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LETTERS

Getting the Message

To the Editor:

What a surprise to see the write-up of Pittsburgh's own *Mill Hunk Herald* magazine (Sept.-Oct. issue) and its growing gang of celebrants. While no formal ties exist between the *Hunk* and Pittsburgh DSA, many local members (and, increasingly, national DSA members) are avid readers, occasional contributors, and often exhausted participants in the periodic *Hunk* events. We fielded a Big Red volleyball team (we beat ACORN) at the Roberto Clemente Nicaragua Sports Festival. And we won the unofficial and self-awarded Emmy for the best skit at the Reagan Counterinaugural Ball. In addition to revealing the all-too hidden culture of working life, the *Hunk* gang is prodding movement types back to physical fitness — something we need probably more than better theory.

I would encourage readers to send the *Hunk* a \$3 subscription (916 Middle St., Pgh., PA 15212). It's cheap and a pretty good rag.

Also, the article mentions the AFL-CIO-sponsored Labor Institute for Public Affairs (LIPA) cable TV production projects.

Continued on page 7

DEMOCRATIC Left

Formerly Newsletter of the
Democratic Left and Moving On.

BARBARA EHRENREICH
MICHAEL HARRINGTON
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MAXINE PHILLIPS
Managing Editor

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Cover: Youngsters celebrating the fourth anniversary of the liberation of Estele, Nicaragua. Photo by Steve Cagan.

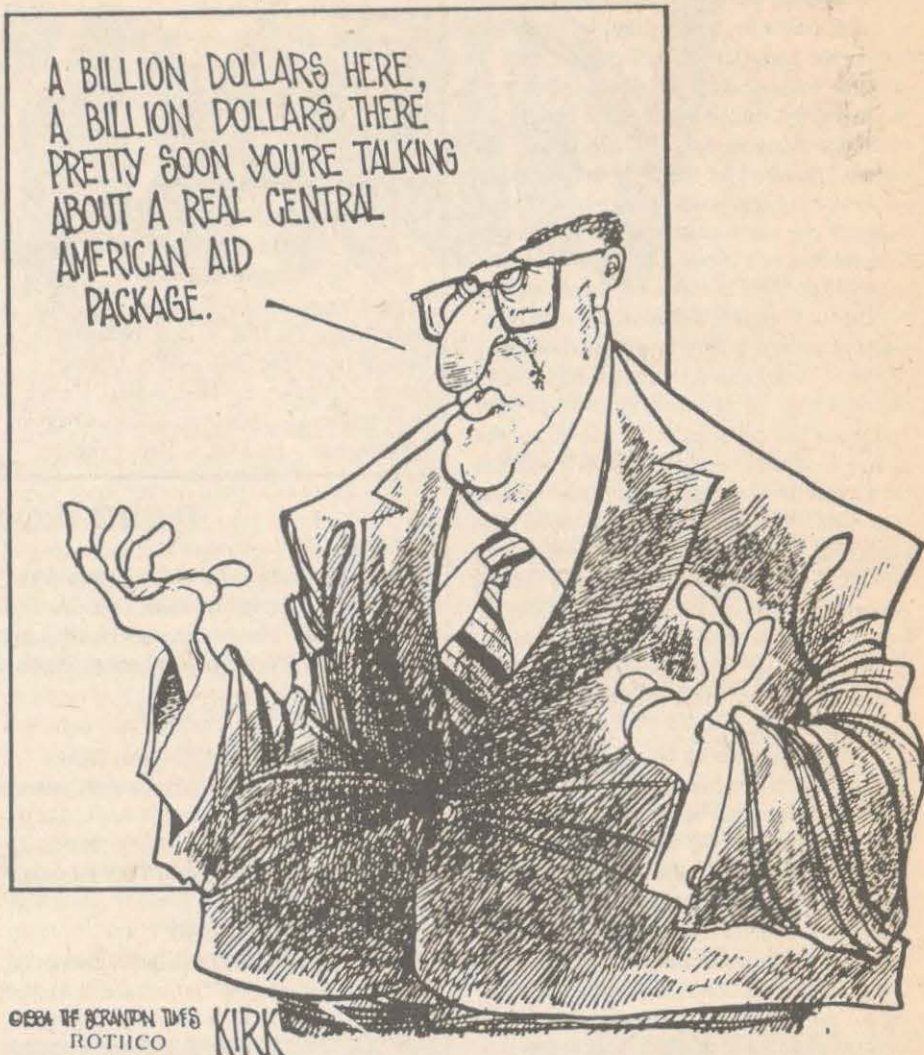
Activity Against Intervention

by Jeremy Karpatkin

During a heated election season in which the questions of war, peace, and the general conduct of foreign policy will loom over the presidential outcomes, the Reagan administration is facing major challenges to every aspect of its containment roll-back policy in Central America. Despite its best efforts at destabilization, the administration has failed either to erode the popular support for the Sandinista government in Nicaragua or prevent it from moving on schedule towards its promised elections. In El Salvador, despite the millions of dollars of military aid to the ruling government and to neighboring Honduras—now a virtual military outpost of the U.S.—the revolutionary movement is continuing to progress. As of this writing, there is a serious question as to whether the Salvadoran government will last through this year. The elections scheduled for March 25 are unlikely to improve matters. A far-right victory by ARENA candidate D'Aubuisson seems certain, particularly with the implicit threat of a D'Aubuisson coup in the event of a different outcome.

Nevertheless, the Reagan administration is attempting to build a bipartisan consensus around its policy. The recent report of the Kissinger Commission was essentially a reiteration of the same old themes—continuation of economic and military aid to El Salvador to contain the liberation movement, continuing military and economic destabilization of Nicaragua; and at best an ambivalent attitude towards human rights abuses. The administration has requested a supplemental aid appropriation of several hundred million dollars in the wake of the Kissinger report, demanding from Congress a bipartisan fiscal stamp of approval.

All of this suggests a heated period for the movement to stop U.S. intervention in Central America. Many national organizations have joined in a call for Central America Week, a week of national and local actions March 18-25. Central America Week will include a national day of training sessions March 19, a national religious convocation March 19, and a national day of advocacy March 20—all in Washington, D.C.—as well as nationally coordinated actions around the country during the latter half of the week. Saturday, March 24, is being targeted by religious organizations as a date of special



significance, since it is the fourth anniversary of the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero by right-wing death squads. Romero was closely associated with the popular struggles in El Salvador, and was a vociferous critic of the human rights policies of the Salvadoran government and of U.S. aid policies.

DSA has endorsed Central America Week along with a broad range of religious, labor, peace, solidarity, and civic organizations, such as the Inter-Religious Task Force on El Salvador, the National Labor Committee for Human Rights and Democracy in El Salvador, the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy, SANE, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, and others.

The DSA Youth Section has initiated a major coalition action for campus activities. Several national campus organizations—including the Third World Students Coalition of the United States Student Association, the Youth Caucus of the Americans for Democratic Action, the National Ecumenical Student Christian Conference, the Student YWCAs and others—have joined with DSA to form the National Student Teach-In Campaign (NSTIC), a resource and clearinghouse to coordinate campus-based teach-ins on Central America during the week of March 18-25. NSTIC has prepared a resource packet and is currently lining up a wide range of speakers to participate in the teach-in program. Confirmed speakers to date include: Laurence Birns, Charles Cle-

ments, David Dyson, Frances Moore Lappe, Barbara Ehrenreich, Janet Shenk and Wayne Smith.

The Institute for Democratic Socialism has hired an additional half-time staffer, Matteo Luccio, to help coordinate this project. Plans call for about one hundred campus events during Central America Week.

DSA is also participating in a national legislative and electoral effort designed to stop the supplemental aid appropriation and, in the longer run, make Central America a campaign issue in the 1984 elections. The effort, organized by the National Campaign for Peace in Central America, is a product of many of the same organizations sponsoring Central America Week. The organizers have targeted districts in which legislators are vulnerable to pressure and have set up a timetable of critical points in the policy-making process. DSA locals in more than half a dozen districts have agreed to work on this effort, and more will participate. At this stage, the goal is to apply pressure on local legislators through letter-writing, phone calls, cables, and visits. As the elections draw closer, the Campaign is likely to dovetail neatly with local DSA electoral campaigns. Since Central America is a key national priority of DSA, all locals should be in touch with the national office to find out which local electoral races overlap with legislative priorities regarding Central America.

Those locals with no campus base and without a swing or marginal legislator should still plan some kind of event during Central America Week. DSA, through NSTIC, will make speakers and other resources available. DSA is cooperating with the national Anti-Intervention Pledge plan—which is trying to present thousands of signatures to Congress during Central America Week calling for no U.S. aid. DSA is also assisting in local material aid campaigns, educational outreach efforts, media projects and various other strategies for building public opposition to U.S. policies towards Central America.

