and education programs. All of these basic human needs aid programs combined get \$35.56 million of the proposed aid package, or 9.4¢ on the dollar. The rest goes for miscellaneous economic programs.

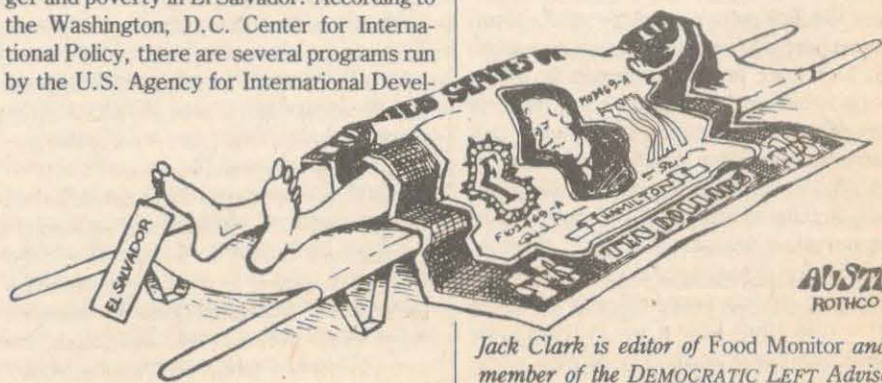
There is reason for skepticism about the usefulness of that 9.4¢ in helping the Salvadoran poor. In the last decade radical critics of aid programs to the third world have documented how aid tends to reinforce patterns of power and privilege.

One classic story concerns a well in Bangladesh dug to make irrigation easier and thus increase crop yields for a poor village. Funds were provided for the well; it was dug; and the villagers were poorer than ever. The largest landowner in the village had the well dug on his land and was charging for its use.

Salvadoran landlords are even more rapacious than their Bangladeshi equivalents, so that basic human needs aid may be doing limited good. The World Bank has reported that food aid programs fail to reach into poor neighborhoods in El Salvador.

Last year in *Food Monitor*, Jim Morell from the Center for International Policy pointed out that the resources then being directed from the U.S. toward El Salvador could triple the average incomes of the poorest one million Salvadorans. Aid on that scale and with that kind of redistributive intent could defeat the most persistent and vicious killers in El Salvador, the hunger-related diseases that take more lives than the death squads.

Somehow, though, U.S. policymakers never see the purpose of aid in those terms. As long as they don't, the U.S. left should avoid getting caught in supporting "humanitarian" aid that goes mainly to soldiers, bankers, and local oligarchs.



*Jack Clark is editor of Food Monitor and a member of the DEMOCRATIC LEFT Advisory Board.*



# VOTER REGISTRATION

by Jim Shoch

**I**n the past decade or so, in response to declining voter registration and turnout, particularly among poor and minority peoples, a number of organizations have turned toward voter registration as a way to begin plugging what Walter Dean Burnham has dubbed the nonvoting "hole in the electorate." The people in this "hole," the theory goes, would vote for Labor or Social Democratic parties in Europe. This activity has greatly increased since Reagan's election in 1980. With the failure of Reaganomics, the 1984 election promises the possibility of at least a partial return to class-based voting, a possibility foreshadowed by the November 1982 election results. Key to ousting Reagan and the right in 1984, however, will be the return of many nonvoting poor and working people to the polls. Almost 75 percent of people making less than \$10,000 per year report that they do not vote in midterm elections.

At its national board meeting in February, DSA voted to develop a plan for DSA voter registration activity to be brought to the May National Executive Committee meeting for consideration and action. The plan adopted by the NEC is outlined below.

## Different Approaches

Voter registration drives can be undertaken by the Democratic party, in conjunction with specific candidates' campaigns, and on a purely nonpartisan, noninitiative-related basis. Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, authors of *The New Class War: Reagan's Attack on the Welfare State and Its Consequences*, are correct in arguing that in states and cities where machine Democratic politics still exist, the statutory party will have little interest in voter registration, since expanding the rolls by adding poor and minority voters may be to the advantage of insurgent, rather than regular Democratic candidates. But in a few states, mostly those with weak official parties, the Democratic party actively conducts voter registration efforts. In California, for instance, the state party raises money from candidates and other sources and pays bounties of up to \$1 per registered Democrat. Sometimes the money goes to a staff of organizers who then coordinate the efforts of many more volunteers; in

other cases the money goes directly to the people doing the registration. The San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee registered about 45,000 new voters in 1982 in this latter way.

Individual candidates and initiative campaigns may also undertake voter registration efforts to expand the electorate eligible to vote for them. The registration of over 100,000 new voters in Chicago was the key to Harold Washington's victory in the mayoral primary and general election. Last fall in California the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Voting Power Political Action Committee registered thousands of voters in two key Congressional districts, helping one pro-Freeze Democrat to victory and almost upending an entrenched conservative Republican in the other race.

Many of the new voter registration efforts, however, are nonpartisan in character. Nonpartisan coalitions are formed to allow nonprofit organizations to participate and to allow the receipt of nonprofit grant monies. But the areas targeted and the issues raised in these drives usually guarantee an overwhelming margin of Democratic registrations.

