

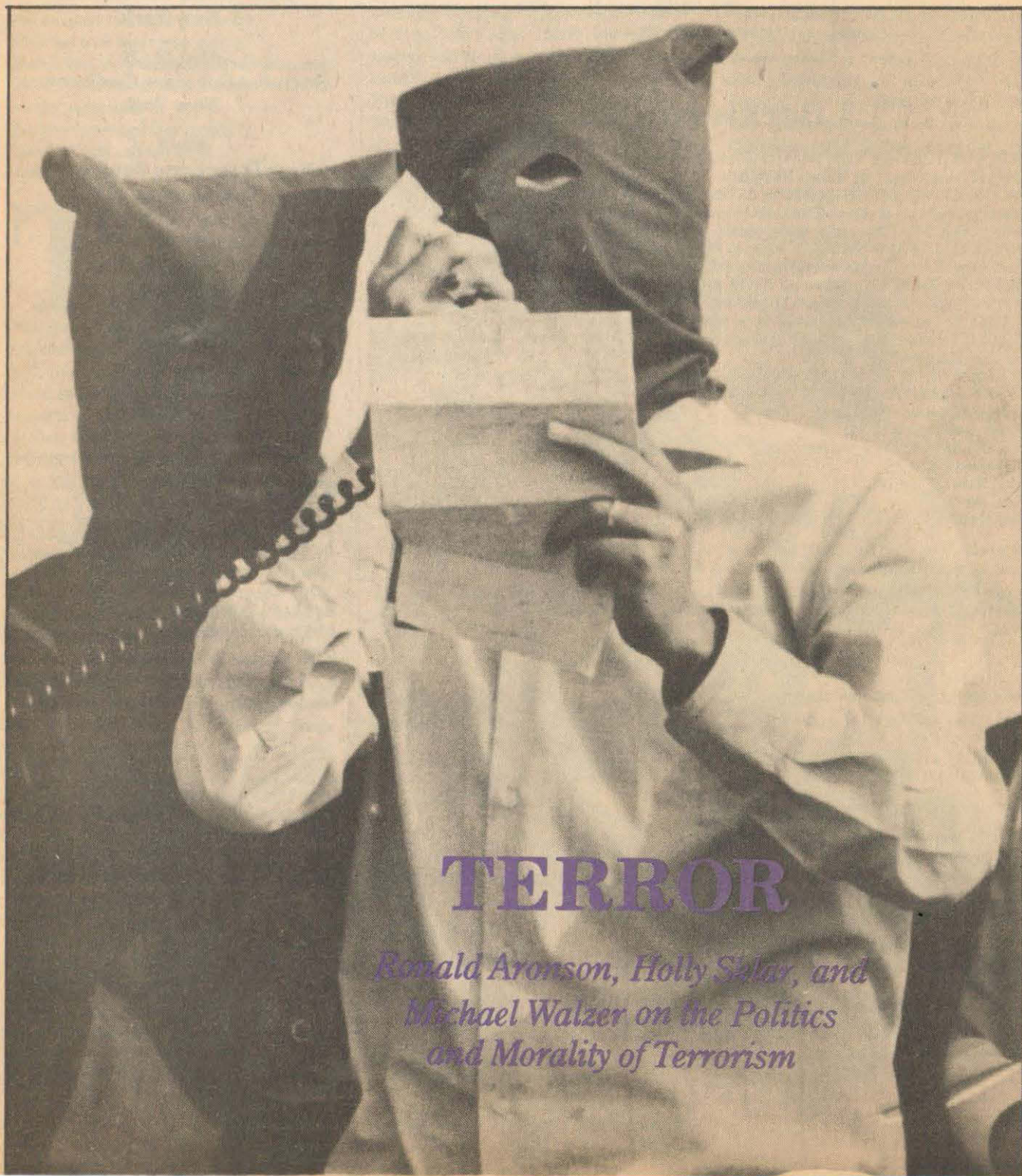
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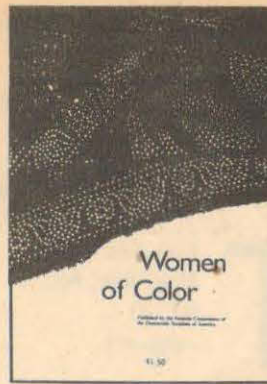
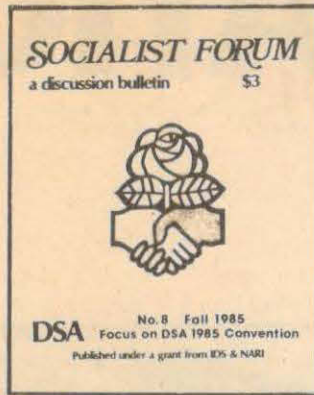
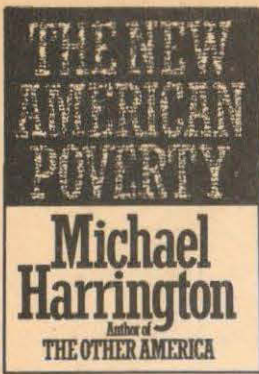


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TERROR

*Ronald Aronson, Holly Sklar, and
Michael Walzer on the Politics
and Morality of Terrorism*



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Terrorism: Dispelling the Fog

by Ronald Aronson

*And you dare to call me a terrorist
While you look down your gun
When I think of all the deeds that you have done
You have plundered many nations
Divided many lands
You have terrorized their peoples
You ruled with an iron hand
And you brought this reign of terror to my land.*

The Wolftones' moving ballad tells the story of Joe McDonnell, who died in the Maze on the sixty-first day of a hunger strike on July 8, 1981. These lyrics make two attempts at piercing the fog surrounding the issue of terrorism today. First, the usual definition of the phenomenon known as "terrorism" is ideological, reflecting political and social interests, and furthering their legitimacy. Second, like any social process, political violence demands to be understood in a larger social context.

And yet "Joe McDonnell" *thickens* the fog. Did *he* kill innocent people? "Right or wrong," he says, "I tried to free my land." In fact, he was arrested on a firearms charge after a factory was bombed in October 1976, during a rash of indiscriminate sectarian murders. If his eloquently defended acts were aimed at nonparticipants in the conflict over Northern Ireland, was he not a terrorist?

The fog, it seems, surrounds the issue from every direction. As socialists, however, we can discover tools for penetrating the fog by *combining* the above approaches: criticizing the self-serving and distortive categories of the status quo and developing more authentic and illuminating ones; uniformly applying a single standard of human rights and dignity; and seeing specific facts in relation to the social processes that create them.

Defining Terrorism

What is terrorism? Those labeled "terrorists" by media and organs of state power are any non-state organization or individuals engaging in political violence on the "other" side. Normally "terrorism" includes guerrilla

warfare, political assassination and politically-motivated attacks against civilians, and normally it excludes state violence, especially if on "our" side. Usual definitions thus stretch too far in one direction and not far enough in the other. In *Just and Unjust Wars*, Michael Walzer has given us an alternative definition about which we can and should be uncompromising: terrorism is "the

random murder of innocent people." This must be expanded, of course, to include the threat of murder: holding hostages. The definition implies the kind of moral standard with which socialism begins and ends: People have a right to live just as they have a right to flourish. We may disagree about whether other forms of political violence are justifiable, but surely making a target of innocent



Two young Jordanians, trained as Junior Fatah commandos, guard their camp.

people is politically and morally contemptible.

The starting point of any revolutionary politics always includes a deep moral claim: they are *wrong* to oppress or dispossess us, and we are *right* to resist them. Within that claim usually lies another: the oppressors' methods show their disrespect for humanity, while ours show our deep respect. We engage in violence only with reluctance, to defend ourselves or the people, to punish brutality, or to overthrow illegitimate authority.

Terrorism, on the other hand, moves in a rather different direction. People who do *not* exercise or enforce power are threatened or attacked *insofar as they are bystanders*. It is not the same as political assassination, although this shades into terrorism as its targets become less clearly oppressive and attacks become more random and unconnected with a mass movement. In terrorism the innocent are attacked to try to force those who *do* exercise power to change their actions.

In an ultimate sense it may be true, as his Tupamaro captors told British Ambassador Henry Jackson, that "there are no innocent bystanders." But even Sartre, theorist of responsibility, would see a radical distinction between the shapers and agents of oppressive policy and those private citizens (and their children) who go along with it. But, the terrorist may reply, the Israelis' very existence is in some sense the source of Palestinian homelessness, as the very existence of Irish Protestants (or Catholics) bars each other's hegemony. When the logic of political struggle becomes genocidal, as in these cases, we have reached the ultimate contradiction: we deny an entire people the national self-determination that we proclaim as our sacred right. No movement acting on behalf of what is proclaimed as a *higher* morality can acknowledge this, so it erects theoretical arguments transforming attacks on civilians into courageous assaults on "the enemy." Intellectual corruption goes hand in hand with political and moral corruption.