The next several months may well be decisive. DSA is playing, and can continue to play, a major role in the effort to stop U.S. intervention and to build a broad domestic consensus for an alternative foreign policy. This effort will also allow us to educate the public about the relationships between U.S. policy in other parts of the world, and to U.S. policies at home. Participation in this movement is vital—both to stopping the U.S. from crushing legitimate movements for national liberation in Central America, and for exposing the roots of the American power structure. ●

Jeremy Karpatkin is the national DSA youth organizer.

CENTRAL AMERICA LEGISLATIVE ALERT

As this issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT goes to press the Reagan administration's request for several hundred million dollars of supplemental aid for El Salvador and covert aid for the Somocista contras in Nicaragua is winding its way through Congress. The following list of legislators represents key committee votes on the legislation. All should be pressured by their constituents. All legislators without asterisks should be asked to oppose all economic and military aid to El Salvador. Those with one * are generally favorable to this position but should be pressured to maintain their stance. Those with two ** are good on the issues and should be thanked. Contact DSA at 212-260-3270 for more information.

California—12 Dist.—Rep. Zchau	West Virginia—Senator Byrd**
Kentucky—2nd Dist.—Rep. Natcher Senator Huddleston	Florida—16th Dist.—Rep. Smith 10th Dist.—Rep. Ireland 14th Dist.—Rep. Micah 19th Dist.—Rep. Fascell Senator Chiles Senator Hawkins
Louisiana—Senator Johnson	
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New York—15th Dist.—Rep. Green*	Maine—2nd Dist.—Rep. Snow
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Future articles in *TWS* include:

- Rafael PiRoman on "Hispanic Politics."
- Kusum Singh on "Charisma and Democratic Leadership Styles" within Third World Political Movements.
- Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz on the "Native American Struggle for Self-Determination."
- Political Commentary by *TWS* Editorial Coordinator Manning Marable.

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Save the Date

Socialist-feminist activists and theoreticians will gather in Chicago August 3-5 for a conference that will look at where the socialist-feminist movement has been and where it's going.

Correction

The photo credit on the picture of Cheryl Johnson in the last issue was dropped in production. It was by Elaine Wessel.

Note to Readers

Good news. Bad news. The good news is that you won't have to spend the entire summer without an issue of DEMOCRATIC LEFT to read. There will be a July-August issue. The bad news is that as a result of budget-cutting measures taken by the National Executive Committee at its meeting in December, DEMOCRATIC LEFT has been cut from nine to six issues a year.

Solidarity

by Michael Harrington

The American labor movement is under the most sustained attack in half a century. At Greyhound, Continental Airlines and other companies, union-busting corporations are engaged in strike-breaking activity of a type that has not been seen since the great union struggles of the thirties. During the past several years, unionized workers have been forced to make concessions, usually under the threat of losing their jobs if they don't.

Fifty years ago the response of the left and of liberals would have been automatic: solidarity with the embattled workers. Today, that is not the case. There are opponents of Ronald Reagan, frightened of his militarist foreign policy and furious with his assault upon the welfare state — and the food stamps and Medicaid of the working poor in particular — who are suspicious of and even hostile toward labor. Aren't the unions just another special interest? Worse, aren't they a bastion of support for a counter-revolutionary strategy in the Third World? Aren't they bureaucratized and undemocratic institutions that block the way of exploited minorities and defend a privileged labor aristocracy?

Most of those notions are not simply absurd, but absurdities carefully fostered by the truly privileged, the corporate leaders of America, as part of their defense of their class position. And where there is truth in some of the criticisms of the unions, it is always much more complex than the caricatures in the popular wisdom. So in this space it is necessary to do something that would have been utterly unnecessary a generation ago on the left: restate some of the ABCs of our commitment — a critical *and* principled commitment — to unionism in America.

Who is unionized?

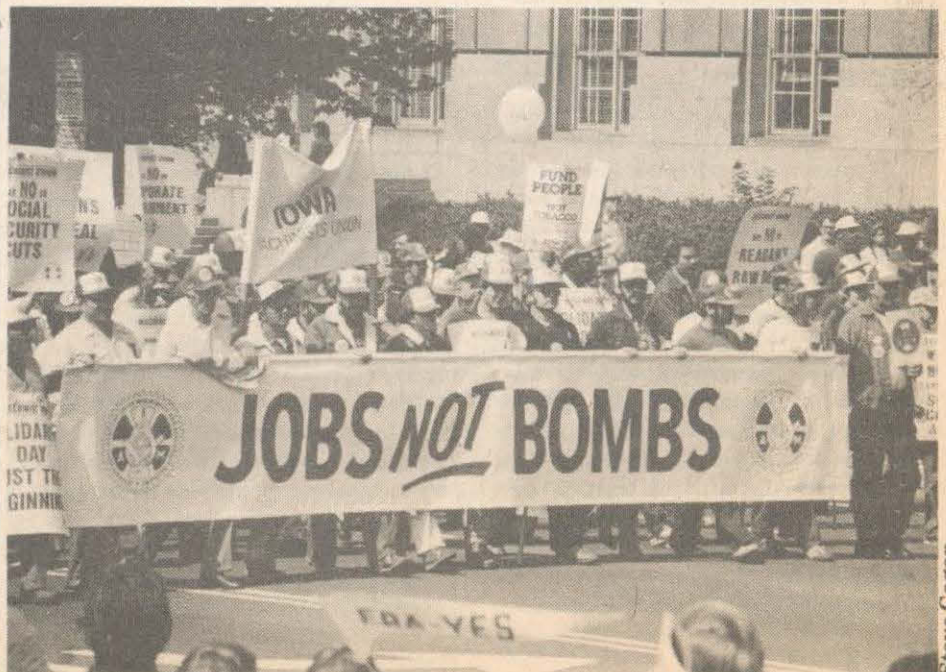
"Big labor" enrolls less than 20 percent of the labor force and is not only the underdog

in the struggle with big business (no quotation marks needed there) but is losing ground because of the structural transformations of Western capitalism. The unions are concentrated in the declining smokestack industries of the Northeast and Middle West and in public employment (the latter trend a development of the last twenty or so years). The largely nonunion "new class" of professionals and technicians very much needs organization. There is an "oversupply" of educated labor given the narrow uses to which it is put and a relative deterioration is almost certain to begin in this sector, but most of its members don't understand that fact.

Then there is the highly exploited stratum of minority workers in dead-end, low paying jobs and women concentrated in clerical, financial, and retail work. Both receive about two-thirds of the white male wage. And finally there is the underclass of undocumented workers, largely Latino in the Southwest and West, Caribbean in the East, who are to be found in the sweatshops of late twentieth century capitalism.

One could conclude from the trends I have just outlined that the unorganized minority, women, and undocumented workers should mobilize against the favored white male members of the working class. That, of course, would result in a complete victory for corporate capital since it would plunge the potential anti-corporate opposition into a civil war. At the same time, this strategy rests upon a preposterous notion of the living standards of organized workers.

America is more of a class society, in terms of income distribution, than most other developed capitalisms. In Japan, the top 20 percent of the people earn five times as much as the bottom 20 percent; in the United States eight times as much. Within this structure of pervasive inequality (which is understated when one talks of income and much more outrageous when wealth is taken into consideration) union workers are anything but an "aristocracy." In 1982, the gross weekly earnings for workers in manufacturing (the most heavily unionized sector) was



Steve Cagan

American Solidarity Pledge

\$334 — or \$17,468 a year. Measured in constant (1977) dollars, manufacturing workers had \$208 of weekly buying power in June 1982 as against \$206.40 in 1965 and \$208 in 1970. Over a period of almost twenty years, then, the labor "aristocrats" saw their real wages go up slightly (to \$231.70 in 1978) and then fall. The net gain from 1965 to 1982 was less than \$2.

But didn't auto production workers make over \$20,000 a year in good times? Weren't there steel workers close to \$30,000? There is no question that in some industries militant unionism succeeded in significantly raising wages. These wages must be put in context. In the summer of 1981, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an "intermediate" budget for an urban family of four came to \$25,407, i.e. \$8,000 more than the average manufacturing worker and close to the "stratospheric" income of the best paid union workers.