The first of the nonpartisan voter registration organizations were black. The Voter Education Project was founded in 1962 and rejuvenated in the past few years to register blacks in the south. It forms coalitions, with churches playing a key role, and recruits volunteers to canvass for new voters. The A. Phillip Randolph Institute, a membership organization, targeted its 1982 efforts in three key congressional races. It forms coalitions to canvass for new voters, and operates phone banks to turn out the vote. The Coalition on Black Voter Participation has grown from 50 member organizations in 1976 to 80 today.

One of the most impressive of the nonpartisan groups is the Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (SWVREP), which works primarily to build Latino political power in the Southwest. It has undertaken 463 registration drives in Texas, California, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico and has worked with 1,200 organizations in 130 cities.

SWVREP, founded in 1974, targets local issues and races in order to mobilize the



Muhammed Ali Knows:

**"Voting is a great equalizer. We each get just one vote. Use it!"**

Stand Up For Our People!

**VOTE  
THIS TUESDAY**

PROJECT VOTE! 1201 16th St. NW, Wash, DC 20036



electorate. From 1976 to 1980 Hispanic voter registration in the Southwest jumped up 44 percent for the region as a whole, and from 1975 to 1979 the number of Mexican Americans elected to public office rose by more than 30 percent.

Project Vote is a Washington, D.C.-based organization formed in 1980 specifically to facilitate the registration of low-income voters. Project Vote notes that there are over 27 million people in the U.S. who make less than \$10,000 per year. If they had all voted in 1980, they would have accounted for one-third of all the ballots. In fact, 17 of the 27 million didn't vote. Like SWVREP, Project Vote works through coalitions of low-income groups, tenant organizations, community-based organizations, unions, civil rights organizations, student groups, religious leaders and groups, budget coalitions, and candidates, and elected officials. Its approach stresses three main principles: the importance of issue orientation; the importance of get-out-the-vote efforts shortly before elections; and reaching lots of people in short periods of time with limited resources.

Since traditional door-to-door canvassing yields about eight registrations an hour, Project Vote has combined strategies to reach low-income people by conducting



## SEND US A MESSAGE



The September-October issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT will be a special Labor Day/Convention issue. Every year we ask our members and friends to show their support for our paper and our organization. This year, you'll be able to show that support for DSA's First National Convention, too. Send greetings today!

### Personal Greetings

- \_\_\_\_\_ Square boxes, 15 words  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Name only

Rate

\$25  
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MESSAGE (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I want my local/chapter to receive 25% of this contribution. Deadline July 30.

(Make checks payable to DEMOCRATIC LEFT. Mail to DL, Suite 801, 853 Broadway, NYC 10003.)

# RED ALERT

**Y**ou read about the DSA campaign to raise \$126,000 for the 1983 operations of the organization in the April issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT. If you are a member or subscriber, you should have received a mail appeal during the first week of May. Although we have received some \$20,000 to date in addition to the \$25,000 in Challenge Gifts referred to in the April announcement, we are far—too far—from our goal.

The first article (and the mail appeal) focused on DSA's achievements and prospects. We are firmly convinced that democratic socialism has established a mode of operation and an open political stance that guarantees its ability to make headway in the left sector of the mainstream of American politics. The addition of 2,500 members to the united organization last year, the continued influx of members at a rate of 150 per month so far this year (and with a modest direct-mail effort later it will increase), the chartering of new locals and the revitalization of existing ones—all confirm our belief.

But the slow response to our appeal, and the relatively modest average size of the contributions so far received makes us wonder. Have we, perhaps, oversold DSA's successes? Have we conveyed such an impression of growth and vitality that good, loyal members feel they can relax and direct their funds to other, more hard-pressed causes and organizations?

If so, we have erred. DSA's ability to get through the summer without cutting staff salaries, curtailing phone calls and deferring publications is now seriously in question. Two major projects, voter registration among the victims of the Reagan depression, and the 20th Anniversary March on Washington, are crippled by the lack of funds.

DSA operates at the very edge of insolvency at all times—and has no cushion whatever against shortfalls in anticipated support. We have been paying off the organization's dangerous past debt at a slow but steady pace—but must incur new, unmet obligations at the same, or even a slightly greater, rate.

DSA is a national organization. We have locals in more than 80 cities. Most of them

are extremely active in electoral and other social and political arenas. It is there, at the local level, that the democratic socialist movement of our times is being built, block by block. But without national governing bodies, a national publication, a national presence in the various movements and coalitions that make up the broad dynamic of the "left" in American politics, our local activity tends to lose focus, coherence and impact.

The DSA Building Blocks Campaign plays a vital role in maintaining the momentum of DSA's first year. It is not "just another" fund appeal. It is the *only* serious socialist appeal by the entire organization for your financial support this year. For each of us who is employed and not burdened with some extraordinary financial obligation, \$100 should be at the lower end of our consideration. If you, our readers, haven't given, do it. If you have given less than you can, do it again.

Or, as William Wordsworth put it:  
*Give all thou canst; high Heaven  
 rejects the lore  
 Of nicely calculated less or more.*



drives at food stamp distribution sites, unemployment offices, social service agencies, minority churches, minority colleges, public or subsidized housing, minority high schools, and surplus food distribution sites. It conducts door-to-door registration, too, targeting precincts with low registration rates but high rates of support for progressive candidates. In this way canvassers reach households with more than one voter, and the not-quite-so-poor.