State Terrorism

And yet the ballad glorifying a man convicted of terrorism is also right: Who is Ronald Reagan, who sponsors *contra* terror and holds the Soviet people nuclear hostage, to call Abul Abbas a terrorist? But we must be precise: Is it state terrorism to occupy Northern Ireland, and to subject the IRA and its supporters to harassment, indefinite internment, beatings and torture? Is it state terrorism to bomb PLO headquarters in Tunis? This spectacular attack, killing many non-PLO Tunisians in the process, may be judged an ugly act, but it did not involve the specific viciousness of attacking noncombatant civilians *as such and at random*. In fact, if states

commit terrorism relatively rarely it is because they have political and military power *and thus do not need to*. Their violence can be targeted more precisely against their actual opponents, as in Tunis, and thus need not be randomly directed against nonparticipants.

Although states can do great evil without succumbing to the particular viciousness of terrorism, they have in fact succumbed, again and again in this century. At his trial for terrorism in Britain in 1976, IRA Active Service Unit member Joe O'Connell, seeking to legitimize his own acts by equating them with those of states, asked "whether the bombing of Hiroshima and Dresden were terrorist offenses." Yes, like his, they were. O'Connell's remarkable self-justification takes us to

"The corruption of terrorism often reflects the moral ambiguity of a position without majority prospects."

the actual relationship between state and individual terrorism in our century: the one is the historical predecessor of the other. As Walzer points out, random killing of civilians was initiated not by revolutionaries but by governments in wartime. The moral, political and intellectual corruption of terrorism began at the highest levels, with the loftiest guardians of the status quo. From World War I to the present they have initiated the killing of over one hundred million people, often in vast random massacres. At this very moment their heirs, more massively armed but untouched by these catastrophes, operate the state terrorism which keeps all of us *nuclear* hostages.

Why do we, even on the left, so often miss seeing the phenomenon of state terrorism which Joe O'Connell claimed as his moral predecessor? Why do we fail to understand the TWA flight 847 hostage-taking as a response to Israel's far more massive hostage-taking in southern Lebanon? Why do we fail to see that the US and the USSR make threatening each other's *civilian* population the pivot of nuclear-war theory and practice? The state has a deep and powerful legitimacy. Sovereign over people and territory, states are the *definers of legitimacy*. They are, inherently, the status quo. Politically, legally and psychologically we live within their reassuring frameworks: the state is and defines law, the state is and defines order. Even if, as today, states engage in hostage-

taking, bombing of civilians or nuclear terrorism, their character as order reassures us. To think critically about today's world, however, requires that we learn the century's horrible lessons about the terrorism of order: that mass murder becomes normal within the social order carrying it out, that constitutionally-elected or appointed rulers can become genocidal.

Why Terrorism?

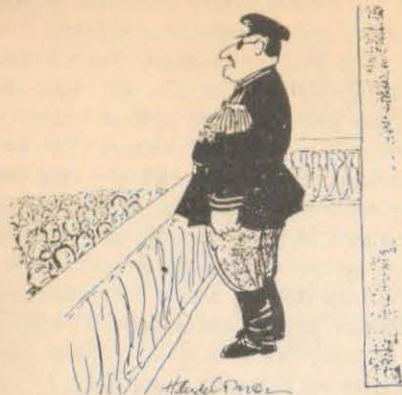
The general—white, Western, male—roots of twentieth-century terrorism suggest how fogbound are those self-righteous ones who speak contemptuously about Lebanese terrorists as lacking "our" respect for human life. Amidst the mass murder and nuclear terror of our century, is it any wonder that movements demanding social and political liberation turn to terrorism?

But people, not the general conditions, create their actions. Liberation movements turn to terrorism for *their own* reasons. Generally speaking, random attacks on innocent civilians begin *when all else fails*. Terrorism becomes the strategy of a movement, substituting violence for politics, which can find no other effective strategy. It is an expression of political weakness.

A movement which attacks innocent civilians is usually one which has found itself in an intractable dilemma: either it has no significant base, no chance of winning hegemony or no geographic or political space in which to mount a struggle for power (or some combination of these debilities). Terrorism becomes a replacement for the far better forms of struggle which the situation has disqualified.

If we contrast the situation of such movements with that of the proletariat as envisioned by Marxism, the difference could not be more striking. Marxism was projected as a movement of the vast majority against their exploiters. Its successful incarnations have confidently undertaken slow, patient organizing to win the support of this majority, as well as a primarily political assault on those in power. Marxism's peasant-oriented and anti-colonial applications retain its moral and social emphasis on the vast majority, and thus avoid terrorism on principle. At decisive moments in the struggles in Russia, China and Vietnam, each Communist movement managed to *win* hegemony over virtually the entire society and become its ruling force. In each case, revolutionary violence, as midwife of the hegemonic movement, was selective and limited. It was an adjunct of politics, not its replacement.

Terrorism is the resort of those who lack political or geographic space, support, or the demographic prospect of winning po-



"I have been saddened to hear that, despite the recent restrictions on your liberty, many of you still do not like me."

litionally. The Provisional IRA, which began by defending Northern Catholics against Protestant terrorism, set off bombs in London when they had reached the limits of struggle in Northern Ireland. And they had reached these limits not because of British power or because they lacked support in their own community, but because they were the movement of a distinct minority in the six counties and were unsupported by the government of the other twenty-six.

But this suggests that the corruption of terrorism often reflects the moral ambiguity of a position without majority prospects. The Northern Catholics should not be oppressed, and British imperialism should not rule Northern Ireland—but should a million Protestants be incorporated into the Irish Republic against their will? Similarly, the Palestinians should have a state of their own, in Palestine, but should Israelis not have a state of their own, in Israel? If on the left we are generally sympathetic towards separatist and national liberation movements, we also sense that the Basque and Sikh causes differ significantly from those of East Timor or black South Africa. Even if we agree with many of the demands of the terrorist sects in Western Europe, should they be imposed by violence in societies where elections are possible?

Yet we must not evade the dilemmas, as do establishment commentators clucking their tongues because terrorism usually appears in societies with democratic constitutions. The point, of course, is not that terrorists are congenitally anti-democratic, but that the usual processes of representation are unable to meet their demands. To understand this dilemma let us bring the issue closer to home: if the American people are opposed to *contra* aid yet the Reagan administration ignores us, what are we to do? What are we to do when we discover that the government has a constant and decisive ad-

vantage over the opponents of nuclear escalation, and that most people remain anesthetized, if opposed, on the issue? How to fight against the ultimate endgame when all decks are inevitably stacked?

Conclusion: Our Tasks

If terrorism cannot square the circle of such dilemmas, does it accomplish nothing? What alternatives are there to terrorism or surrender in a dead-end situation? After denouncing terrorism, how can socialists deal with the situations generating it? Can we effectively urge a movement to overcome the corruption of terrorism?

I will rapidly sketch some concluding answers in terms of the conflict with which my own heart and mind have been most burdened, that between Israelis and Palestinians. Yes, terrorism does have an effect. It has been subjectively decisive in the formation of the Palestinian national identity, which, after all, coincides with the self-creation of the PLO *through terrorism*. It has kept their cause alive, often spectacularly, bringing much of the world closer to the conviction that *something ought to be done* to give the Palestinians a state.

Still, nothing has been done. Palestinians are too weak to win a state by their own efforts. And, because attacking civilians is inherently a declaration of total war, compromise or reconciliation with security-fixated Israel is difficult to imagine. Only PLO renunciation of all violence against civilians will provoke the needed moral and political challenge to Israel's (pre-PLO) refusal to recognize *any* expression of Palestinian nationalism. Random terror directed at Jews, today, will never reverse the mood of righteous denial and produce the mood of compromise necessary to repartition Palestine.

Practically speaking, it is urgent, today, for the Palestinians to get beyond terrorism. Enough processes have been set in motion (yes, through terrorism!) that renouncing it may produce results. But is it possible for a movement that shaped itself through terrorism to free itself of it?

Certainly Israel would have found other excuses for denying Palestinian nationalism. After all, Zionism too has its own demons to be exorcised, some of them terrorist, all of them corrupting: from the Jewish Agency's campaign against a democratic Palestine in the 1920s, to Deir Yassin, to making the mass temporary exodus of Palestinians permanent by state policy, to the bombing of refugee camps in Lebanon, to Sabra and Shatilla.

Yet to return to our starting point, these facts *do not justify terrorism*. *Nothing* does, even when responding to another evil, even when the other people as a whole is blamed for a people's plight, even when terrorism seems to be the only mode of struggle. But if

this morality is a central tenet for socialists, so is looking beyond the terrorist acts and becoming effective partisans in righting the wrongs they address. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict—as in so many other bi-national conflicts—an effective partisan is one *who can see the legitimate claims of both sides*. The genuine left position, rarely taken today, involves fundamental respect for the human rights of *everyone*. In the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this involves appreciating the a-symmetries of power *and* fighting for whatever complex equation will allow each side to achieve its rights, consonant with those of the other. Without doing so, there is no hope for either Israel or Palestine. ●

Ronald Aronson's most recent book is *Dialectics of Disaster: A Preface to Hope (Verso/Schocken)*. He teaches humanities at Wayne State University and is active in Detroit DSA.