Why is it that a Greyhound driver getting \$35,000 a year for doing a tough, demanding job that provides an important service to the society is considered overpaid while a Wall Street lawyer engaged in the "paper entrepreneurship" of corporate takeovers is considered entitled to \$150,000 and up? Why were harassed flight controllers from PATCO, merely engaged in matters of life and death, regarded as greedy when stockbrokers — most of whom add no real value to the economy — profit from a bull market in the midst of the worst recession in half a century?

In short, if one wants to talk about what women and men "should" get for their work, one would do well to start at the top of the occupational structure. A trip to a grimy steel town, where the now jobless "privileged" workers who live in the shadows of the hulking mills once got a relatively decent wage, might add a little perspective. Life in the executive suites remains somewhat more pleasant than on the factory floor or in the mine.

Moreover, there is now a shift in relative power that allows multinational corporations to beat down wage rates for the best paid union workers. So it will take militancy and imagination for the best off in labor to defend the relatively modest gains they won in the past.

But the left commitment to unions is not simply based on a sense of morality, fairness and equity, though that is most certainly a factor. On domestic social and economic issues the unions are, and have been, the single most important institutional force in the fight for progressive legislation: for tax justice, national health, poverty programs, aid to education, and all the rest. When the sec-

American unions are under attack—more than at any time since the great organizing drives of the thirties.

Employers are not simply fighting workers on issues of wages and hours. They are threatening wholesale firings, strikebreaking, trying to win contracts where new workers no longer have the same rights as those already employed.

For the first time in half a century there is a real possibility of the de-unionization of America.

We are against that trend. We are in solidarity with the unions of this country in their fight for existence.

None of us is an official or staff member of a union. Some of us belong to unions; others do not. All of us have our criticisms of labor in the past and even the present—and all of us believe that those criticisms must now take second place to our expression of solidarity in Ronald Reagan's increasingly anti-union America.

We believe in unions, not simply as a means of the struggle for a better economic life, but as the basis for human dignity. We believe that an American economy which achieves an "equilibrium" through chronic high unemployment and low wages is preparing the way for an economic crisis in which the society is too poor to buy its own output. That will strike, not only at the union worker, but at practically every member of the society.

Above all, we recognize a moral claim upon our conscience when the working men and women of this country ask our help. We are, all of us, in solidarity with the magnificent struggle of the Polish workers for trade union rights; we are in solidarity with the black workers of South Africa in their battle against economic and social *apartheid*; and we are in solidarity with American workers. Support for unions does not begin only at a foreign border.

In this spirit we invite our fellow citizens and their organizations to take this pledge of American Solidarity:

- Whenever we see a picket line of workers engaged in economic struggle, we recognize it as a legitimate claim upon our conscience and we will do all that we can to honor it.
- Whenever we see a corporation engaged in strikebreaking or other forms of anti-union activity, we pledge to consider not buying its products or using its services.
- Whenever the issue of labor law reform is once again placed upon the agenda, making the law an instrument of the worker's right to organize rather than, as so often today, a bureaucratic weapon against that right, we will support the reform effort. In doing so, we are particularly mindful that the benefits of unionism must be brought to the vast mass of the unorganized, many of whom are low-paid members of minority groups and women.

In the struggle for the unions' right to exist we pledge our moral and practical solidarity.

Initiating Committee for an American Solidarity Movement: *Michael Harrington, Convener; Stanley Aronowitz, Balfour Brickner, Harry Britt, Harvey Cox, Representative Ronald Dellums, Bogdan Denitch, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cynthia Epstein, Jules Feiffer, Representative Barney Frank, Msgr. George Higgins, Irving Howe, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Frances Fox Piven, Jose Rivera, Ray Rogers, Gloria Steinem, Peter Steinfeld, Ellen Willis.*

ond most important economic policy institution in the United States, the Federal Reserve Bank (only the White House has more power) is totally composed only of bankers, that is, we are told, a way of keeping an "objective" check on politicians who are merely elected by the people and not appointed like the rulers of the Fed. But when the unions fight for a domestic political program which, if passed into law, would create greater benefits for nonunion members than for the unionists themselves, that is somehow "special interest" politics.

Simply put, there can be no effective mobilization for the rights of minorities, women,

and other victims of discrimination, most of whom do not now belong to unions, without the labor movement's playing a key role.

Foreign Policy

All well and good, one might say, but what about foreign policy? Wasn't the AFL-CIO the most intransigent supporter of the unconscionable war in Vietnam? Didn't Lane Kirkland just sign the Kissinger Commission Report with its Communist plot theory of social revolution and the militarist deductions it made? That is true, deplorable, and only part of the story. In the case of Vietnam, major unions joined the antiwar movement

— the Machinists, Auto Workers, State, County and Municipal Workers, Clothing and Textile Workers, to name but a few. And in the struggle against American intervention in Central America, under the leadership of Jack Sheinkman of the ACTWU, labor involvement is already greater than it was in the case of Vietnam.

We must also ask whether lowering the living standards of the working women and men of the United States is a way to strike a blow for peace. Take the building trades, a sector of the labor movement which, with important and honorable exceptions (Jack Joyce of the Bricklayers for instance) has been hawkish on foreign policy. The building trades have been under fierce attack in recent years. Will the college-educated, and often genuinely privileged, activists of the anti-intervention movement enter into dialogue with those workers by telling them that their real wages are of no concern? To ask such a question is to answer it.

What about racism and sexism? There is no doubt that both flourished in the American labor movement — international union constitutions had whites only clauses and the AFL-CIO Executive Council remained a male club until a few years ago when Joyce Miller was elected to it. But the juridical racism and sexism have largely been eradicated, the Coalition of Labor Union Women has been organized and black Americans are now much more likely to vote for a union than white Americans.

What of the bureaucracy? There are substantial charges here, even though some of the best and most honest trade unionists regard any criticisms in this area as the work of the unionbusters. That is one of the reasons why I think that an organization like the Association for Union Democracy — pro-union *and* pro-civil liberties within labor — is so important. It is why we should fight to see that every union has the equivalent of the UAW Public Review Board, an independent institution that protects the rights of UAW members against their own union officers in the relatively small number of cases where that is necessary. But, here again, standing by while trade unionists' living standards are gutted does not provide impressive credentials for one who wants to talk about internal democracy in the labor movement.

Finally, we have to understand how the unions, as they are *and* as they could become, are an important instrument for justice for *all* America.

The unorganized women and minorities in the low-wage industries and the "Right-to-Work" states of the Sunbelt desperately need organization. Indeed, the labor movement's struggle for labor law reform in the seventies, had it been successful, would

have struck a mighty blow against racism and sexism in American society. The undocumented workers do not need an internal passport that could be a new cause of discrimination; they do require the vigorous enforcement of the various labor standards laws to curb the criminal employers who prey on them. Jay Mazur of the ILGWU, the head of a local which is now more than 50 percent Chinese American, has been excellent on precisely this count.

More largely, if Ronald Reagan and the unionbusters succeed in getting a new employment equilibrium — with a mere eight million workers in the labor reserve — on the basis of concessions and low wages, they

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP UNIONS

Spurred by the severity of attacks on labor unions, many members of DSA have joined with other concerned progressives to launch the American Solidarity Movement. The text of the American Solidarity Pledge shown here will appear in *The New York Times* along with the signatures of scores of prominent Americans. DSA locals can work with others to form local Solidarity committees and publish the ad in their own local newspapers as part of a campaign to express solidarity with beleaguered unions. The ASM is a project of the New American Research Institute, and all contributions are tax deductible. For more information about the campaign, write to the Institute at 853 Broadway, Suite 801, NYC 10003.

will be preparing the next crisis of the American economy. Indeed, we encounter a structural contradiction of the capitalist system at this point. Corporations want cheap labor and affluent consumers, but the wages that they are driving down are the prime source of the buying power that they want to go up. The anti-unionism of the 1920s was prelude and cause of the Great Depression. Could history repeat itself?

The struggle for higher wages, particularly for those at the bottom of the economy, is obviously a "special interest" of those immediately involved. But it is also in the general interest of the society, for the critical fact is that a more just America for workers, minorities and women is the precondition of a more productive America for everyone.

We are for solidarity, then, not out of nostalgia for the bad old days of the thirties, but out of a solid commitment to justice and peace in the eighties. If we split, then — the corporation, the Reaganites — win. If we stick together — black, white, brown, yellow, red, women, men, environmentalists and building trades people, new class and old — we have at least a chance. ●

Letters

Continued from page 2

I'd like to second the *Hunk's* Larry Evans' enthusiasm for the opportunities presented by cable. For example, a special LIPA project called CableLINE brought prime-time labor-oriented programming to cable subscribers in three cities — Pittsburgh, Seattle, and Atlanta. The 10-week demonstration project ended December 17th. Cable viewers will be extensively surveyed for their opinions. LIPA hopes the CableLINE Project will help justify something like a national labor-controlled production network.