Project Vote suggests a typical scenario. A series of initial coalition meetings are followed by a "Right to Vote Sunday," which produces both registrations and volunteers. This is followed by a big evening mass meeting to solicit more volunteers. These first

## RESOURCES

Technical assistance is available from Project Vote! 1309 L St., N.W., Washington, D.C., (202) 393-7313. It has produced useful written information on campaigns and has model mail registration and mandatory deputization statutes.

Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward are available to speak if locals can find money for honoraria through universities or other sources. They can be reached through the Emergency Campaign to Save Human Services, Room 410, 622 W. 113th St., New York, N.Y. 10025, (212) 280-5458.

### For Further Reading:

*Social Policy*, Winter 1983, contains articles by Cloward and Piven and by Sandy Newman of Project Vote!

*Voter Registration and the States: Issues, Problems and Choices*, Lee Webb and Carlos Lizzaralde, eds. Available for \$6.95 from the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies, 2000 Florida Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

volunteers are then sent out to food stamp and unemployment lines. Registration there takes about one week. Then, the volunteers, along with any new volunteers they have recruited, move on to door-to-door canvassing. As for staff, Project Vote recommends that a local organization loan the coalition one staff person for 60-90 days to work with paid interns and volunteers. Project Vote can provide technical assistance. This approach has produced impressive results in a number of pilot situations. In New Jersey, a drive funded by four unions registered 11,500 people in eight days of activity at food stamp sites. With a letter and two follow-up phone calls, 66 percent of these newly-registered voters actually voted. With no follow-up in a

# VOTE!



similar Maryland situation, only 18 percent voted.

## Conditions Are Good

Piven and Cloward have argued that massive voter registration drives could lead to the realignment of the Democratic party if huge numbers of nonvoters enter it. They believe that a massive campaign of this kind can work at the present time because: Reagan's attacks on the poor will force voters back to the polls in 1984; barriers to electoral participation such as poll taxes, literacy tests, residency requirements, and so forth have been struck down in recent years; and the growth of the welfare state creates the possibility of massive registration of social service clients (who are conveniently located in long lines) by social service workers and outside volunteers.

The two theoreticians have been a major force behind the current New York Voter Registration Campaign, which aims to register 250,000 new voters between this May and the November 1984 election. New York DSA is active in the campaign, which includes union, social service, church, women's and peace organizations in its coalition.

## DSA Directions

The first step for local DSA involvement is for locals to begin discussions of voter registration strategy through existing DSA electoral or political action committees. Locals without such committees should establish them. Find out what the voter registration situation is in your state. Twenty-one states now have mail registration, and in other states election officials may be willing to make special arrangements to register people at the site you target. Working for reform of registration laws is also an activity that can pay off in the future.

In terms of getting actual voter registration drives off the ground, as with almost everything else we do, it's better to join ongoing efforts than to try to start something of our own. Initiating a voter registration coalition is an ambitious undertaking.

If the Democratic party is aggressively registering new voters, join those efforts. In situations where both partisan and nonpartisan drives are being planned, DSA locals should consider getting involved in both ef-

forts, attempting to avoid any "turf" fights over who gets which food stamp line or street corner.

Where locals have sufficient resources and strength to initiate voter registration coalitions, the first step is to talk the idea up with possible coalition partners, such as public employee service unions, private social service agencies, low-income groups, civil rights and women's organizations, neighborhood and tenants' groups, student groups, churches, existing budget coalitions and candidates, elected officials, and other electoral activists. Call a coalition meeting to begin making plans. Questions you have to consider include the importance/possibility of using social service workers and outside volunteers to do registration at social service sites, where, when, and whether to canvass or do street-corner registration, relation to the Democratic party registration activity if there is any, etc. The most crucial question is one of resources. Can participating agencies or organizations loan staff to the coalition? Is foundation money available? Will there be a computer available to hold the names of new voters?

In San Francisco, Frances Piven spoke in March at a forum organized by DSA and co-sponsored by other political organizations. The next morning she attended a brunch with 30 key trade union, community, and electoral activists to explain the strategy. Since then, several unions and social service groups have expressed interest in beginning activity.

Voter registration drives take an enormous amount of work. But the numbers of potential voters who have an immediate, direct stake in countering the cruel programs of the Reagan administration make the project a tantalizing and intriguing one. ●

*Jim Shoch is western regional coordinator for DSA. This article is adapted from a longer version that will appear in the next issue of Socialist Forum.*

## Reminder

DEMOCRATIC LEFT does not appear during July and August. We'll see you in September. In the meantime, we look forward to your support for our Labor Day/Convention Issue.

## Correction

Gremlins were at work in our article about Kristin Lems and Fred Small in the May issue. We apologize to Fred, whose phone number is 617-497-1416. He can be reached at 38 Jay St., Cambridge MA 02139, and his record label is Aquifer.