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Politics vs. Terror

Ed.'s Note: "Roundtable" is a new feature in DEMOCRATIC LEFT. We will periodically invite responses to major articles, in an effort both to stimulate and clarify debates on important issues. Following Ronald Aronson's piece are comments by Holly Sklar and Michael Walzer.

by Michael Walzer

Ronald Aronson takes the obligatory moral position: terrorism is murder, and murder is always wrong. But he goes on to make a number of arguments that undermine that position—the same arguments, indeed, that terrorists make. Perhaps he is bending over backwards to be "fair." But why should we want to do that?

The first argument is that terrorism begins "when all else fails." Aronson evokes the picture of a political movement that tries everything and only resorts to terror when nothing works. But what does it mean to try everything? In politics, one tries, and tries again: lose a strike and organize for the next one; lose an election and begin a new campaign. If we march in the streets and don't get what we want, we don't give up marching; we plan a bigger march. There is in fact no point when we have tried everything except terror, so that there is literally nothing left...except terror. That is what the terrorists say, but what they mean is that the movement should make terrorism its preferred strategy. In every nationalist and revolutionary movement, there are people who favor terrorism from the beginning, and in some movements these people win out, sometimes by killing, sometimes only by frightening or outmaneuvering their opponents. They promise a shortcut, a victory delivered by themselves without the difficulties of political struggle. Why try everything if there is one thing that works?

The second argument is that terrorism works. Aronson's example is the terror of the PLO which, he says, "has been subjectively decisive in the formation of the Palestinian national identity." But this is nonsense. War, exile, and occupation have created Palestinian nationalism, while terror has brought one disaster after another upon the Palestinian nation. The only success that terrorism (sometimes) achieves is to bring terrorists to power within the movement—or, better, to replace the movement with the terrorist gang. Thus the PLO today, its poli-

tical organization overshadowed by its warring gangs. That is what terrorism has inflicted upon the people it was supposed to liberate (and upon all the rest of us too). By contrast, a politics of civil disobedience, general strikes, massive demonstrations, and diplomatic conciliation would almost certainly have led by now to a Palestinian state or at least to a Jordanian federation. No such strategy was ever tried.

The third argument is that no such strategy could have been tried because of "the ultimate endgame when all decks are inevitably stacked"—in this case, improbably, the "total domination" of Israel over the West Bank. I am not sure that total domination has ever been achieved anywhere, but it is worth noting that in those states that come close, the states called "totalitarian," there is no terrorism except the terrorism of the state. Where political strategies are impossible, terror is also impossible; where terror is possible, so is politics. Sometimes, of course, political strategies fail because of repression, and then we can only hope that there is strength and courage enough to try again. Sometimes political strategies fail because they don't command sufficient popular support, but then, so democratic socialists must believe, they ought to fail. Terrorism, which is indeed congenitally (that is, from the beginning) undemocratic, ought always to

fail. But there are many memorable political successes against repressive regimes.

The fourth argument is that we must look beyond terrorist acts and "right the wrongs [the terrorists] address." But terrorists don't "address" wrongs. The IRA Provisionals are not struggling to deal with the oppressive treatment of Catholics in Northern Ireland; they are struggling to drive out the Protestants and create a unified Irish state ruled by people like themselves. "Wrongs" are only the occasion of terrorism—the reference point of its recruiters—but they are not intimately connected to its purpose. The purpose is given by political ideologies or religious doctrines that are remarkably independent of anything so concrete as oppressive treatment. And so when we set out to right wrongs, we must do so in ways that don't reward the terrorists or strengthen their organizations or provide them with incentives for future activity. And when "right" has been established, we must be prepared to defend it against terror. For example: if we ever achieve what both Aronson and I want in the Middle East, that "complex equation" which recognizes the rights of each side, the first result will certainly be a paroxysm of terror, a systematic effort to explode the settlement. What will Aronson call that—an effort to address new wrongs? A last resort, when all else has failed? I'm afraid that he hasn't quite lifted the fog. ●

Michael Walzer is Co-Editor of Dissent magazine. His most recent books are Spheres of Justice and Exodus and Revolution.



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Foggier than Thou

by Holly Sklar

ter-ror-ism. n. the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, esp. for political purposes.

—The Random House Dictionary

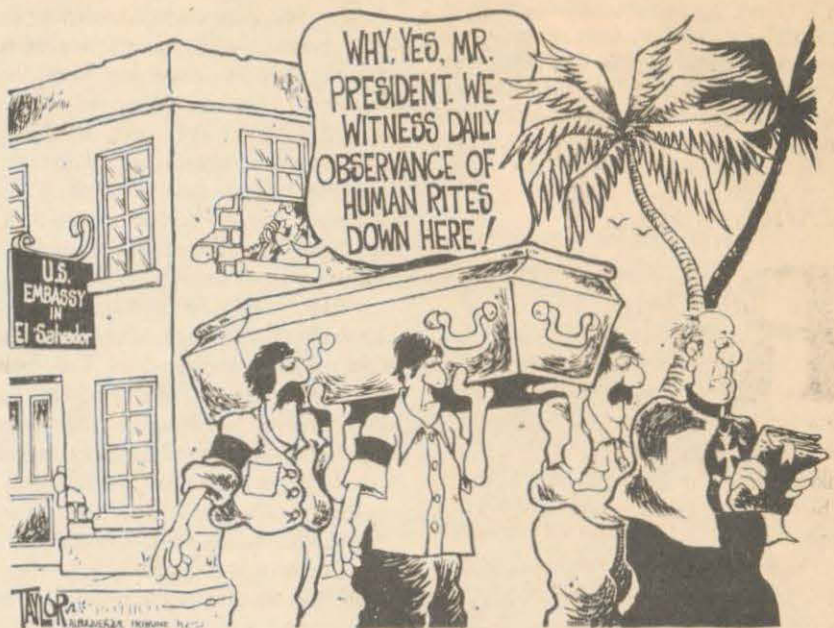
A U.S. Ambassador in Central America, who has since been transferred, was asked to explain how such U.S. actions as the mining of Nicaragua's harbors and bombing of airports differed from the acts of terrorism that the U.S. condemned around the world. The reply, off the record, was, "Well, you're not going to like this answer, but if they do it it's terrorism, if we do it, it's fighting for freedom."

—"Fighting for Freedom or Practicing Terrorism," Patricia Hynds, Central American Historical Institute, August 1985.

I should say at the outset that I have an immediate, negative reaction to leftist commentators who adopt a collective "we" and a holier-than-thou tone when discussing purported faults of the left and putting forth their own allegedly original ideas. Ronald Aronson writes: "Why do we, even on the left, so often miss seeing the phenomenon of state terrorism... even if, as today, states engage in hostage-taking, bombing of civilians or nuclear terrorism, their character as order reassures us." If Aronson believes that, it's unfortunate, but I don't think his views are epidemic on the left. It is Aronson who obscures the phenomenon of state terrorism, a point I will return to later.

"The most important task of the U.S. left... is to inform and sensitize the American public to the practice of state terrorism."

At the end of his very foggy article, Aronson laments, "The genuine left position, rarely taken today, involves fundamental respect for the human rights of *everyone*." This particular statement is attached to a discussion of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in which Aronson calls implicitly for a two-state solution. I would say that more leftists would favor a two-state solution, reflecting a fundamental respect for human rights and self-determination, than either an Israel without



Palestine or a Palestine without an Israel. There would be more debate over Aronson's proposition that it is the PLO who must first renounce "all violence against civilians," rather than the PLO and Israel jointly, or Israel first. How does this differ from President Botha's demand that Nelson Mandela renounce violence as a condition for Mandela's release? If it is different, in Aronson's view, is it because the PLO is more terrorist or less legitimate than the ANC? Aronson's definition of terrorism is not helpful on this or other points.

Aronson presents very foggy and, I believe, mistaken definitions of terrorism. He writes: "Michael Walzer has given us an alternative definition about which we can and should be uncompromising: terrorism is 'the random murder of innocent people.'" Later, he adds, "People who do *not* exercise or enforce power are threatened or attacked.... In terrorism the innocent are attacked to try to force those who *do* exercise power to change their actions."

However, defining terrorism as the random murder or hostage-taking of the innocent completely obscures the issue of state terrorism. He asserts that the Israeli bombing of PLO headquarters in Tunis "killing many non-PLO [i.e. innocent?] Tunisians in the process, may be judged an ugly act, but it did not involve the specific viciousness of attacking non-combatant civilians as *such and at random*." Where does Aronson draw the line between ugly and terrorist? What is the bombing of guerrilla-controlled zones in

El Salvador? Are enough innocents dying randomly for Aronson's definition of terrorism to be invoked?

