



## APARTHEID TOTTERS

Nelson Mandela has been freed and a series of reforms announced by the racist regime in South Africa. The long-oppressed black people have filled the streets from Capetown to Soweto, celebrating the concessions made by the De Klerk government. There has been joy and excitement in the air. But as well, the people know that racist oppression continues and freedom is yet to dawn. The hard fight for victory over racist oppression must proceed.

While the changes announced in South Africa open up new prospects for the development of the anti-apartheid movement and the struggle of the workers, they also open up new pitfalls.

The reforms haven't been granted by the regime to help the masses organize better. No, they've been granted to clear the way for a deal with Mandela and the other leaders of the African Na-

tional Congress — a deal which would not uproot the system of oppression of the black majority but only modify it. Through this deal, many harsh and hated features of the apartheid system may well come to an end and a black elite will be given a portion of power and privilege, and even the numbers of the black middle class may grow, but the oppression of the black working people would remain.

The workers and poor may be able to breathe a little easier with the loosening of repression and the scrapping of the most blatant measures of discrimination. But the miserable economic conditions in which the masses live won't be changed. The black workers and poor have not fought against apartheid merely for such a halfway solution. They have not sacrificed so much just to get a black elite into a share of power. No,



Black people in Soweto celebrate release of Nelson Mandela.

they have fought apartheid both because it denied them democracy and brutalized them, as well as because

*Continued on page 8*

## March 8 — International Women's Day

### Bring the working class to the fore of the women's movement

March 8 is International Working Women's Day. It comes at a time when women's rights are under attack. It is not a time for sentimental speeches, but for raising one's voice against new outrages.

The most visible confrontations are those taking place over abortion rights. Bush and the religious fanatics are seeking to develop a movement to take away the right of each woman to decide for herself on abortion.

Across the country, women and men have been outraged at the threat to rights which they thought they had won in the early 70's. They have rallied in

front of health clinics and in demonstrations to defend women's rights. New activists have come forward in the pro-choice struggle.

#### Exploitation and the Women's Question

But another struggle is taking place as well. The attack on women's rights is part of a broader capitalist program to step up the exploitation of the working class. Workers are being forced to work faster and longer for less pay. There is increasing harassment and regimentation. Women workers have, as usual,

suffered particularly harshly, as they are herded into low-paying jobs under bad working conditions.

The Bush administration and Congress are also continuing cutbacks in social programs. The tens and hundreds of billions of dollars to bail out the bankers and to buy new bombers is to be extracted from the already inadequate social services. The cutting down of health services, the lack of affordable child care, the deterioration of the schools and other support for children, all bear especially hard on working class and poor women.

#### The Haves and the Have-Nots Have Different Interests

But not all women have suffered at the work place or from the cutbacks.

There are divisions among women. Bourgeois women are getting more and more positions in the upper strata. While working women are faced with wage cuts, and speedups, social cutbacks and "user fees," bourgeois women make money off this exploitation, as bourgeois men do. Businesswomen often come out against pregnancy leave laws and other social measures as too expensive for business. They feel solidarity with the profits of the wealthy, not with the women who toil in poverty to provide those profits. The pro-capitalist leaders of some bourgeois women's groups, such as NOW, speak in the name of all women and support some social measures for women, but they want at all costs to prevent a militant mass struggle of the toiling

*Continued on page 7*



Pro-choice activists clear away anti-abortion bigots in front of clinic in San Francisco Bay Area, February 17.

## U.S. imperialism, get out of Central America!

The U.S. government is on a rampage in Central America. In the last few months alone, it first backed an attempted coup and then invaded Panama. It sent more help to the Salvadoran death-squad government which used U.S. war planes to strafe and bomb working class districts of San Salvador. It unleashed the CIA-created contras to murder peasants while attempting to buy the Nicaraguan elections. And, in the guise of a "war on drugs," it has spread the terror wider — attacking an unarmed Cuban freighter, and rushing arms and military advisors to suppress peasants in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.