# REVIEWS

by Maurice Isserman

In 1905 Thomas Dixon Jr., a North Carolina politician and Baptist minister, published a novel entitled *The Clansman, an historic romance of the Ku Klux Klan*. It was a story of chivalry and honor set in the years just after the Civil War when, as Dixon told the tale, brave southern gentlemen banded together to protect their wives, sisters, and daughters from suffering a fate worse than death at the hands of newly freed black men. Like other classic expressions of the racist imagination, Dixon's novel amounted to a form of socially-approved pornography, such as a scene in which the black villain, his eyes "gleaming apeline," sinks his "black claws" into the "soft white throat" of the blue-eyed heroine.

A decade later D.W. Griffith's film version of Dixon's novel, "The Birth of a Nation," was released. The film, produced with the same salacious imagination that had made the novel so popular, drew immense crowds in the north as well as the south. One of its admirers was Dixon's friend, President Woodrow Wilson. After viewing the film in a special showing at the White House, Wilson declared: "It is like writing history with lightning, and my only regret is that it is all so terribly true."

Concepts of what is "true" about the Klan and its history have changed since then, and no president would dare to defend it publicly. Nevertheless, most serious historians of the Ku Klux Klan agree that it can best be understood as an expression of rather than an aberration from mainstream racial values in the United States. Robert Miller, writing about the rebirth of the KKK in the 1920s (when the group claimed five million adherents and was a powerful political force in much of rural America), argued:

It is necessary to insist on a hard point... The Klan tapped rather than created Negrophobia and anti-Catholicism... It did not so much inspire as reflect a pervasive Anglo-Saxon racism.

Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers, does not agree with the general historical consensus. Shanker has been waging a protracted campaign against a teachers' informational kit entitled *Violence, the Ku Klux Klan and the Struggle for Equality*, published by the Connecticut Education Association, the National Education Association and the



Scott von Osdol

Council on Interracial Books for Children. The kit is designed to guide elementary and high school teachers in preparing classroom presentations on the history of the KKK from the Reconstruction era to the present. It is a well edited and slickly produced booklet, with sample lesson guides, historical documents and illustrations, and a list of relevant books and films. It is a work of engaged scholarship. The editors warn in the introduction of the dangers posed by the KKK resurgence of the early 1980s. Although it is

## Violence, the Ku Klux Klan and the Struggle for Equality, An Informational and Instructional Kit.

Prepared and published by the Connecticut Education Association, the Council on Interracial Books for Children, and the National Education Association, \$4.95, 1981. Order from the Council, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

## Extremist Groups in the United States, A Curriculum Guide.

Published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, \$10, 1982. Order from the ADL, 823 United Nations Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017.

clear that the editors lean to the left politically, the tone of the booklet is moderate and balanced. Teachers of differing political persuasions could apply their own interpretation and emphasis to the materials (Frederick Douglass's bitter 1852 speech, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?", is followed immediately in the text by John F. Kennedy's upbeat 1963 speech, "The Time has Come for This Nation to Fulfill Its Promise."). The guide should prove a useful tool for classroom teachers who are looking for ways to supplement the rather bland treatment of racial conflict offered in most history textbooks.

But don't tell Al Shanker if you plan to use it. In his *New York Times* "Where We Stand" column last November, Shaker warned that

The NEA-Council curriculum kit... has a certain slant. Its authors saw the Klan not as an aberration [but as] "the most visible and obvious manifestation of the entrenched racism in our society"... Claims of progress made by blacks in America according to the NEA-Council material were "exaggerated." The publication supported racial quotas... Such bias in materials prepared for teachers and students is counter-productive.

The Spring 1983 *American Educator*, the AFT's journal, returned to the attack. An article by David Asman, originally published in a different form by the right-wing, antiunion Heritage Foundation, entitled "The Hidden Agenda" argued:

Under the guise of producing "bias-free" materials for classroom use, the Council on Interracial Books for Children has published a series of books whose purpose is to teach American school children that they live in a racist and unjust society. The council has been aided in its mission by federal funds and by the endorsement of the National Education Association.

Asman was particularly disturbed by an elementary reader produced by the Council on Interracial Books that dealt with the history of immigration. The reader described the lives of women garment workers on the Lower East Side at the turn of the century, concluding that bad conditions

were the result of exploitation of women by their employers. Their wages were purposely kept low so as to save employers money and increase their profits.

And what is so controversial about those conclusions? "Of course what is said is true," Asman concedes (he is, after all, writing in a publication of a union many of whose members had grandmothers who had worked in those sweatshops); but he goes on to complain that "the implication is that capitalism in a democracy offers absolutely no hope to the poor or downtrodden."

Continued on page 14.



# ON THE LEFT



by HARRY FLEISCHMAN

## NATIONAL ROUNDUP

### Alabama

The DSA at the University of South Alabama in Mobile sponsors a campus paper, *On Guard*, in coalition with other student and faculty groups. DSA is raising money this summer to fight campus rapes and encourage safer student housing. DSA also set up a book coop that saved students almost \$200.