The real problem is not in clarifying how Aronson defines what is "random" or who is "innocent," but how he defines terrorism to begin with. State terrorism is not randomly directed against the innocent. Indeed, Aronson's concept of "innocence" and "bystanders" seems to support the idea that the struggle is being played out between a minority of "extremists of the right and left." State terrorism is the use of institutionalized violence—torture, detention without trial, "disappearances"—to repress political dissent and coerce the citizenry into conforming to an exploitative social and economic system. State violence is often quite selective, as in the terrorist killings of Enrique Alvarez and other Salvadoran revolutionary leaders. Of course, many "uninvolved" persons are caught up in the net of terror, but while the psychological target of state terror may be the public at large, the *primary* physical target of terror is the subset of people who are current or likely participants in dissent and revolution. It isn't any less terrorist for a death squad to mutilate and murder an active FDR-FMLN supporter than a non-committal Salvadoran teenager from a poor barrio.

In my view, the most important task of the U.S. left concerning the question of terrorism is to inform and sensitize the American public to the practice of state terrorism. In *The Real Terror Network*, Edward Her-

man spells out the grim statistics:

At the First Latin American Conference of Relatives of the Disappeared, held in San Jose, Costa Rica, January 20-24, 1981, the estimate given for disappeared men, women and children in Latin America over the past two decades was 90,000. By contrast, the CIA's most recent (newly inflated) estimate of the total number of deaths resulting from "international terrorist" violence for the period 1968-1980 numbers 3,668, or about 4 percent of the number of "disappearances" for Latin America alone.

I draw my own admittedly problematic distinction between terrorism and armed struggles for liberation. Among the distinguishing features are the nature of the group(s) involved, the larger political environment, and the nature of the violence. The more narrowly based the group, the more open the political environment to non-violent change, and the more indiscriminate the attacks, the more likely I would consider it terrorism. The Red Brigades could be called terrorist; not SWAPO or the ANC. Aronson and I could agree that shooting selected hostages on the basis of their Israeli or U.S. passports is a terrorist act. Yet, taking a group of hostages, many of whom are clearly tied to the oppressive regime, with the intent of freeing them for clearly articulated demands (prisoners, publicity, money), may be justified within a revolutionary struggle; the Sandinista takeover of the National Palace in 1978 is a good example of this.

If we are to carry on a more "precise" debate over what constitutes terrorism, we should solicit the views of representatives of liberation movements. But I continue to believe that the overwhelming problem for the left in the U.S. is to confront Administration propaganda about "international terrorists" and "freedom fighters," and make state terrorism a central public concern. ●

Holly Sklar is completing a booklet on U.S. foreign policy and intervention to be published soon by South End Press. She is the co-author of Poverty in the American Dream and editor of Trilateralism.

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France

Continued from page 15

to represent broad national interests rather than merely workers' interests.

The real question is not whether enormous obstacles constrain the possibility of achieving radically democratic change. While it would be utopian to deny the difficulties involved in a socialist path, an adequate strategy would exploit whatever latitude for maneuver exists despite harsh realities. Concretely, did the situation confronting the Socialists in France dictate as conservative a response as they developed?

Take the relationship between rationalizing the productive apparatus and democratizing relations of production. The Socialist government assumed that the two goals were basically incompatible and chose to subordinate the latter to the need for industrial modernization and technological innovation.

This definition of the situation, however, is rooted in an earlier era of Taylorized production. In the current period, the character of technological change points to a more complex relationship. At the shop floor level, the new technology requires high levels of skills, initiative, and judgment—in brief, the transcendence of Taylorism. At the community and global level, overall economic efficiency may be enhanced by democratic planning, collaboration among social forces, and the ability to adapt rapidly and exchange information. The micro-electronic revolution creates possibilities for radical changes in social relations which, thus far, are barely developed in theory or tested in practice.

The absence of vibrant debate on the left deprived the Socialist movement of inspiration, concrete proposals, and critical support. The Socialists were left vulnerable to a rightist ideological, political, and economic onslaught. Meanwhile, the right incorporated newly emerging social demands for flexibility, individualism, and autonomy into a

neo-liberal project to dismantle the welfare state and reconstruct capitalism. Yet the new demands are not inherently incompatible with socialism. They first erupted, after all, in the social movements of the late 1960s. In fact, such demands could be the basis for a modern, decentralized, participatory socialism. But this left approach requires both ideological vision, which intellectuals in France failed to provide, and vigorous social movements, which, under Mitterrand, did not exist.

The Socialist government's failure is thus partly a product of a larger crisis of left political culture in France. But by its words and deeds, the Socialist government bears a heavy responsibility for intensifying that crisis and, in the process, discrediting the socialist project. ●

Mark Kesselman is professor of government at Columbia University. He has written widely on French politics and is now completing a book on the significance of the Mitterrand government. This article is excerpted and adapted from an article forthcoming in Socialist Register 1985/86 (New York: Monthly Review, 1986).



"Refresh my memory, Miss Grimes. Am I hiring Mr. A. P. Larkin or firing him?"

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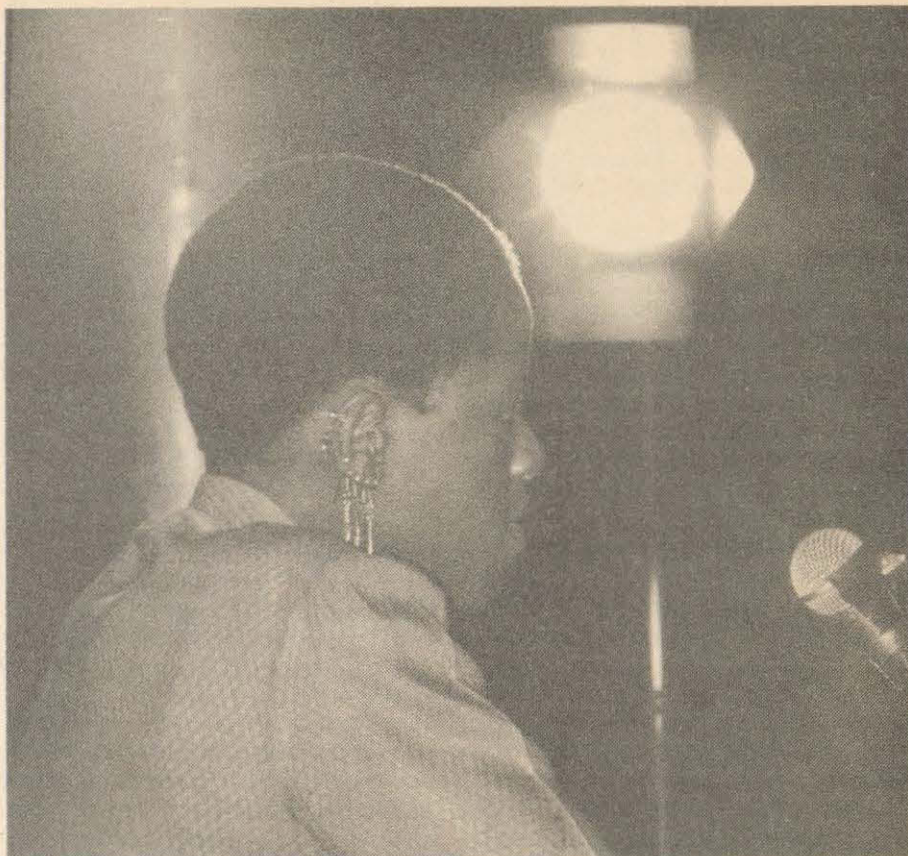
Timeless Values, New Ideas

by John Haer

There were images of both the past and the future, the familiar and the new, when more than 175 delegates representing 40 locals met in chilly Berkeley, California, for the second national convention of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

The West Coast site was certainly a first. The NAM/DSOC Unity Convention in 1982 was in Detroit. Subsequent national meetings have been hosted by New York City and Philadelphia. Berkeley symbolized DSA's hope for a truly nationwide organization. More than 30 percent of its members now live west of the Rockies.

As a group, convention delegates appeared remarkably diverse. Members in their sixties, radicalized in the movements spawned by the Depression and World War II, participated side-by-side with comrades from several younger generations. More than one veteran of the New Left, contemplating their fortieth birthdays, gave thanks for the presence of new young activists. Low participation of Black and Latino delegates, however, was a cause for concern. While every major convention plenary afforded minority representation from the podium, there were still fewer Blacks, Latinos, and



Mpho Tutu, daughter of Bishop Desmond Tutu, on stage at the Berkeley Community Theater.

Photo by Roger Robinson

Asian members at Berkeley than at the New York convention in 1983.