The CableLINE programming choices were indeed excellent in both quality of production and message. Recent documentaries such as *Rosie the Riveter* and *With Babies and Banners*, as well as news and magazine-type features were shown. The clear identification of the labor movement with the dispossessed, anti-racism, and women's rights came through loud and strong. That's not a bad message to be delivered into millions of living rooms every night.

John Haer
Pittsburgh DSA

Never an Ex

To the Editor:

Barbara Ehrenreich's article on the DSA convention was excellent, except for one unfortunate error. She lists the backgrounds of DSA members as ex-Trotskyites, ex-Communists, ex-Schachtmanites, labor activists, feminists, religious socialists, atheists, internationalists, localists, minority leaders, visionaries, pragmatists, etc."

I don't like being an "etc." just because I, and a great many others, never were ex-es but have remained democratic socialists all our political lives. I joined the Young People's Socialist League in 1931 and the Socialist Party in 1934, and view my membership in the Democratic Socialists of America as a continuation of that democratic socialist philosophy. So do many others.

Harry Fleischman
Wantagh, N.Y.

Why Stay with Jesse?

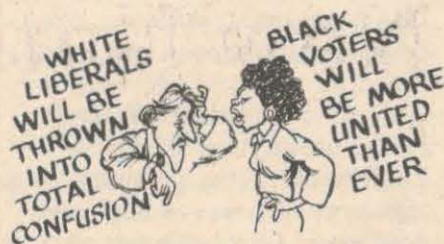
by Manning Marable

Jesse Jackson was never known as a "progressive" or "leftist" within the context of black politics. In fact, the economic program of Jackson's Operation PUSH (People United to Serve Humanity) is an updated version of Booker T. Washington's "Black Capitalism." PUSH's response to the loss of black workers' jobs in the auto industry was the purchase of one hundred shares of stock in Chrysler, Ford, American Motors, and General Motors. Stock ownership, according to Jackson, "assure(s) us the right and the platform to voice our concerns." PUSH's "corporate covenants" with Seven-Up, Burger King, Coca Cola and other corporations have produced headlines for Jackson but relatively few jobs.

Inside black political circles, Jackson has represented the personification of opportunism and ambivalence. At the crucial 1972 National Black Political Convention, for example, Jackson delivered a keynote address promising to help build the militant all-black force. After he left the stage, neither he nor PUSH were ever heard from again. During the Miami race rebellion of 1980, Jackson flew into the city to "cool off" black militancy — only to be denounced by local community leaders and activists. At the Democratic National Convention in 1980, both Jackson and Mayor Richard Hatcher of Gary, Indiana tried fervently to water down Kennedy-sponsored jobs programs in the party platform. After the convention, Jackson flirted with the Reagan campaign, declaring that "the black vote is the wild card in this election." Given this record, why should anyone on the democratic left support Jesse Jackson's bid for the Democratic presidential nomination?

Challenging Centrists

The arguments for Jackson have to do with several assumptions about the current political period. First, as I see it, the national political culture is divided into three basic currents, each with its own subdivisions: mass conservatism, or "Reaganism"; the two-party political center, which includes



most of the Democratic party and a significant fraction of Republicans, such as Howard Baker, Lowell Weicker, and William Green; and the democratic left. This third grouping is the weakest, but it comprises a potential majority of the American electorate: blacks, Hispanics, gay men's and lesbian organizations, environmentalists, peace and disarmament coalitions, feminists, liberal and anti-corporate populists in the Democratic party, the liberal wing of the labor movement, liberal religious groups, progressive community and neighborhood associations, and the small democratic socialist left. Our immediate political goal must not be simply the defeat of Ronald Reagan, but the entire reactionary philosophy of Reaganism

Politically, this requires that the democratic left target Reagan's supporters for defeat in the November 1984 election. It also demands support for representatives of the democratic left who challenge centrists inside the Democratic party primaries this spring and summer. I am much more optimistic about our ability to defeat congressional Reaganites than I am about removing the incumbent president. As of now, either

Walter Mondale, John Glenn, or Ronald Reagan will be inaugurated in January 1985 — and Reagan is the clear favorite.

A word about Walter Mondale is in order here. Mondale's crucial base of support is organized labor, big city Democratic party organizations, and the most moderate elements of national minority leadership. His speeches and policy statements clearly indicate that he is not of the democratic left, but a "liberal centrist" in the Cold War liberal tradition. Leftists who have now committed themselves to Mondale's campaign insist that he is the "most liberal" candidate who has any hope of derailing Reagan. This is probably true, but it obscures the more fundamental issues — how can we build a stronger democratic left, *and* how can we reverse the advances of mass conservatism? Moreover, how can we seriously expand the electorate in 1984 to include millions of young people, national minorities, women, and poor people? Working for Mondale in the Democratic primary does not do this — and in fact, it *virtually guarantees* the defeat of either Glenn or Mondale in the general election. Given our meager resources, socialists should be involved in campaigns that build coalitions with liberal and left constituencies within national minority communities, and that raise political issues from a democratic left perspective. Electoral politics must be used to help build mass movements across racial, gender, and class boundaries.

The candidate who comes closest to accomplishing these strategic goals is "the Country Preacher," Jesse Jackson. Indeed, if he were white, the media would portray Jackson as the most left-wing candidate for

the presidency since Norman Thomas. Unlike Cranston or Mondale, Jackson recognizes that the cutting edge of white conservatism is racism — attacks on affirmative action, civil rights, and economic opportunities for people of color. Only Jackson backs a left social democratic economic program that calls for the total restoration of the 1981-84 budget cuts, tax increases on corporations, and massive public works programs. On foreign policy, Jackson is again the leftwing candidate, strongly condemning the Grenadan invasion, U.S. troops in Lebanon, the placing of cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe, and U.S. support for apartheid. At a national level, the Jackson campaign is the Harold Washington/Mel King coalition, bringing together representatives of every element of the democratic left.

Much is made of the fact that Jackson does not have unanimous support from black leaders, and that Coleman Young, Julian Bond and Coretta Scott King are behind Mondale. Would any liberal white female candidate for president (e.g., Elizabeth Holtzman, Barbara Mikulski, etc.) obtain unanimous support from all feminists and women's political groups? Would we expect a leftist labor leader, such as William Winpisinger, to attract united support from the AFL-CIO Executive Council if he ran for president? The argument for unanimity is merely a convenient dodge to obscure the very real class divisions that exist within the Afro-American community. The majority of blue-collar and low income blacks, people who infrequently take part in the electoral process, support Jesse enthusiastically.

Some white progressives have even said to me, "I'd love to support a Ron Dellums or Julian Bond, but Jesse Jackson isn't the *right* kind of candidate." This position strikes me as metaphysical at best, and profoundly ethnocentric at worst. The white left isn't in a position to choose which protest candidates emerge from national minority communities. The internal dynamics of the civil rights movement has culminated in an electoral protest against the Democratic party. Neither McGovern nor Cranston has the social forces behind him to realign the power relationships within the Democratic party. For better or worse, only Jesse has seized the opportunity, riding upon the popular enthusiasm of Harold Washington's victory, August 27th, and local electoral movements to lead the next stage of the civil rights movement into the center of national politics. Can the democratic left afford to stand outside of this mass movement? For DSA, this is an opportunity to expand working relationships within the most progressive constituencies of the black and Hispanic communities.

Given the changes made to reduce the impact of the McGovern reforms, it is unlikely that Jackson will win more than 175 convention delegates. However, Jackson's race will increase the number of registered voters (especially within the black community), and increase their turnout rates in both the primary and general elections. The race will probably increase the number of blacks who will run for local and statewide office, and will strengthen the potential progressive bloc to undermine the right. Local "Jackson-for-President" coalitions of national minorities, feminists, environmentalists, etc. could survive the 1984 campaign as progressive, multiracial united fronts. Jackson himself is elevating political issues (racism, U.S. militarism, etc.) that centrist candidates would ordinarily ignore. And finally, the 1984 effort of Jackson sets the stage for a more

"serious" race by a black, Hispanic or female candidate in 1988.

Jesse is not my ideal candidate — far from it. But it would be extremely short-sighted for any socialist to stand outside this historic movement of civil rights and poor people's activists within national electoral politics. Most of the social forces that embodied the "Coalition of Conscience" at the August 27th March on Washington, D.C., and that elected Harold Washington mayor of Chicago are now coalescing behind Jackson. We must do likewise. ●

Manning Marable is chair of the National and Racial Minorities Commission of DSA. His latest book is How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America. This article is the first in a series about socialists and the 1984 campaign.