### California

The Chico local is supporting the June 20 International Day of Protest for Nuclear Disarmament... East Bay DSAers testified at Assemblyman Tom Bates' hearing on the feminization of poverty... The DSA Socialist Community School in Los Angeles sponsored a June 5 tribute to Dorothy Healey, who is moving to Washington, D. C. to be with her family. More than 300 people attended. Dorothy has worked for decades as a union organizer, activist for peace and social justice and socialism... Mike Rotkin, former mayor of Santa Cruz, spoke to the DSA local May 1 on "Socialism, Santa Cruz and You." Harry Boyte, author of *The Backyard Revolution*, spoke at several college and DSA Santa Cruz meetings in May... DSAer Dorothee Soelle led a seminar on liberation theology at Stanford DSA and then addressed about 100 local campus and community peace activists. Julian Bond spoke in April and DSAers are now working on efforts to reach out to East Palo Alto, a low-income, primarily black community...

### Connecticut

The Eastern DSA regional labor conference will be held at the Univ. of Conn. School of Social Work in Hartford on June 25. Socialist unionists from a dozen states are expected to attend.

### Georgia

More than 120 activists attended the Third Annual Southern Socialist Conference held at Georgia State University in Atlanta May 28-29.

### Illinois

More than 450 people attended the Thomas-Debs dinner in Chicago honoring Joyce Miller, president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and heard Ron Delums give a rousing anti-militarism speech... Congratulations for local and national joint work go to DSA Program Director Holly Graff and husband Tom Simonds, the new half-time staffer for the Chicago local, who produced the newest potential member of the Youth Section in May. Holly is on leave with son Keith for a while before returning to full-time work.

### Iowa

Dick Greenwood, assistant to Machinists' union president William Winpisinger, spoke to 50 unionists at an Iowa City Labor History Workshop, sponsored by the Iowa City Federation of Labor and DSA.

### Kansas

The May DSA national executive committee approved an organizing committee charter for Lawrence, Kansas.

### Maine

Bangor DSA successfully lobbied the Maine legislature to pass a bill to establish an employee-owned coop law, modeled after the Massachusetts statute drafted by the Industrial Coop Association in Somerville... The bill to establish a state bank was defeated 69-38 in the Maine House, but State Commissioner of Agriculture, Stewart Smith, urged State Rep. Harlan Baker (DSA-Portland), "It's a good idea, don't give up on it."

### Massachusetts

Boston DSA will soon publish *Who Rules Boston?*, a publication made possible by grants from the Haymarket People's Fund and the Burgess Urban Fund of the Episcopal City Mission... The May *Yankee Radical* profiled Gloria Clark, just appointed director of the Mass. Office for Children by Gov. Dukakis, and Francine Wall, a DSA member from Nashua, N.H., who spent 30 days in a New York prison for "depredation of government property" when she broke a small vial of her own blood on the Pentagon walls as a symbol of "the blood their work spills every day."

### Michigan

Over 100 people turned out at Wayne State University to hear DSA members Zoltan Ferency and Manning Marable assess the plight of workers, blacks and stu-

dents in Reagan's America... The Detroit DSA is making plans for a voter registration drive.

### New York

Michael Bedford of the Cambridge Center for Development Policy gave a slide show for Albany DSA. "The Buddha Is Smiling" traces the development of nuclear power and nuclear weapons in India, Pakistan, Taiwan, S. Korea and the Philippines... Buffalo DSA held a "Focus on Feminism" session last month that included presentations by NOW and the Coalition for Abortion Rights and Against Sterilization Abuse (CARASA)... Ithaca is working together with the Machinists, Citizens party and others to build the Tompkins Co. Unemployed Workers Council, which works politically as well as on training people to become paralegal advocates for the unemployed... On June 19, Nassau DSA holds a reception for DSA vice chair Barbara Ehrenreich, whose new book, *The Hearts of Men*, discusses the current male revolt against marriage and analyzes what capitalism is doing to marriage today... DSAer Robert Lekachman now chairs a taskforce of the Long Island Progressive Coalition on the economic implications of the Shoreham Nuclear Plant... DSA's Bogdan Denitch debated the Social Democrats' Josh Friedman May 26 on the international position of both groups... Professor Ruth Milkman of Queens College spoke to the DSA CUNY branch on "Women and the Labor Movement Today."

### Ohio

Beth Cagan spoke to Cleveland DSA on "Taking Feminism Seriously." A July 4 picnic will be held at the Cleveland Municipal Stadium... Columbus DSA and the campus sponsored a panel on women in the work place featuring Susan Joseph on women and unions; Sheila Davis on feminism and socialism; and Lois Helmbold on working class women.

### Oregon

State Rep. Carl Hosticka of Eugene spoke to Portland DSA on "Progressive Approaches to Taxation"... The Red Rose School registered more than 60 pupils for the spring session.

### Pennsylvania

The newly chartered DSA Industrial Heartland Region will hold its first conference in Pittsburgh June 11-12. The theme is "Developing a Socialist Strategy for the



80's"... Pittsburgh's first feminist bar and restaurant, Wildsisters, has been created at what was formerly Wobbly Joe's. It features both cuisine and culture... Leo Casey, DSA Field Director, met with members in Pennsylvania to get chapters going in Reading and Harrisburg.

#### Rhode Island

A Providence debate on "Should Progressives Run Candidates on a Third Party Ticket?" was held last month between Richard J. Walton of the Citizens party and John D. Stephens of DSA.