Another first was Friday's pre-convention gathering, where about seventy-five participants discussed women's participation in DSA, feminism and racism, DSA and the wider women's movement, and women and public policy. The mini-conference served as a forum for feminist concerns related to subsequent convention business, such as adoption of DSA's Economic Program and election of the National Executive Committee.

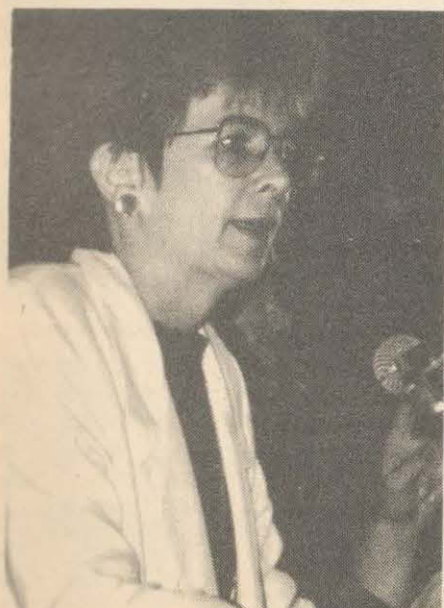
Solidarity

If the weather was cool in Berkeley, the political climate was anything but. Some 2,500 people turned out for DSA's Friday night outreach event, a community meeting featuring speeches by Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Fr. Miguel D'Escoto; Mpho Tutu, daughter of South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu; Marta Petruszewicz, an organizer of international support for the Polish Solidarity movement; Barbara Ehrenreich, co-chair of DSA; Representative Ron Dellums; and Elinor Glenn, secretary-treasurer



Cornel West, addressing DSA Strategy plenary.

Photo by Roger Robinson



DSA Co-Chair Barbara Ehrenreich, speaking on Friday.

Photo by Roger Robinson



Voices of Freedom: Michael Harrington, Ron Dellums, and Elinor Glenn (l. to r.) at Friday night outreach meeting.

of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. DSA Co-Chair Michael Harrington introduced the speakers, emphasizing the essential unity of struggles for democratic justice at home and abroad. For four hours, Berkeley Community Theater resounded with the enthusiastic audience response to eloquent calls for international solidarity.

Saturday's sessions at the Pauley Ballroom began the convention in earnest. Michael Harrington's keynote speech articulated themes that were discussed, analyzed, and debated throughout the weekend. "DSA exists," said Harrington, "to anticipate and work toward the birth of a new American left." This movement, described as "not itself socialist, but the left wing of the possible," will emerge when "Reagan's Keynesianism by mistake" comes completely "unstuck."

Harrington urged this left to "reclaim the ideological high ground" from the right by emphasizing the theme of "economic growth through national and international justice."

DSA should be an explicitly socialist, catalytic component of this movement.

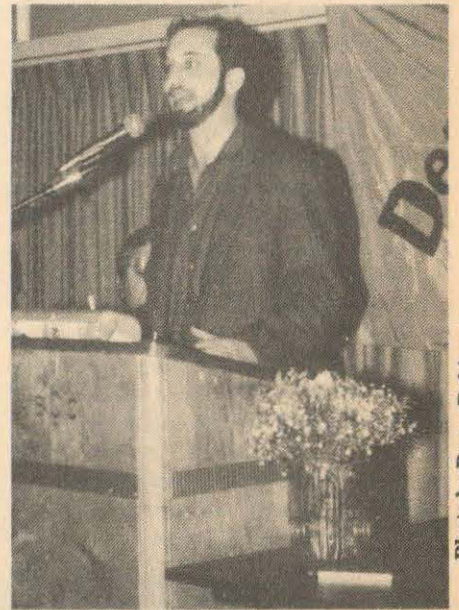
Application of this vision to national politics was discussed by panelists Harold Meyerson, Paulette Pierce, and David Plotke. Meyerson cited polling data backing the thesis that voting behavior in the 1984 elections was conditioned chiefly by perceptions of economic issues. He advocated direct opposition to the rightward drift of the Democratic Party through articulation of a program for a democratized economy and political mobilization of poor and working class constituencies. Plotke's analysis of such possibilities for the immediate future was more pessimistic. He advised the left to "reach some accommodation with neoliberalism" if it seeks to be a major partner in a coalition that will challenge Republicanism in 1988. Pierce called attention to cultural pluralism as a vital element in American politics, citing the power of Afro-American nationalism as evidenced by the Jackson campaign.

Saturday's other major plenary high-

lighted a two-year organizational effort to adopt an official DSA Program on the Economy. Since 1983, two draft documents have circulated throughout the organization for discussion and comment. Delegates voted to publish both under the authors' names and to charge Judith Van Allen with writing a short outreach document, highlighting feminist and antiracist perspectives.

Strategy

Sunday's sessions began with consideration of DSA's major priorities in the next year. Political Director Jim Shoch outlined the rationale and anticipated goals for a major DSA-initiated conference scheduled for May 1986 in Washington, DC. Called "New Directions," the conference is conceived as a national coalition of labor, women, minorities, seniors, students, and activists committed to working towards a "democratic econom-



DSA Political Director and convention organizer Jim Shoch.



Participants in Combatting Racism plenary: Beverly Stein, Mel Pritchard, Jim Jacobs, and Dolores Delgado Campbell (seated l. to r.). At podium is DSA Organizational Director Guy Molyneux.

ics" agenda for the Democratic Party. Shoch hoped that the national conference could be repeated in several regions in fall and early winter of 1987.

Panelist Gail Radford from Philadelphia called for more focused development of local DSA activists and national commitment to training and education of DSA organizers. Cornel West advocated an anti-racist, anti-imperialist strategy for the organization.

Another first for DSA was the Sunday afternoon plenary on anti-racist strategy. Speaker Bev Stein described Portland's role in building the Oregon Rainbow Coalition. Mel Pritchard of San Francisco spoke of the complex issues faced by DSA's minority members. Jim Jacobs called for focused organizing to counter racism in white communities, and Dolores Delgado Campbell outlined Latino issues and concerns.

Our Future

Monday's resolutions plenary concluded the convention. The most important resolution adopted was the Organizational Priorities Statement, which highlighted the New Directions Conference as our principal national project in the coming year. The document also stressed the importance of continued involvement in anti-intervention, labor solidarity, anti-racist, feminist, and campus organizing efforts. Another resolution called for the development of a national campaign focused on Central America. In all, the session yielded an ambitious program of organizational development and political activism for the next two years.

As delegates concluded their meeting with the traditional singing of the "Internationale," they pondered their task of working

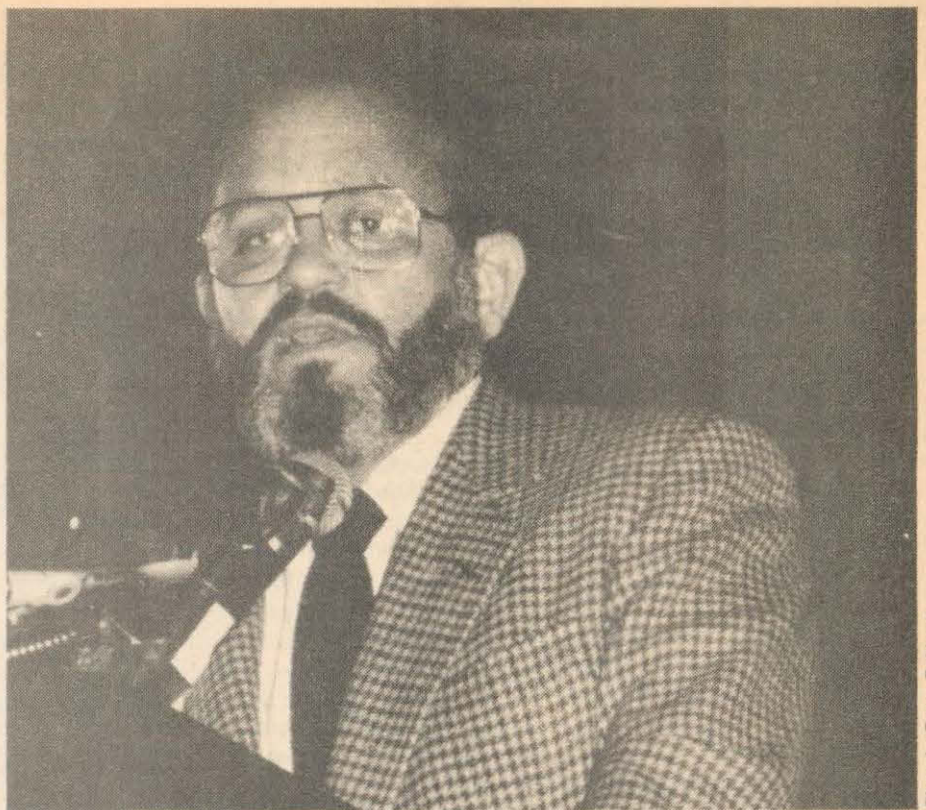


Photo by Roger Robinson

Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto, speaking to packed hall at opening session.

for a socialist transformation of the earth's wealthiest and most fortified nation. "We socialists at least have half an idea," Mike Harrington had said earlier. "And that's twice as good as those in power who don't even have the faintest notion about how to achieve social justice."