New National Staff

by Jack Clark

The worst thing I've heard about you is that you're too nice." Maxine Phillips encountered that reaction from one DSA leader when discussion came around to her application for the post of DSA executive director. Phrased less directly, that impression of Phillips is widespread. In almost six years as DEMOCRATIC LEFT editor and two years as organization director of the merged organization, Phillips has rarely been a factional figure. A person who prefers consensus to confrontation, she has built a reputation as a conciliator. In the left political world of clashing egos, Phillips' style may be refreshing, but to some she comes across as somehow "not political." Why, then, did she decide to take a job that her best friends in DSA told her had too many problems?

"Because I couldn't resist the challenge," she laughs. "Everyone knows we have been through an incredibly difficult two years. Thanks to Gordon Haskell's hard work and fiscal management we're in better shape financially than we have been for quite some time. It's been hard, but we should look at what we've accomplished—significant public events on both coasts, good literature, membership growth that we can build on, socialist schools throughout the country, lots of local activity and involvement in campaigns. We have enormous talent and potential in our membership. A merger is always difficult, with different expectations,



Tom Roderick

"I'm excited by the energy at the local level."

traditions, sensitivities. It's inevitable that there would be problems, fights, distrust. The standard wisdom is that it takes ten years for any two organizations to really merge. I think the worst is behind us, but it would be naive to think that it's all over."

Phillips is not only the first executive director of the merged organization, but the first woman to head the staff of either organization. NAM's collective leadership always included women and DSOC had strong women on staff, but the national secretary or

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Thirty Years of Dissent

by Peter Steinfels

When intellectuals can do nothing else they start a magazine." DSA Vice Chair Irving Howe once wrote that typically ironic explanation of the founding of *Dissent* by himself and other independent-minded young socialist writers in 1954. He repeated the phrase when I interviewed him recently. "We were fed up with a sectarian existence," Howe recalled. "It was sterile and didn't offer any prospects for developing any socialist community." *Dissent*, which celebrated its thirtieth year in February, was begun as a forum for rethinking and reviving socialism but also—and more immediately—as an instrument for stiffening the spine of American intellectuals in their sometimes uncertain resistance to McCarthyism.

Well, starting a magazine is one thing; keeping it going for thirty years is something else. Especially when you are, like Irving Howe, busy writing literary criticism, collecting political essays, anthologizing Yiddish literature, producing a best-selling portrait of the Eastern European Jewish immigrant experience (*World of Our Fathers*), writing an "intellectual autobiography" (*A Margin of Hope*), and appearing in an occasional Woody Allen movie (*Zelig*).

My conversation with Howe, in an office at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, was a break in his current projects: reworking a series of lectures into a new book on American socialism and, of course, putting out the next issue of *Dissent*. Our conversation moved quickly from the McCarthyism of the fifties to the Reaganism of the eighties.

D.L.: How would you compare the political and intellectual environment today with the one in which *Dissent* was born three decades ago?

Howe: There's some continuity but many differences. The continuity consists in this, that, despite the temporary interruption of the sixties, the long-range trend in American intellectual life since the Second World War has been to the right. The conservatism of the fifties seems to me more bearable than that of the present—maybe in part because the conservatism of the past is always more bearable for me than that of the present. But

I think it was more philosophical, more reflective, a kind of Madisonian, even Burkean conservatism. Socialists had something to learn from it. One thing was the relative autonomy of politics in relation to socioeconomic life. Another was the role of pluralistic communities and political groupings, or what Madison called "factions." The unattractive aspect of that conservatism was its muting of struggle against McCarthyism as a result of the Cold War.



Jill Kremenitz

"Over the years I've gotten muscle pains in my neck twisting my head and watching people who criticized me from my left as they moved to my far right."

The conservatism of today is much more strident, more vicious in tone. Nobody in the fifties was talking about undoing the welfare state, whereas now Reagan—and we all underestimated his strength and seriousness—has succeeded to some extent in exactly that. On questions of civil liberties things are much better now. On questions of social policy they are much worse.

There's another difference. In the fifties, the conservative intellectuals were still working pretty much as individuals. Now they have formed a gang. At least some of the corporations have come to understand the importance of ideology, and that if you

are fighting about the welfare state you must fight not only in terms of this or that policy but in terms of philosophical premises. About five or six years ago there was an ad by Mobil on the op-ed page of the *New York Times* that quoted Lionel Trilling! I remember saying to myself, this marks a big change in American life.

The corporations have developed an ideology and institutions to advance that ideology—magazines, foundations, think tanks, etc., all of which are decidedly well financed. That didn't exist in the fifties.

Something else has been added, a kind of cultural struggle. From Emerson on, American culture has traditionally been one which, on the one hand, exalted the possibilities of American democracy—even to a quasi-religious extent—and, on the other hand, severely criticized American society. Now, some of the neoconservative intellectuals, whether or not they acknowledge it openly or even to themselves, are making a sustained effort to undermine or repudiate that vision. The message is that we have a good society and that our job is to celebrate it and put an end to criticism. For the next few years a major preoccupation of *Dissent* and perhaps of the left as a whole, therefore, is to validate the role of criticism and the need for it.

D.L.: It seems to me that in a sense you might be playing for larger stakes now. When *Dissent* began it was addressing a much more enclosed community of intellectuals who only indirectly influenced the larger world of culture and public policy. Now it seems there is a much more direct connection between the debates among intellectuals and that larger world.

Howe: That's absolutely right. And it means that while questions about socialism continue to matter deeply to us, there are two crucial tasks that must be faced immediately. One is to stop the dismantling of the welfare state; that means defending the trade unions, which are under terrible attack today. The other is to assert the right and necessity of social criticism.

D.L.: I want to get back to the ques-

tion of *Dissent* and socialism, but just one more question about these recent developments. I've heard it said that it's impossible to run a serious intellectual journal on the left because keeping a journal going requires either money or fanaticism. If you're on the left, you usually don't have money. And if you have fanaticism, you won't have a serious journal.

Howe: There's a way of coping with that, namely have a modest amount of money and a reasonable amount not of fanaticism but of zeal. *Dissent* is one of the last cottage industries. None of the editors has ever received a cent in payment. What's more, we all contribute heavily to our biannual fund drives. In some sense we take it out of our skins. But why not?

D.L.: Okay, in what sense is *Dissent* a socialist journal?

Howe: In the sense that most of its editors, though not all, consider themselves democratic socialists. And in the sense that the problem of socialism, of the possibility of reviving it intellectually and politically in America, is for us, so to speak, a personal problem. At certain moments it comes to the forefront of our considerations. At other moments, it may recede. But it's always there. Socialism or the idea of socialism remains the guiding norm or value which controls and gives vision and content to our day-by-day work.

D.L.: The fact that you publicly declare yourself a socialist seems to provoke a certain degree of resentment. On the left there are those who apparently feel you don't qualify for the term because you're not radical enough for their taste. On the right there are those who are happy you're not more radical but who therefore conclude that you are unfairly claiming some moral cachet by continuing to call yourself a socialist.

Howe: Well, nobody has a monopoly on the term, which I admit leads to a lot of political and moral confusion in the contemporary world. Almost every political phenomenon in the world in the last thirty or forty years, including some of the most terrible, have used the term. We have even sometimes discussed the question of dropping the word if we could find another term which would indicate that (a) we are in principle completely attached to democracy; (b) we want a whole series of immediate social reforms; and (c) we envisage a transformation of society in which democracy would be extended to economic life and there will be greater egalitarianism and a spirit of cooperativeness. But lacking another such word, we call

*"The [conservative] message is that we have a good society and that our job is to celebrate it and put an end to criticism. For the next few years a major preoccupation of *Dissent* and perhaps of the left as a whole, therefore, is to validate the role of criticism and the need for it."*

ourselves, like the people in DSA, democratic socialists—a phrase that would have been redundant 70 years ago.

As for the people on the left, all I can say is that over the years I've gotten muscle pains in my neck twisting my head and watching people who criticized me from my left as they moved to my far right. As for the criticism from the right, I think one has to admit that although there may be a considerable community of interest and agreement on current issues between *Dissent* and, say, ADA liberals, there remains a difference of ultimate perspective—and what's so terrible about that?

D.L.: You've been a member of DSA and DSOC since their beginnings. From the perspective of your own intellectual work and concerns, how would you evaluate DSA?