#### Tennessee

The Race Relations Institute of Fisk University sponsored a conference June 3-4 on "The Arms Race vs. Human Needs!" DSA vice chair Manning Marable, director of the institute, said the conference sought to create a bridge between Third World activists and unionists, clergy and political organizers... Nashville DSA is working on a "Right to Know" campaign on environmental hazards, and publishes a newsletter, *Volunteer Left*.

#### Texas

Houston DSA held a first annual John Tower Memorial Picnic May 15, whose goal is to make him "just a memory politically" by the 1985 picnic.

#### Utah

Jim Shoch spoke to an initial DSA

meeting in Salt Lake City which led speedily to a new DSA local. Kay Hunt, who pulled the meeting together, is chair of the Economics Department at the University of Utah.

#### Washington

DSA has joined with other groups for an initiative petition to Congress to end U.S. military involvement in war in Central America. It will go on the ballot in November if over 15,000 signatures are obtained by June 11.

#### Wisconsin

The spring municipal elections have not made Madison socialist, but it did bring in some new DSA members, including alderwoman Nicole Gotthelf and Anne Monks and former alderwoman Kathy Kuester. Seven of the candidates endorsed by MDS-PAC (Madison Democratic Socialist Political Action Committee) were elected.

## FULL EMPLOYMENT

An important book for Socialists is Helen Ginsberg's *Full Employment and Public Policy: The United States and Sweden* (Lexington Books, \$24.95). She contrasts the full employment policies of Sweden with our failures in the USA and shows what we have to do to change our course. The price is steep, but make sure your library gets it.

## GOODBYE, PENNY

organizing several youth conferences and aiding all major DSA conferences and Democratic Agenda events, plans to work in the labor movement. She is currently one of the organizers for the June 25 Labor Conference in Hartford.

Succeeding her as Youth Organizer is Jeremy Karpatkin, a June graduate of Oberlin College. Karpatkin, who worked for the June 12 mobilization last summer, was also active in the Mobilization Against the Draft, a DSOC coalition activity in 1980.

In other staff changes, Peace Tour proposals of amendments were submitted and methodically considered before the final version was approved. The result may be less than stirring, but far more effective.

Yes, the radicals and visionaries had a role in all this, too. The pacifists and the protesters kept the bishops' consciences to

## QUIET HEROISM

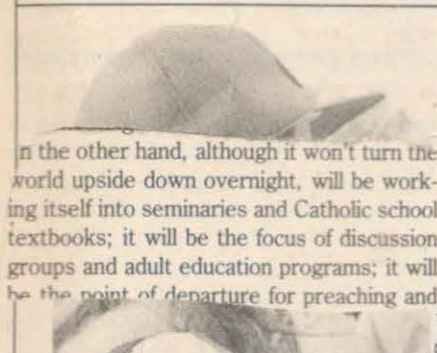
Muriel Gardiner, longtime DSA member and supporter, made the news this spring when her autobiography, *Code Name "Mary"* (Yale University Press, \$14.95), appeared. Gardiner, an American studying in Vienna in the thirties, took the enormous risk of volunteering her apartment and her country house as havens on the underground railroad for refugees from Hitler. She also served as a courier for the resistance. Gardiner insists that she was only doing what any person of conscience would have done. Many people have commented on the striking similarities between her life and that of Lillian Hellman's "Julia." Unlike Julia, though, who died young, Gardiner married Joseph Buttinger, leader of the Austrian Revolutionary Socialists, who hid out in her country house, and eventually returned to the United States. As Gail Godwin, writing in the May 30 issue of *The New Republic*, commented, "in some cases, real life is kinder to its heroines."

## IN TUNE WITH TIMES

Long Island's *Newsday* carried a page and a half article on democratic socialist regimes and parties in its May 1 issue, with the headline, "An Ideology in Tune With Times." The article distinguished accurately between democratic socialist and Communist governments, saying the latter bore "no resemblance" to Eugene Pottier's "better world in birth." It quoted Mike Harrington and Bob Lekachman, but inaccurately said Mike was living in Paris. A letter to the editor from Barbara Ehrenreich pointed out that far from being an expatriate he was only there for a few months as a visiting professor and that one didn't have to be a European to be a socialist.

## WALTER BERGMAN WINS

A federal judge ruled in Kalamazoo, Mich. that the federal government was liable for failing to prevent a 1961 attack on Walter Bergman and other civil rights workers in Birmingham, Ala., since the FBI knew it was going to take place. The ruling was a victory for Socialist Walter Bergman, 83, beaten and crippled by Klansmen who attacked two busloads of Freedom Riders. He was suing for \$2 million. If he gets the money in a new trial to set the amount of damages, he says he will give it for civil rights.



On the other hand, although it won't turn the world upside down overnight, will be working itself into seminars and Catholic school textbooks; it will be the focus of discussion groups and adult education programs; it will be the point of departure for preaching and

### Penny Schantz on Solidarity Day, 1981

DSA Youth Organizer Penny Schantz left the staff in June after two years of traveling up and down, across and around the country setting up youth chapters. Schantz, who worked on numerous other projects, from bringing 1,000 DSAers to Washington for Solidarity Day in September of 1981 to



# Reviews

Continued from page 11.