John Haer is a Pittsburgh DSA activist and is co-editor of The Allegheny Socialist.

NEC

The convention elected a new National Executive Committee. The members of the NEC, listed below, will serve until the next bi-annual convention.

Laila Atallah, Baltimore
 Joanne Barkan, New York
 Kathy Callahan, Detroit
 Jack Clark, Boston
 Carisa Cunningham, New York
 Bogdan Denitch, New York
 Barbara Ehrenreich, Syosset, NY
 Abby Haight, Los Angeles
 Michael Harrington, New York
 Gerald Hudson, New York
 Jeremy Karpatkin, New York
 Eileen Luna, Berkeley
 Marshall Mayer, Los Angeles
 Harold Meyerson, Los Angeles
 Paulette Pierce, New York
 Rafael PiRoman, New York
 Frances Fox Piven, New York
 Skip Roberts, Foster City, CA
 Tristine Roberts, Cleveland
 Roger Robinson, Detroit
 Joseph Schwartz, Boston
 Tim Sears, Washington
 Judith Van Allen, Ithaca, NY
 Cornel West, Hamden, CT
 Barbara Scott Winkler, Ann Arbor



All shall come to those who wait.

Photo by Roger Robinson

ON THE LEFT

by HARRY FLEISCHMAN



NATIONAL ROUNDUP

Alaska

DSAer Niilo Koponen has introduced a resolution in the State House of Representatives calling for a Nuclear Free Arctic and Subartic.

California

California DSAers turned out for the DSA national convention November 8-11. See story elsewhere in this issue.

District of Columbia

DC/MD DSA scheduled a holiday party December 14 featuring a solo performance by DC actress Sarah Walton in a one act play, "The Mother"... A performance of "Silkwood," the one-woman play by DSAer Jehane Dyllan, was presented by the American Public Health Association "in recognition of nuclear workers who have endured personal hardship in the defense of public health and safety"... Theologian Cornel West spoke to DC DSA in November on "The Black Political Agenda for the 80s: A Black Socialist View"... More than 200 DSAers and friends honored Victor Reuther at the DC/MD DSA Debs-Thomas dinner, which raised over \$2,000. Speakers included Carl Shier, Swedish Labor Attache Henry Perssons, James Farmer, Joe Glazer, Jehane Dyllan Reuther, Joe Rauh and mistress of ceremonies Ruth Jordan... With established chapters at George Washington University and the University of Maryland in College Park, the Metro DC Area DSA Youth Section is growing, and outreach events are being planned for other area campuses.

Illinois

Three dozen DSA activists from Chicago, Iowa City, Madison, Wisc., and South Bend, Ind. attended an all-day DSA Midwest Leadership School that heard DSA political director Jim Shoch... Chicago DSA's Southside branch heard Bernie Sanders, Burlington, Vermont's three-time Socialist mayor, speak on local politics and socialism. Chicago's Gay & Lesbian branch

is pushing a drive to persuade City Council to adopt a gay rights amendment... John Cameron is the new Chicago DSA staffer, replacing Mark Davidson, who is now working with Alderman Marty Oberman... A benefit party for Chicago DSA and *In These Times* featured disc jockey Bill Zayas and contemporary, Latin, and Afro-Cuban music.

Massachusetts

DSA Vice-Chair Frances Moore Lappe spoke on "World Hunger: The Lessons of Ethiopia" at Northeastern University in October... An Institute for Democratic Socialism forum in November on "Lessons from the '60s for Today's Anti-Intervention Movement" featured Paul Joseph, Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan... Bob Gehret is the new staff director of Boston DSA, replacing Janet Wilder... In October, following affirmative votes by the State Senate and House, Massachusetts became the first state in the nation to call on the U.S. Congress to pass a law calling on the states to adopt a new constitutional amendment for full employment. The resolution was backed by the Boston and Mass. AFL-CIO, DSA, the Mass. Catholic Conference, the Urban League, the National Assn. of Social Workers and many others.

Michigan

At the Detroit DSA Debs-Thomas Award dinner honoring Mildred Jeffrey and Helen Samberg, more than 250 members and friends heard DSA Co-chair Barbara Ehrenreich's keynote address and songs by Windsor NDP activist Len Wallace. The dinner raised almost \$4,000, half of which was given to the National DSA Labor Commission... The local has hired a part-time organizer, Erika Meyer... More than 100 DSA Labor Commission members met to share experiences and plan strategy and a new organizational structure.

New Jersey

DSAers William Wimpisinger, Michael Harrington and Frances Fox Piven joined Morton Bahr, president of the Communications Workers of America; Lynn Williams, United Steelworkers president; Henry Steele Commager; Michael Walzer; Jeff Faux and many others at Rutgers University's Labor Education Center's two-day conference in December on Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, but stressing Strengthening Worker Participation in Workplace and Community Decisions.

New York

Speaking before a standing-room only audience at SUNY/Albany in October, DSA Vice-chair Irving Howe delivered an absorbing address on "Socialism in America." A broad-ranging discussion followed during a reception for Howe by Albany DSA which resulted in a flurry of new DSA memberships... Student protests were victorious as the SUNY Board of Trustees voted to divest its holdings in companies that do business with South Africa... Research scientist Dr. Peter Stein of Cornell's engineering faculty (68 percent of whom have signed a statement saying they will refuse to work on Star Wars projects) talked about this defense folly November 29... Cornell DSA helped organize a Coalition for a Democratic University, which presented university trustees with a petition with over 1,000 signatures asking for a campus-wide vote on any changes in the campus code... Nassau DSA heard Ken Lederer speak on his recent visit to Nicaragua. The local raised over \$300 for NICMAC, part of its \$1,000 goal. In December Nassau DSA held discussion sessions on "Alternatives to the American Way - Sweden and Hungary" and "Forging a Socialist Alternative for Americans: Goals and Strategies"... The Long Island Progressive Coalition heard Tom Webster on "The Politics and Public Policy of Garbage Disposal" at its November meeting. LIPC's latest bro-



"This is the voice of Moderation. I wouldn't go so far as to say we have actually seized the radio station."

© Punch

chure is "If Shoreham goes on Line Your Rates Will Double"... DSA Vice-Chair Frances Fox Piven spoke November 13 at the New York City demonstration against *contra* murder.

Ohio

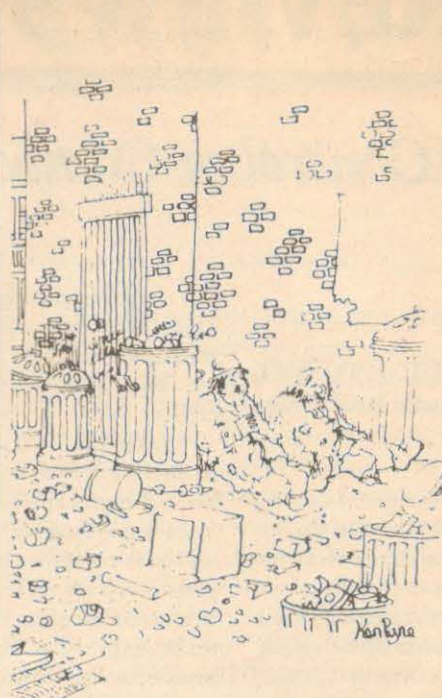
Prof. Vernon Domingo of Bowling Green State University spoke on "South African Apartheid: Racist Myths and Revolutionary Struggle" at a meeting sponsored by Black Swamp DSA.

Oregon

Ron Herndon spoke on future strategy at the November meeting of Portland's Rainbow Coalition. DSAer Rhys Scholes, as a Coalition lobbyist, with the help of many others, persuaded both houses of the Oregon legislature to pass South African divestment legislation, which, unfortunately, was vetoed by the Republican governor... George Potratz presented a slide show of the DSA national convention at the November Portland DSA meeting... DSA joined in the November vigil protesting Evergreen Helicopter Company's CIA links and work in Central America.