Howe: I very much like its spirit of openness, the fact that it has not degenerated into a political sect, the fact that there are some very bright young people in it. I very greatly admire the activists in DSA. I also find hard to understand a certain tone of innocence in DSA, as though nothing has happened in the twentieth century that might cause one to rethink socialist views or feel a little uncertain or even depressed. That is, there's an atmosphere in DSA—I wouldn't call it anti-intellectual, it's sort of *un-intellectual* or *a-intellectual*—which suggests that with the right spirit and the right sentiments, everything is going to be okay. A lot of people in DSA, for example, do not subscribe to *Dissent*. That's fine if they don't subscribe because they don't like the political views in

Dissent. But some of my friends in DSA tell me that the people who don't subscribe to *Dissent* don't read any other left-wing intellectual journals either, or don't read very much at all.

Now maybe I'm being a little unfair. There's a difference between the way an organization functions and the way an intellectual group functions. An organization has to maintain a certain positive face; a group of intellectuals does not. Still, to speak of socialism, at this point, simply as if it were a totally assured and self-confident vision seems to me childish. You may convince yourself, but you're not likely to convince anyone else. People know that we have lived through the experiences of Hitler and Stalin. People know that the whole socialist idea has suffered severe internal fissures and ruptures and disintegration.

D.L.: Hasn't *Dissent* been characterized as practicing "preemptive disillusionment"?

Howe: If all we wanted to practice was disillusionment we wouldn't have knocked ourselves out for thirty years. I know that sometimes I'm invited to DSA conventions or other meetings to be the pessimist, which is not a terribly bad role. Yet it irritates me a little bit—because I don't think that optimism and pessimism are serious categories. The serious categories are *probing* and *truthfulness* and *self-awareness* and *trying to cope intellectually*. ●

Peter Steinfels is executive editor of Commonweal and serves on the boards of DEMOCRATIC LEFT and Dissent.

IT'S 1984!

Do you know where your DSA local is? This year you can't afford to be an unaffiliated socialist. Be active! For the address of the local nearest you, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to DSA, Suite 801, 853 Broadway, NYC 10003.

Calling All Delegates

Will you be a delegate to the Democratic National Convention? We're planning a socialist caucus meeting during the convention as well as other activities. Let us know if you'll be there. Write to Jim Shoch, DSA, 3202 Adeline St., Berkeley, CA 94703.

REVIEWS

by Maurice Isserman

1984 REVISITED, TOTALITARIANISM IN OUR CENTURY, Irving Howe, ed., Harper & Row, 1983, \$3.50 paperback.

Shortly after the end of the Second World War, George Orwell wrote an essay entitled "Politics and the English Language." In an inspired passage he "translated" a sentence from Ecclesiastes into "modern English." The original:

I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

And in "modern English":

Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.

As a democratic socialist Orwell feared and despised the uses to which an increasingly debased language was being put:

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible. Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bomb on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed aims of political parties. Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness.

The purpose of such vagueness was "to name things without calling up mental pictures of them." Thus the first responsibility of radicals, in Orwell's view, was to give things their proper names.

Orwell died in 1950, the year after the appearance of the book he is best remembered for, the novel *1984*. "What if..." questions in history tend to be rather self-serving; the "What if Orwell had lived to see 1984" question is no exception. Norman Podhoretz, for example, has argued that if Orwell were around today he'd be a neoconservative. I prefer to believe otherwise, but for the sake of argument let's say that Orwell is alive and well, a supporter of Thatcher and Reagan, and a frequent contributor to *Commentary*. In his youth Orwell was never a good party man: he displayed a withering scorn for the self-deceptions of his comrades on the left. Would he do less for his new comrades on the right? What, in particular, would he make of the Reagan-Kirkpatrick distinction between "authoritarianism" and "totalitarianism"? "The great enemy of clear language," Orwell wrote in 1946, "is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink." No, Mr. Podhoretz, better to leave Orwell sleeping safely in his grave.

"Totalitarianism," in the usage given it by the Reagan administration, is a long word and an exhausted idiom. But when Orwell was writing *1984* the idea of totalitarianism was still a fresh concept and spoke to legitimate fears about political trends in the 20th century. Read as historical document, *1984* reminds us of the mood of despair that enveloped many on the democratic left in the

immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Nazism's defeat failed to usher in the hoped-for renaissance of peace and democracy. Stalin ruled over his new empire in Eastern Europe with customary brutality while the United States descended into one of its periodic frenzies of paranoia and missionary zeal. Orwell wrote his novel in 1948 (he chose its title by reversing the last two digits of the year). That same year, shortly after the Stalinist coup that destroyed the last remnants of Czechoslovakian democracy, a young socialist named Irving Howe wrote: "Who could avoid the feeling of discouragement — to say it bluntly — which a socialist must feel about so many events in Europe?" The socialist movement, Howe argued, had to abandon "myopic and opiate forms of 'official optimism'" and recognize that "giant bureaucratic structures" were coming to dominate political life, while everywhere one looked one saw the "disintegration of the initiative and confidence of the rebellious classes."

Times change and ideas change, *1984* as Howe notes in the introduction to a timely collection of essays, *1984 Revisited, Totalitarianism in Our Century*:

The evidence of history...comes down strongly against Orwell's vision of the future. Europe this past half century has been convulsed by repeated, if unsuccessful, rebellions in which the workers...have played a major role, from East Berlin [in 1953] to France in 1968, from the Hungarian Revolution to the rise of Solidarity in Poland.

In separate essays in *1984 Revisited* Michael Walzer, directly, and Milovan Djilas, by implication, take issue with Orwell's vision of the "long dark night," the permanent triumph of totalitarianism. In the post-Stalinist Soviet bloc few people truly love Big Brother; Walzer describes Andropov's Russia as "a dictatorship resting on popular apathy, the hollow shell of a totalitarian regime." Djilas questions whether Poland ever deserved the label of totalitarianism, given the uninterrupted influence of the Catholic Church on the nation: "In Poland, an illegal pluralistic society has arisen beneath a legal government totalitarian in tendency but not quite in actuality." History has not come to an end in the Communist countries: whatever the intentions of their rulers, these are societies in which heretical ideas — many of them based on Marxism's original promise — continue to appear and take root.

Other valuable essays in *1984 Revisited* include Bernard Avishai's "Orwell and the English Language" ("How good it would have been," Avishai writes, "to have had Orwell around since 1984...especially during elections. What would he have made of serious journalists debating whether or not the President can 'stay the course?'" and Robert Nisbet's "1984 and the Conservative Imagination" (Nisbet's contribution is a reminder of how much more interesting life would be if we could argue with genuine Burkean conservatives rather than the corporate/militarist flacks who pass for conservatives in the United States today).

Winston Smith begins his rebellion in *1984* by keeping a diary and describing his life and the events he witnesses in his own words, rather than in the official "Newspeak." In an age when invasions are called "rescue missions" and nuclear missiles are called "peacekeepers" there is still something to be learned from his example.

Maurice Isserman teaches history at Smith College. He is writing a book about the American left in the 1950s.

Staff

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executive director post was held by a man. What does Phillips think of being the first woman?

"I'm proud to be both 'firsts.' I'm particularly excited by the turn the organization took at its convention with the election of Barbara Ehrenreich as co-chair. We doubled our ability to reach out to the constituencies we care about. Neither co-chair is willing to be a figurehead, so we now have more sharing of leadership responsibilities and resources."

Does she think it would be fair to label her leadership style as "feminist"?

"I'm certainly a feminist, but I think my style reflects my generation. Those of us who came along in the sixties received a different socialization, more influenced by the new left and feminism. DSA has leaders with both old left and newer styles, but I think the organization as a whole is ready for a more conciliatory rather than internally combative style."

Phillips sees the internal tone of conciliation as important precisely because of the need to de-emphasize internal politics and focus on external political tasks.

"I'm excited by the energy at the local level—the Central America teach-ins, the labor support work, the socialist schools, the electoral work, voter registration projects, every effort to dump Reagan. On the national level I think the renewed commitment to feminist work and the effort to build a multi-racial organization offer great opportunities. We need to provide some level of organizational coherence, some sense that all that local work, with our various commissions, and coalition-building activity, is feeding into a national organization. We need to work very hard to defeat Ronald Reagan and Reaganism at the same time that we struggle to find the time and energy to come up with new ideas. Why should people be socialists instead of being good liberals or active feminists or militant trade unionists or civil rights or community organizers? We don't pay enough attention to that."

"Some people have dropped away. There are political differences, a sense of distance and in some cases some very bruised feelings coming out of the tumult of the last few years. I think the key is to avoid the internal fights, widen our appeal and fight to build that socialist presence in the wider American politics. Everyone who is in the socialist movement is here because of larger beliefs. We need to put those beliefs into some sort of practice."