In his "Where We Stand" column last November, Shanker recommended a curriculum guide published by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith [ADL], *Extremist Groups in the United States*, as a desirable alternative to the NEA-Council booklet. The Spring 1983 *American Educator* reprinted the introduction to the ADL's guide in an effort to promote its use. What makes it preferable to the NEA-Council offering? The ADL guide is divided into two sections, the first examining "The Hate Groups of the Extreme Right," including the KKK and the Neo-Nazis, and the second focusing on "The Marxist-Leninist Groups of the Extreme Left," including the Communist party, various Trotskyist, Maoist, and black nationalist groups, and the Weather Underground. Shanker extolls the ADL guide for revealing "the common characteristics of the organizations at the two political extremes, including hostility to democratic ideas, actions aimed at destabilizing and destruction of democracy, violence and terrorism."

One does not have to be a fan of any of the groups discussed in the second section of the ADL guide to conclude that there is a "certain slant" to the interpretation offered there: the documents describing the Weather Underground, for example, include a review by neoconservative Midge Decter in *Commentary* of Jane Alpert's *Growing Up Underground*, and a story from the *New York Daily News* charging that "the Cuban government knows at all times where every Weather Underground member...is hiding out."

Al Shanker is a busy man. Why is he spending his time on abstract historical debates? Does he really care about the alleged "bias" of the NEA-Council curriculum guide compared to the "objectivity" of the ADL guide? Certainly he finds the ADL's current pro-Cold War and anti-affirmative action politics congenial. It seems likely that he sees the issue as a useful weapon in the AFT's perpetual jurisdictional battles with the NEA.

Shanker, and those who share his political outlook, believe that American society is basically healthy; all of its problems are

caused by *outsiders* (the Soviet Union, and various extremists of the right and the left). Racism, in their view, has nothing to do with the structure of the American economy, or the content of American culture: it is simply a set of odd and archaic beliefs promoted by a few disturbed individuals and marginal groups.

What Shanker ignores, because it does not suit his ideological purposes, is how often the racist views of the "extremists" of the right have complemented those of men in power. Woodrow Wilson was a cautious reformer, more conservative than his "progressive" textbook image suggests, but a decent, principled and humane leader. He was also a racist, who used his power as president to strengthen segregation within the federal government and who was, as we have seen, an admirer of the Reconstruction era Ku Klux Klan. If that seems to be a contradiction, it is not the only one that students of race relations will encounter in American history: how could southern slaveholders in 1776 have put their names to a document that declared "All men are created equal"? Racism is deeply rooted in American society. It is important to understand the historical roots of present day racial inequality. If Al Shanker is using a complex historical issue to carry on his ideological vendetta against the National Education Association and the Council on Interracial Books, his actions are, to say the least, distasteful. ●

*Maurice Isserman teaches American history at Smith College and is on the steering committee of the Pioneer Valley Local of Democratic Socialists of America.*

## 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 Washington for Peace and Justice. For more information, write: Institute for Democratic Socialism Youth Conference, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, NYC 10003.

# CLASSIFIED

**SUMMER SEMINAR IN ISRAEL.** Members and friends of the DSA Youth Section are invited to join a two-week study seminar August 7-21, co-sponsored by the Mordechai Anielewicz Circle of Americans for Progressive Israel and the Chicago Friends of Peace Now. Meet with Peace Now activists, community organizers, trade unionists, members of Mapam and other opposition members of the Knesset. There will be field visits to projects of cooperation between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel. Total cost, including air fare, is \$950. Tickets can be extended. For more information, individuals between the ages of 20 and 35 should contact the Mordechai Anielewicz Circle of API at 150 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1002, New York, NY 10011. (212) 989-2661.

**FOR SALE:** Many back issues of leftist journals. Best offers. SASE for details. N.W., 3333 Nebraska, Sioux City, Iowa 51104.

"The Jews of the Diaspora or the Vocation of a Minority" by Richard Marienstras. Sophisticated critique of Zionist and Leninist approaches to Jewish peoplehood from progressive perspective. \$2.50. Medem Jewish Socialist Group, P.O.B. 564, Brooklyn, NY 11217. (Checks payable to Jewish Youth Bund.)

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### Michigan

Over 100 people turned out at Wayne State University to hear DSA membersoltan Ferency and Manning Marable assess the plight of workers, blacks and stu-

— stadium... Columbus DSA and the campus sponsored a panel on women in the work place featuring Susan Joseph on women and unions; Sheila Davis on feminism and socialism; and Lois Helmbold on working class women.

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# THE LAST WORD

## A Well-Considered "No"

by Peter Steinfels

**W**hen the American Catholic bishops issued a pastoral letter declaring severe strictures on U.S. nuclear weapons policy, their action made the front pages, drew the White House into a prolonged exchange of views, raised the consciousness of millions of Americans, and laid the foundations for an educational effort that may add vastly to the constituency urging arms control and disarmament. Yet the bishops' statement was far from the most radical one that church leaders have made. Two weeks earlier, two hundred leaders from Christian churches in sixty nations had met in a world peace conference in Sweden. The statement they drew up had delineated such a sharp opposition between the possession of nuclear weapons and Christian faith in God that some Western church people had hesitated to support it—and the representative of the American bishops' conference, in particular, refused to sign even a watered-down version.