Pennsylvania

Marcos Wheelock, Minister-Counselor of the Nicaraguan Embassy, spoke to 110 DSAers and friends in Harrisburg recently about the *contra* attacks which now drain 40 percent of Nicaragua's budget. The Central Pa. DSA raised \$945 for the Rural Day Care Center at San Jose de San Lucas... The local's education director, Professor Charles Barone, helped provide a "hot" welcome for U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese at Dickinson College by organizing a "teach-in" that followed Meese's denunciation of affirmative action as equivalent to slavery. Among the signs confronting Meese were: "Warning: the Surgeon General has Determined that Meese is Dangerous to Your Constitution," "Dis-Meese the Attorney General" and "The End Does Not Justify the Meese"... A DSA regional youth conference was held November 16-17 at Swarthmore College... Philadelphia DSA heard Thomas Paine Cronin, president, AFSCME District 47; Richard Smith, Machinists Local 1864 shop steward; and Donna Ford, executive vice president, Dist. 1199-C, Hospital Workers; at a forum on "Must Workers Sacrifice Their Hard-Won Gains?"... Pittsburgh DSA is calling for public ownership of the Pittsburgh Pirates baseball team... DSAer



"I often think it would be nice to get the opportunity to betray my socialist principles."

© Punch

Jerry Starr told Pittsburgh DSA of his visit to Hungary and Sweden, stressing both the pros and cons of Swedish life... DSA members sponsored fund-raising parties which netted more than \$3,000 for State Representative Allen Kukovich's gubernatorial campaign... DSAers and others are planning a three-day spring '86 conference on "Planning for Peace and Prosperity"... Mike Harrington was scheduled to speak at the First Annual Maurer-Stump award dinner sponsored by Reading DSA December 12. The 1985 Award recipients are Darlington Hoopes, Sr. and Mark Brown... Hoopes ran with Norman Thomas for vice-president in 1944, and for president in 1952 and 1956 on the Socialist ticket.

Tennessee

Nashville DSA is doing the research for an anti-apartheid coalition focusing on the city's pension funds... The local held a November forum on "Christianity and Socialism."

Virginia

Northern Va. DSA gave strong support to the new lieutenant governor, Doug Wilder, the first black to be elected to a statewide office since Reconstruction...

Dr. Jean Sinbad, executive director of the Washington Office on Africa, was the featured speaker at the local's 6th annual Spaghetti Dinner in November... NOVA DSAers are taking part in anti-apartheid protests at Control Data Corporation in Alexandria. CDC sells computer hardware and software technology to South Africa.

Wisconsin

Milwaukee DSA member Dismas Becker was elected by his Democratic colleagues as Majority Leader of the Wisconsin State Assembly.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Mark off May 2-4 on your 1986 calendars now. "New Directions" is coming to Washington, D.C.

The conference, supported by DSA, will bring together activists, analysts, and elected officials to develop new directions for the Democratic Party and the broad democratic left. It will be held at the Washington Convention Center.

Initial sponsors of the event include Representatives Charles Hayes (IL) and Barney Frank (MA); labor leaders William Winpisinger (IAM), Jack Sheinkman (ACTWU), Joyce Miller (ACTWU and CLUW), and Jack Joyce (Bricklayers); feminist leaders Gloria Steinem and Judy Goldsmith; and policy analysts Bob Kuttner, Jeff Faux, and Eleanor Holmes Norton. Jo-Ann Mort will organize the conference.

RESOURCES

The fall issue of *Religious Socialism* contains articles on "Socialism and the Individual" by Blaise Tobia, "Spirituality and Politics" by Judy Harrow, and "Habits of the Heart - a Review" by Tom Roderick... Subs at \$5 per year available from IDS/Religious Socialism, 1 Maolis Road, Nahant, MA 01908.

A new book, *Surviving America*, has just been published by the Center for Third World Organizing, 3861 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland, CA 94609, \$12.95 per copy. It takes the mystery out of programs important to low-income people, such as general assistance, unemployment insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, immigrants rights, work place safety and domestic violence. Gus Newport, mayor of Berkeley, says, "With this book you really can fight City Hall!"

REVIEWS

QWL: Workers' Control or Company Unionism?

by Steve Early

INSIDE THE CIRCLE: A UNION GUIDE TO QWL
by Mike Parker. A Labor Notes-South End Press
Book, 1985, 154 pp., paperback.

No labor relations development in recent years has received more favorable publicity than the Quality-of-Worklife (QWL) movement. In hundreds of union and non-union workplaces in both the private and public sector, collaborative labor-management bodies have been set up to deal with employee concerns about working conditions and employer concerns about productivity and product quality. QWL programs operate under many different names: quality circles, employee involvement groups, participation teams, joint problem-solving committees. But in all its various forms, the "QWL process" has been hailed as the basis for a new system of industrial relations in which labor-management cooperation will replace traditional adversarial bargaining between workers and their employers.

With the support of major unions like the United Auto Workers, Steel Workers, Communications Workers, and International Union of Electronic Workers, QWL programs have been implemented on a widescale in a number of heavily unionized industries. At the same time, managers of major non-union firms such as IBM, Digital, and Texas Instruments have utilized QWL-type programs to reduce worker discontent that might otherwise lead to unionization. Even the Reagan Administration has gotten into the act by creating a special branch of the Department of Labor to assist employers in starting employee participation programs.

Until recently, trade union skeptics about QWL have been in the minority. Only the United Electrical Workers, the Machinists, and the Postal Workers officially caution their members about participation in QWL on the grounds that it can be used to speed-up work, eliminate jobs, weaken worker solidarity, and erode collective bargaining. As more union members have direct experience with QWL activity, however, a rank-and-file backlash has been developing against it. In one of the IUE's largest General Electric locals, for example, candidates opposed to the company's quality circles recently swept elections for positions on the local's executive board.

The most articulate national spokesperson for the emerging anti-QWL trend in labor is a Detroit auto worker named Mike Parker. Parker decided to write *Inside the Circle* because of his own experiences as a rank-and-file participant in shopfloor QWL activity. The book combines considerable personal anecdotal material, a survey of the mainstream academic literature, and the results of interviews with scores of other workers involved in QWL programs.

Parker acknowledges that QWL appeals to "workers' best instincts—to do a good job, to be part of a group, to make a contribution." In workplaces where management has done little in the past to promote a sense of equality, dignity, or respect on the

job, employee participation schemes are often very popular at first. The problem, according to Parker, is that "instead of providing us with more control or influence over our jobs, QWL-type programs are taking away the only real power we have by undermining our unions."

Inside the Circle contends that QWL weakens organized labor in several ways. Collective bargaining can be affected—even discredited—if issues that should be the subject of formal labor-management negotiations are addressed instead in QWL meetings. Parker also cites numerous instances in which scarce union resources and personnel were diverted to the conferences, training seminars, and workplace meetings that are necessary for QWL "facilitation." As a result, aggressive representation of the membership and development of new rank-and-file leaders has suffered.

Inside the Circle argues further that QWL participation fosters a narrow, "company-union" mentality among trade unionists. "The main point of QWL," Parker says, "is to convince workers that their security and future are tied to the success of the company (or plant or department) instead of to their union or class—hardly the way to build trade union solidarity throughout an industry."

Despite the case he makes against QWL, Parker does not urge an immediate labor boycott of all employee participation programs. He recognizes that some unions have no choice but to stay involved in them for the time being. So he outlines steps they can take to "push QWL programs to their limits" by keeping them focused on a tough, union-defined agenda of unresolved problems involving safety, automation, and job stress.

Parker is not alone in concluding that few QWL programs have ever empowered workers to deal with such major workplace issues. A 1984 study sponsored by the AFL-CIO and conducted by researchers from MIT found that union members participating in four out of the five QWL programs surveyed felt no more able to influence significant management decisions than did non-participants. An even more revealing report by the Federation's Department of Organization and Field Services documents the widespread use of QWL-type programs by anti-union companies in campaigns against employee organizing efforts.

What more local union activists are now questioning is why their organizations should embrace the same management-initiated labor relations programs that have helped so many employers remain "union-free." QWL may indeed be in the interests of employers—both organized and unorganized—but the gains for unions and their members are often harder to see. And that's what is fueling the current debate within labor over the role of unions "inside the circle." ●

Steve Early is a lawyer and labor educator who works as a union organizer.

THE LAST WORD

Whither French Socialism?

by Mark Kesselman

Imagine the following: In his inaugural address, the president of a major industrialized capitalist nation declares that his primary goal is to unite socialism with liberty. This is no fantasy. It occurred in May, 1981 following Francois Mitterrand's election as France's first socialist president in the Fifth Republic. (Kapitalstate, no. 10/11, 1983)

How long ago it seems that I wrote those words. The bitterness and disappointment of many former Socialist Party (PS) sympathizers, like myself, is all the greater because of the high expectations raised by the Socialist Party's stunning victory in 1981. Under Mitterrand's leadership, the party captured the presidency and an absolute majority of seats in the National Assembly.

Today the polls in France show that the Socialist Party will lose its majority in the parliamentary elections this spring. Mitterrand, his image badly tarnished by the Socialists' mediocre economic performance, by the bombing of the Greenpeace ship, and by General Jaruzelski's visit to the Elysee, will at best finish out his term as a beleaguered minority president.