Finally, our conversation turns to Phil-

lips' background. Her political involvement dates back to the civil rights and anti-war movements in college. For several years after coming to New York, she served on the executive committee of Village Independent Democrats, the leading reform club in New York City, which has also been an intense political battlefield. She was elected to the county Democratic committee. In 1970-71, Phillips helped found Village Friends of Welfare Rights and was co-director of an advocacy project for workfare recipients. She holds a master's degree in journalism and has worked as a writer, editor, conference planner and public relations specialist. Her employers have included such leading nonprofits as the Child Welfare League of America, Family Service America and the National Mental Health Association.

A major part of her life is her commitment to church activity. She's a member of Judson Memorial, a Baptist and UCC church in Greenwich Village with a proud progressive record. The church helped lead the fight for legal abortion in New York State; most recently it was one of the sites for the massive exhibit by the Artists Call Against Intervention in Central America. Phillips has served on the church board and chaired its social action committee. Through a church study group on corporate capitalism in 1977, she learned about DSOC, decided she was a socialist, and became involved. She helped found the New York City Religion and Socialism Committee and has been very active in the national Religion and Socialism Committee.

Our Sunday afternoon interview was over. Phillips got ready to go home and lay

STAFF CHANGES

Cutbacks and career moves have changed the casts and roles in the New York and Chicago DSA offices. Jason Kay moves from being the Chicago office manager to the post of Chicago local organizer. Dee Rossman, executive assistant in the N.Y. office, has returned to the pursuit of her primary love—low-income housing development. Carisa Cunningham, formerly active in the Oberlin DSA feminist group, now handles the co-chairs' schedules and manages the New York office. John Keefe has stopped answering the phone for the national and now does it for the local as the New York organizer. He has been replaced by Esmeralda Guerrero, a native of Honduras, who has been active in Central America solidarity work.

out DEMOCRATIC LEFT. I said that although I've known her for six years I was surprised by the extent of her political experience. She's too understated about her achievements. We've often joked that when she first came on as DEMOCRATIC LEFT editor, several members of the search committee wondered then whether she wasn't "too nice." One of her first acts as editor was to reject a piece by a prominent member.

"Interview me again in a year. I may have some enemies by then," she grinned. ●

Jack Clark was the national secretary of DSOC and serves on the NEC.

THANKS, GORDON

In February, DSA appointed its first executive director and accepted reluctantly the resignation of Gordon Haskell, who served as the political director of DSA from the time of merger.

Haskell, who came out of retirement in 1982 to accept the post of political director of the newly-merged organization, worked at the herculean task of managing DSA's money. He assumed his position when the accumulated debt of DSOC stood over \$100,000 and threatened to cripple the merged organization before it started. This year, at an early February meeting of the NEC budget and finance subcommittee, Haskell was able to report that indebtedness has been reduced to \$44,000, the lowest it has been in more than two years. While even that figure sounds high, the burden of retiring that level of debt is manageable on an annual budget of \$300,000. The improvement in the financial situation of the organization is directly attributable to Haskell's tough-minded management and hard work.

Besides the more than full-time task of raising money and spending it slowly, Haskell put major effort into DSA's work in the peace movement and in Democratic party activity.

He now retires for real. He and his wife Rachel plan to leave Brooklyn and move to the West Coast. All of us who have worked with him will miss him. All of us in DSA join together in wishing him a happy, productive and long retirement. And we understand that there is a different kind of debt that the organization has run up over the last two years. We hope to repay that debt by working with Gordon Haskell to carry on the work to which he has devoted a lifetime.

M.H.

ON THE LEFT



by HARRY FLEISCHMAN

NATIONAL ROUNDUP

Alabama

Mobile DSA members at the University of Alabama have raised over \$2,000 at benefit parties featuring live bands. They are developing a rape prevention project and are working to force the university to upgrade apartment housing it owns.

California

San Francisco DSA and the *Socialist Review* sold out a West Coast premiere January 19 of *Seeing Red*, a film by DSAers Julia Reichert and Jim Klein on the lives of Communists during the thirties and forties. Pulitzer Prize winner Alice Walker spoke at the reception preceding the showing.

Georgia

DSAer Alice Johnson was elected treasurer of the Fulton County Democratic Committee and several members are involved in the *Inside Labor* programs produced by the AFL-CIO... Fifty students attended a forum organized by Georgia State University DSA youth section. Professor David McCreery spoke on the U.S. role in the Caribbean.

Kentucky

Rosemary Ruether, DSA Vice Chair and noted theologian, will speak at the University of Kentucky's Newman Center February 17 on "Sexism and God Talk—Toward a Feminist Theology"... DSAers backed the Tax Policy Conference at the University last November, held under the auspices of the Institute for Democratic Socialism, which received \$5,000 in grants for the conference. As a follow-up, a Commonwealth Tax Policy Education Group has been organized.

Maine

DSAer Russ Christensen is in Nicaragua with other members of Witness for Peace, working in villages near Honduras.

Maryland

Howard County DSAers heard planner Ernest Erber, speak on "Industrial Policy" in January. New chair of the local is Abraham Bates.

Massachusetts

Rev. Ronald Anton, SJ, of Weston School of Theology, and John Cort, spoke on "The Notre Dame Conference on the Bishops' Pastoral on Capitalism and Christianity" at a January meeting of the Boston DSA Religious Caucus.

Michigan

A DSA Industrial Heartland Regional Conference is scheduled for February 11-12 in Ann Arbor featuring Dan Luria, Tom Weisskopf, Joyce Kornbluh and Hy Kornbluh. Ann Arbor DSA heard DSAer Cornel West, a Union Theological Seminary professor, talk on "The 1960s and Afro-America: A Black Christian Socialist Perspective."

New York

The Albany DSA New Year's Eve Gala highlighted the "Return of Pinks," a musical extravaganza... Some 215 attended the local's Eugene V. Debs Award dinner honoring John T. Reilly, president, Albany United University Professions... Gary Dorrien and Dorothy Tristman were elected co-chairs... The Lizzard Ball, Buffalo DSA's most popular fund-raiser, takes place January 28... A mail appeal has raised \$400, a third of the money needed to send a Buffalo DSAer to Nicaragua as a grass roots ambassador... Three DSA members are running as delegates for Jesse Jackson.

A DSA Board of New York State Representatives is now being organized to encourage communication between the various DSA locals and to formulate a statewide legislative agenda.

Ithaca DSA helped elect John Gutenberger mayor... Steve Jackson is chair of the local... Michael D'Innocenzo, candidate in the 5th Congressional District for the Democratic nomination, spoke to Local Nassau January 22 on "George Orwell and 1984"... DSA co-chair Barbara Ehrenreich will speak on February 18 at 3 p.m. over WBAI on "romance"... Morton Bahr, vice president, District One, Communications Workers of America, spoke to the Long Island Progressive Coalition in January on the divestiture of Ma Bell and its meaning for consumers and workers.

Ohio

A tour for artists, writers and culture

workers will take place in Nicaragua June 23-30. For more information, write to Steve Cagan, 1751 Radnor Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118.

Pennsylvania

The first statewide meeting of Pennsylvania DSAers was held in Mechanicsburg January 28-29... Several DSA members in Philadelphia now run the House of Our Own bookstore at 3920 Spruce St.

Texas

Several Austin members are working on an industrial policy public hearing, looking at the problem of high tech industry in the area... Houston DSA videotaped the recent national DSA convention in New York and the videotape will be available to all locals for outreach.

Washington

Over 30 Seattle DSA members contributed hundreds of hours to the Dick Nelson and Mike Lowry campaigns. Although the candidates lost, the drive for equal pay for comparable work has become a major issue in the state... DSA member Terry Barksdale helped organize an emergency rally at Evergreen State College in Olympia against the U.S. invasion of Grenada. It was attended by over 450 people.

DSA LABOR MEMO

More than 65 DSA members from over 25 unions attended DSA Labor Commission sessions at the recent national convention. They voted to publish the *DSA Labor Memo* to aid in developing a larger DSA presence in the labor movement and within DSA. The five co-chairs are: Tim Sears, Carl Shier, Penny Schantz, Marjor-

IN MEMORIAM

George Gibson of Louisville, Ky., who died in January, was one of the oldest and most supportive of DSA members. Those of us who knew him in the Socialist Party remember his presence at numerous conventions and his tireless activism. This past fall at the DSA convention he publicly reminded younger comrades not to be so self-righteous about resolutions they might pass, recalling his involvement at an SP convention 50 years ago in which the delegates voted not to support the New Deal.

ie Phye and Stella Nowicki. DC/Maryland and Northern Virginia members are putting out the *Memo*, which called for DSA aid to the Continental Airline strikers and reported the formation of Labor Committees on Central America and the Caribbean. For a copy of *DSA Labor Memo*, write to 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 810-A, Washington, D.C. 20036.