Most likely you didn't read about the Swedish conference's declaration—I saw only one report on it even in the American religious press. And I'll bet that six months from now the Swedish conference's statement will be nothing more than some warm memories on the part of the participants in that meeting. The American bishops' letter, on the other hand, although it won't turn the world upside down overnight, will be working itself into seminaries and Catholic school textbooks; it will be the focus of discussion groups and adult education programs; it will be the point of departure for preaching and the justification for peace activities. It will map a common ground where a wide variety of religious groups can join in opposing the arms race. It will become one of the fixed stars by which moralists, Christian and non-Christian, secular as well as religious, steer their thinking.

There's a lesson in this, and I think it is a lesson about revolution. In many ways, the American Catholic bishops' letter is quite traditional. It's an effort to uphold traditional values in the face of a radically new threat. In the course of that effort, those values have



themselves been reexamined, enlarged, developed. The bishops have been brought by the very force of their own tradition to a position that few of them would have foreseen a decade ago. Is this an oddity? Quite the contrary, I think it is the way that revolutions, when they touch large masses of people, have usually occurred.

The American bishops' letter will make a difference, where the Swedish declaration won't, because it is a carefully wrought (and occasionally waffling) document that builds on what the church has already held. The bishops appointed a drafting committee that represented the range of views in the church—from an advocate of nonviolence to the head of the military chaplains. It took plenty of faith, hope, and charity to see those committee members through their two years of work. The two national meetings that debated the letter were painfully democratic. Thousands of pages of commentary and hundreds of amendments were submitted and methodically considered before the final version was approved. The result may be less than stirring, but far more effective.

Yes, the radicals and visionaries had a role in all this, too. The pacifists and the protesters kept the bishops' consciences to

the fire. They were living reminders of the church's early centuries of pacifism, and witnesses to the fact that morality ultimately transcends the state, not the other way around. But their views were ultimately absorbed into a consensus that clearly admitted the obligation of national self-defense and granted a "conditional" legitimacy to nuclear deterrence. A few of them deplored this compromise; but ironically the supposedly absolutist "peace bishops" accepted the consensus gracefully—and thus retained considerable influence in the church—while the outstanding spokesman for the hawks, Archbishop Hannan of New Orleans, seemed to isolate himself by an unwillingness to take opposing views seriously.

The bishops have said a "no" to nuclear conflict because they could not square it with what their tradition teaches about innocent life and the limits of the use of force. Most revolutionary social movements have begun when people say "no" in the name of what they already hold dear. The bishops' letter is in that mold. ●

*Peter Steinfels is executive editor of Commonweal magazine and a member of the DEMOCRATIC LEFT Advisory Board.*



# JANIE HIGGINS REPORTS

**Thatcherism marches on.** By the time you read this, the probably depressing results of the British election will be in. Incumbent Tory Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has been an inspiration to supply-side quacks and fanatic social welfare budget cutters on this side of the Atlantic, too. If she prospers at the polls, look for renewed vigor and optimism from our own reactionary right. Meanwhile, the economic miracles her policies are supposed to be delivering never materialize. In fact, *Business Week* reported in early April that Britain, for the first time since the Industrial Revolution, is in danger of becoming a net importer of manufactured goods. That's serious deindustrialization for you. Ronald Reagan has something to aim for.

**Graph gap.** Ever notice the ominous look of all those graphs purporting to display the current nuclear balance between the Soviet Union and the U.S.? The Soviets seem to be racing ahead in the arms buildup, leaving us in the West terribly vulnerable unless we fight hard to catch up. But, as Andrew Cockburn notes in the May/June 1983 *Columbia Journalism Review*, the graphs are often unclear, confusing, or misleading. Many are based on Pentagon reports, and graphs churned out from that quarter show the Soviets always ahead. Thus, no Pentagon graph has compared U.S. and U.S.S.R. numbers of warheads or bombers because the U.S. clearly leads in those categories (as well as in overall nuclear capability). After all the comparisons, one can conclude with a Jimmy Carter quote: "Just one of our relatively invulnerable Poseidon submarines carries enough warheads to

destroy every large and medium-sized city in the Soviet Union." So, the graphs and numbers they represent don't really matter.

**Banking on apartheid.** The Union of South Africa ran up a large trade deficit in 1982—\$2.8 billion to be exact. But the racist regime managed to get past that debt with a lot of help from big international banks. According to a report in the April *Multinational Monitor*, only U.S. banks have increased lending to South Africa between January 1981 and June 1982. Citibank was the largest U.S. lender, but the Union Bank of Switzerland topped the world list of bankrollers for the South African regime. On top of that, the International Monetary Fund loan of \$1 billion which South Africa successfully negotiated in November 1982 was used to pay back these high-interest commercial loans.

**Bankruptcy is becoming** a tool for employers to weasel out of obligations to workers. Lots of publicity surrounded "bankruptcy" filings by asbestos companies like Johns Manville. Their game was to dodge claims from workers subjected to high levels of dangerous asbestos. Extending the idea, Wilson Foods Corporation filed for Chapter 11 (bankruptcy) to cut wages. Under Chapter 11, contracts, including labor contracts, become null and void. Despite "bankrupt" status, Wilson Foods reportedly is paying good dividends to shareholders.



## DEMOCRATIC Left

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