The demise of French socialism occurred as early as 1982, barely a year after the Socialists' electoral triumph. With its "plan de rigueur" (austerity program) the government abandoned its ambitious attempt to initiate a radical form of social democracy in France. The extent to which rightist ideological hegemony and the near-absence of social theorizing contributed to the government's conservative shift cannot be determined. But feeble leftist intellectual activity, as well as the lack of pressure from trade unions and social movements, were doubtless significant. Even more influential was the failure of the government's attempt to radicalize social democracy.

The Socialist Party proved incapable of translating its ambitious promises into concrete policies. There was a link missing between the torrent of laws passed in the first years and the specific administrative application. That link was the capacity to stimulate a

broad movement to achieve the party's overall goals.

The problem may be that the PS lacked a global socialist strategy and program. President Mitterrand was fond of recalling that most of his 110-point electoral platform had been voted into law. Yet, judging from public opinion polls, a majority of the French believed that one of the principal reasons for his unpopularity (he received the lowest rating of any Fifth Republic president) was that he failed to keep his promises.

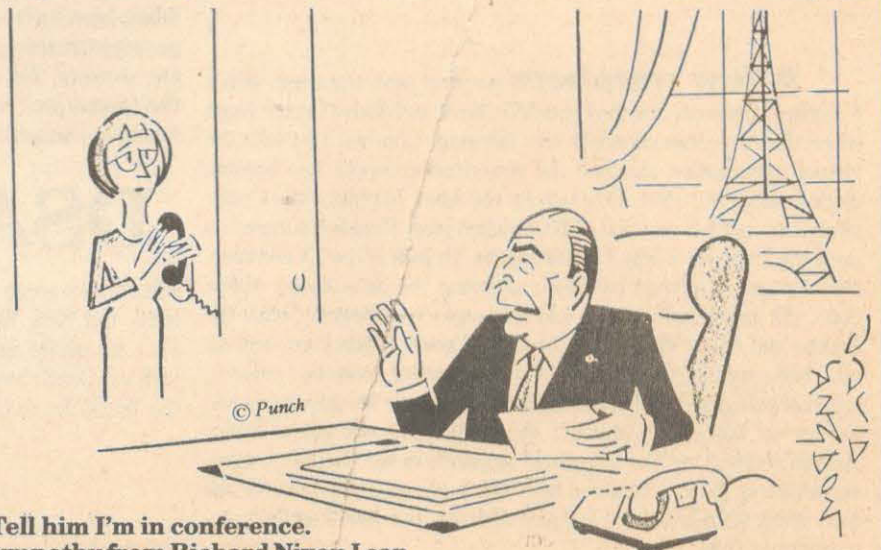
The Socialists proved unable to develop an adequate social vision. They shifted from an abstract call for a rupture with capitalism, to Keynesianism plus nationalizations, before adopting the right's deflationary and rationalizing policies. It is hardly surprising that their turn to *rigueur* proved unpopular, for, in the words of Socialist economist Michel Beaud, this policy "neglected the preoccupations of solidarity, social transformation, and democratization which are the core—and the honor—of the left."

The Socialist movement failed to resolve the complex dilemma of how to achieve substantial reforms of capitalism while avoiding economic disruption due to capitalist resistance. Initially, Socialist rhetoric oscillated between attacking the "privileged caste" and cajoling capitalists to invest. Soon, however, there was a shift toward seeking to bolster capitalist confidence and

profitability. In his declaration of general policy, Prime Minister Laurent Fabius argued that "the essential responsibility for modernization falls on private firms. They deserve the support of the entire country. I have always believed that the left was best qualified to reconcile private enterprise and the nation."

In 1981, the French left confronted a situation quite familiar to other left movements in Western Europe. Social democracy was forged from the attempt to sponsor step-by-step transformation within the structure of opportunities and constraints offered by liberal democratic institutions. Under these conditions, pressures to deradicalize are legion. Although French Socialists had long been disdainful of Northern European social democracy, they quickly succumbed to conservatizing constraints on reaching office. By glossing over their capitulation through references to a necessary "socialism of governance," the PS ignored the need to develop a synthesis involving both opposition and governance. At the same time, French Socialists justify their retreat in a way that is uncannily reminiscent of social democracies elsewhere: the need for the socialist movement to be concerned with immediate problems of living standards and employment, to be responsible and mature, and

Continued on page 8



**"Tell him I'm in conference.
Sympathy from Richard Nixon I can
do without."**

JANIE HIGGINS REPORTS

Some sobering facts: Each superpower spends more on its armed forces than the combined national incomes of the world's 62 poorest countries. A single drop of nerve gas on the skin is fatal; the U.S. has stockpiled enough nerve gas to kill the world's population 4,000 times. With just six months' worth of the world's military spending, a ten-year program could be carried out to meet essential food and health needs of the developing nations.

All of the above come from Grassroots International, a gutsy group dedicated to working for peace, justice and an end to world hunger. This small organization embarrassed large aid organizations by rudely and repeatedly pointing out that donations of food to the Ethiopian government weren't ending hunger in the Horn of Africa. Quite simply, the government was and is intent on starving the rebellious Tigrayans and Eritreans into submission. Grassroots ships food in, too—over the border at night, through civilian relief organizations allied with the rebels. That makes Grassroots popular with some Republican critics of the Marxist government in Ethiopia. They're not crazy about what Grassroots says about South Africa or the Philippines. You might be. More information is available from Grassroots International, P.O. Box 312, Cambridge, MA 02139.

All the world's a stage. If any doubt remains about ours being a media-dominated society, look at the rising stars of American politics: Bill Bradley, Jack Kemp, Steve Garvey (a possible California senatorial candidate), and, of course, the kingpin—Ronald Reagan. Now Fred Gandy, who played the purser "Gopher" on the "Love Boat," is running as a Republican for an Iowa congressional seat (yes, we're serious). Well, maybe it's time for the left to confront harsh reality and play this electoral version of "Battle of the Network Stars." Why not a 1988 ticket of Alan Alda and Bruce Springsteen? (Against 'Sly' Stallone and Charlton Heston, natch.) Remember, you heard it here first: Rambo vs. Hawkeye in '88!

A few numbers for your next argument with a Reagan enthusiast. You may recall the bleak and dismal Carter years when the American economy was faltering. Contrast that with the virtual job-creation machine the American economy has become since January 20, 1981. So much for the fable. In reality, the Carter years saw net job creation of 10.1 million jobs; Reagan's tenure has seen the creation of only 7.3 million jobs. Or look at the TV commercials by newly-formed coalitions decrying the assaults on middle class tax privileges. It's an old message: we allegedly soak the middle and upper classes to benefit the poor. If you know anyone who believes that (if you don't, you keep select company, indeed), ask that benighted soul to look again. Poor people are getting socked harder on taxes than anyone, especially in recent years. Nancy Amidei worked out the following calculation in the October 4 *Commonweal*: in 1979, a family of four with earnings at the poverty line paid about \$276 in federal and payroll taxes, but \$2076 on the same earnings in 1984.

Credit where credit is due. Unless you have been in the Brazilian rain forest for the past month, you are aware of McDonald's multi-million-dollar promotional campaign for the "McD.L.T." It's a daring new culinary concept, a hamburger—get this—with lettuce and tomato! Now, we socialists have sometimes been skeptical about the social value of capitalist consumerism, but we're big enough to tip our hats when the private sector really comes through.

And credit where it's not. *The Wall Street Journal* recently told of a San Diego secretary making \$16,000 a year who received three Master Cards from a bank with a \$5,000 line of credit on each. She has just filed for bankruptcy, owing \$9,000. The case is not untypical. In a frenzied search for borrowers, banks have sent cards to prisoners, unemployed teenagers, and even a few household pets. Any chance Jack Kemp will finally stop talking about the great American capital shortage?

No comment. Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams recently noted the increasing strength of the Nicaraguan *contras*, and worried that in the United States "there are going to be a lot of people who are fairly fainthearted. As they see, in some of these cases, the amount of violence increase—and it will, because the purpose of our aid is to permit people who are fighting on our side to use more violence—a lot of people are going to get scared off."

For logic, a "D" (as in discrimination). A recent *Wall Street Journal* "Labor Letter" notes that women constitute an increasing percentage of students in graduate journalism programs. The *Journal* saw this as an ominous threat to the future of American democracy. After all, reporting the news is crucial to the liveliness of our democratic discourse, and if journalism becomes a low-wage, low-status, "pink-collar ghetto," we'll all lose. Well, fellas, here's a far-out idea for you: what if we kept on paying journalists a decent wage even if many of them are women? We can't help wondering, however, if the *Journal* isn't *really* worried about the boys' club of business journalism being broken open.



DSA is Moving!

After many years at 853 Broadway, gentrification has forced us to move our New York offices. Effective January 1st, all correspondence should be directed to the address listed below. If you want to visit us, Dutch Street runs between Fulton and John Streets, east of the World Trade Center in Manhattan's financial district.

New Address:

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