DSA RADIO PROJECT

Chris Nielsen, 5215 N.E. 30th, Portland, OR 97211, has just issued the first issue of a newsletter for people who attended the Community Radio Workshop at the DSA convention, plus other interested folk. He has available cassettes of three talks by Michael Harrington, two by Barbara Ehrenreich and an edited version of the convention public forum on "Deadly Connections: Nuclear Escalation, Intervention and the Economic Crisis." Each is available at \$4 postpaid.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Historian Philip Foner has brought together writings of black socialist Rev. George Washington Woodbey, author of many works reconciling socialism and Christianity. Woodbey was the only black delegate to the Socialist party conventions of 1904 and 1908, and in 1908 was nominated to be Eugene Debs's running mate.

CLASSIFIED

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.

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Classified advertising rates are \$2 per line, \$50 per column inch. Payment in advance. Twenty percent discount if ad runs two or more times. We reserve the right to reject ads.

RESOURCES

El Salvador: Labor, Terror and Peace, a report by leading trade unionists who visited El Salvador, says that unionists there are death squad victims. The National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador delegation included Jack Sheinkman and Dave Dyson of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers; Bill Lucy and Jack Howard of AFSCME; Ted Barrett of the UAW; and John De Mars and Sam Pizzagati of the NEA. For copies, write the Committee at 15 Union Square, New York, NY 10003.

Poverty in the American Dream: Women and Children First by Karin Stallard, Barbara Ehrenreich and Holly Sklar, examines the feminization of poverty and offers alternatives for the future. *Women in the Global Factory* by Annette Fuentes and Barbara Ehrenreich explores the role of women on the multinational corporate assembly line, from East Asia and Central America to California's Silicon Valley. Both pamphlets are rich in firsthand interviews. Copies are \$3.75 each (plus 75¢ postage) from the Institute for New Communications, Suite 905, 853 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

Reagan's Secret Wars, by Jay Peterzell, is published by the Center for National Security Studies, 122 Maryland Ave. N.E., Washington, DC 20002. This comprehensive examination of the role of current CIA covert intelligence operations in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Libya, Iran and Nicaragua analyzes the costs and benefits of a secret foreign policy. \$3.50 a copy.

We Won't Move: Songs of the Tenants' Movement is a record of tenants' lives and

struggles from 16th century England to New York today. It includes songs by Malvina Reynolds, Langston Hughes, Holly Near and others. Albums available from Fuse Music, 1230½ Garden Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101 at \$7.50 each.

March on Washington: August 28, 1963, by Thomas Gentile (New Day Pub., \$6.95), tells the amazing story of that amazing march, and mentions the role of DSAer Sy Posner as the effective public relations director for the march.

Remember the *Social Stratification Chart* by Social Graphics Co. that showed race, family type, occupation, income, and wealth of the population? In 1979 the bulge below the \$20,000 income mark was fairly uniform. Now, at the end of the Reagan administration, the shift to the bottom of the chart for large numbers of people is striking and shocking. For the new chart, send \$6 plus \$1.50 for mailing and handling to Social Graphics Co., 1120 Riverside Ave., Baltimore, MD 21230. An explanatory booklet is available for \$2.50. The company also puts out a *Nuclear Arms Race* poster for \$5 that shows the growth of the arms race, what it costs, and what it would buy if the money were spent on human needs.

The Shalom Seders, compiled by New Jewish Agenda, features three progressive Passover Haggadahs. One is by DSA member Arthur Waskow. Another focuses on Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation. Available from Agenda for \$10.95 plus \$1 for postage; \$7.95 to Agenda members. Order from NJA, 149 Church Street, 2-N, NYC 10007.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL IN JUNE

Educational/Cultural Tour of

Barcelona, San Sebastian, Mondragon & Madrid in Spain and Lisbon, Estoril, and Sintra in Portugal

Leaving June 8th, returning June 22, 1984

- Meet with leaders of the Spanish and Portuguese Socialist governments
- Visit the famous worker-owned industries of Mondragon
- Explore the cultural heritage of both countries

Cost of \$1,492 includes all transportation (air & ground travel), hotel accommodations, continental breakfasts & dinners throughout, sightseeing, and entertainment.

Write: Institute for Democratic Socialism, 853 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, N.Y. 10003

Call: Tour Leader - Simone Plastrik, (212) 595-3185

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 I would like to subscribe to DEMOCRATIC LEFT: \$15 sustaining; \$8 regular.
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SOCIALIST SCHOLARS CONFERENCE: "The Encounter with America"

April 19-20-21, Boro of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, Greenwich and Harrison Sts., New York City

Last year's conference commemorated Marx's centennial and drew over 1500 participants. This year, over 50 panels will examine the utility of contemporary socialist thought.

_____ \$15 _____ \$5 (student/low income) _____ \$10 (1 day)

For more information, write to Room 801, 853 Broadway, NYC 10003, or call 212-790-4320.

DSA Regional Youth Conferences

MIDWEST: April 7—Oberlin, Ohio—"The Deadly Connections: Nuclear Escalation, Latin America Intervention, and the Economic Crisis." **Contact: Marc Baldwin**, c/o Oberlin DSA, Box 46, Wilder Hall, Oberlin, Ohio 44074, 216-774-8263. **Keynote Speaker: Michael Harrington.**

NEW ENGLAND: April 14—Harvard University, Cambridge, MA—"Strategies for Defeating Reaganism and the Right." **Contact: Tom Canel**, 28 Lowell Street, Somerville, MA 02143, 617-666-3921. **Keynote Speaker: Barbara Ehrenreich.**

WEST COAST: April 13 & 14—Santa Monica City College—"Building the Left." **Contact: Phil Ansel**, 2412 Walnut Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90291. H) 213-306-2940. W) 213-386-7520. **Keynote Speaker: Michael Harrington.**

For more information on any of these conferences, or on other DSA regional Youth Section events, contact Jeremy Karpatkin at 212-260-3270.

JANIE HIGGINS REPORTS

Business is buying back in the Democratic party, according to Alan Baron's research in the November 7 *Baron Report*. Hope and fear govern much political behavior, Baron argues, and business leaders' hopes for a conservative Republican majority have faded since the mid-1970s. Meanwhile business fears being on the outside when the Democrats again take control; after all, those Democrats don't show such a strong tilt against business, anyway, so why should the business political action committees (PACs) antagonize them? The newsletter of the National Association of Manufacturers reported that Democratic fund-raising chief Lloyd Bentsen strong-armed contributions from business PACs by pledging that the Democrats would remember who turned them down once they won back control of the Senate. With all this to mull over, the Democratic presidential contenders are trying to grab headlines by proclaiming loudest who has disagreed with labor the most. Reagan must be defeated, but the alternative party offers little inspiration for change.

Happy 1984. Ronald Reagan's State of the Union address provides a marvelous example of Newspeak: "After all our struggles to restore America...after all our hard-won victories... we cannot, must not and will not turn back, we will finish our job." Pity the president and his terrible struggles to slash food stamp allowances. Oh, how he and his inner circle suffered through these hard-won victories to cut back low-income housing subsidies and public health expenditures. Much of his rhetoric is effective, even

stirring, yet the Great Communicator uses all those skills for the most contemptible ends. Then he wraps it up in grand talk of "all our struggles." Of course, he's also putting Newspeak to work internationally. Just count up the casualties of the peace in Lebanon.

Save fuel, spend lives. Airline deregulation turns out to be problematic, according to an article by Robert M. Kaus in, of all magazines, the December *Washington Monthly*. Kaus leans heavily on the writings of regulation advocate Frederick Thayer. At least two air tragedies of recent years (the crash of a DC-10 taking off from O'Hare in 1979 and the plunge of an Air Florida jet into the Potomac in 1981) occurred in large part because of cost-cutting by the airlines. Deregulation has made the flights cheaper and more dangerous. Kaus raises some serious questions about regulation and deregulation (and some silly questions as well, like "Who was injured when OSHA inspections declined by 15%?) and ends up arguing for strong and consistent regulation on matters of health, safety and environment. "In the end, enforcing the rules to protect the environment or the lives of air travellers doesn't seem more inherently difficult than enforcing traffic laws. The problems come when the government's enforcing power is weak enough to lead individual businesses to think that they can get away with cheating—and they'd better do it before their competitors do." Welcome words of wisdom from the neo-liberals' bible.