This is warmongering courtesy of the "kinder and gentler" Bush administration. And every step has been praised and funded by the Democrats in Congress. It is imperialism at work. Out to suppress the struggles of the workers and peas-

ants. Out to guard its capitalist investments. Out to make it clear that Washington will not stand for the slightest divergence from U.S. interests in its "own backyard."

U.S. workers, anti-imperialist activists, we cannot leave our "own" government free to murder and trample on other peoples. We cannot allow our "own" government to dictate its will over other countries — whether by direct military intervention or by "negotiations" with a U.S. gun to people's heads. We must raise our voice. We must organize. We must build the mass protests. Come out to the demonstrations in Washington D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Austin, Texas on March 24. Build up the movement in solidarity with the fighting workers and peasants of Central America. Say No to Bush and Congress! Down with imperialism!

□

# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## Black students occupy Selma schools



Marching against racism in front of Selma High School.

The struggle against racism in Selma, Alabama flared up in February. Black students sat in at the high school while adults occupied City Hall. They protested against the inferior, racist school system.

Seventy percent of the students in Selma schools are black. They are systematically discriminated against, even though the anti-racist movement forced the formal integration of the schools in 1970. Many of the schools have continued to have a disproportionate number of black students. And these schools have been stuck with hand-me-down furniture, outdated maps showing only 48 states, and fifteen-year-old dictionaries. Meanwhile, in the high school, black students have been arbitrarily placed in lower tracks (level 2 and 3), where they are denied college preparatory courses such as basic algebra or Spanish. Hundreds of black students have been kept out of the highest, level 1 track, even though they made better grades and scored higher on standardized tests than some white students placed in level 1. The tracking system has also victimized numbers of poor white students.

Black people have been opposing these conditions for years. Under pres-

sure from black parents, the system's first black superintendent, Norwood Roussell, began some reforms. He did not oppose the general tracking system, but he did order that objective criteria be used for the placing of students — such as their grades and standardized test scores. This was too much for the predominantly white school board. It refused to renew his contract. The four black board members walked out and a series of pickets, school boycotts, and other protests broke out.

In February the white school board members fired Roussell outright. But black students walked out of the high school in protest February 5. And this led to the closing of all 11 Selma schools. Three days later, black students returned to the high school and sat in at the cafeteria. At the same time, parents occupied City Hall. That weekend, over 700 people marched through Selma demanding an end to the racist system. Police arrested four of the protesters who had gone to the mayor's office.

The mayor, Joe Smitherman, is the same mayor who presided over "Bloody Sunday" when police viciously attacked black protesters on the Edmund Pettus Bridge back in 1965. The president of

the City Council, which appoints the school board, also held his position back in 1965. Longtime overseers of the racist system, they have viciously attacked the anti-racist movement.

After four days, the students ended their sit-in. Mayor Joe Smitherman threatened them with a federal injunc-

tion, arrest, and expulsion from school. Meanwhile, Superintendent Roussell begged them to leave claiming he did not want to have to expel them. But the students left with their heads held high. Over 100 of them marched around the school the day class restarted, shouting "Joe will go! Joe will go!" □

## Protesters denounce racist New York City police

Hundreds of people poured into the streets last month against racist murders by New York police.

On January 31, fourteen-year-old Jose Luis Labron was murdered by a well-known white racist cop in the Bushwick section of Brooklyn, New York. A crowd of hundreds of people came out in protest. For several hours they blocked the ambulance removing his body, claiming authorities were sweeping the murder under the rug.

The next night close to 400 people marched to the 83rd precinct station. They chanted "Justice for Jose Luis!" And they loudly denounced the police as "criminals" and "murderers."

Two days later, over 150 people again marched on the precinct station. They cried out, "Why did they kill him? Because he was Latino!" About 300 cops, many dressed in riot gear, lined the march route. Young protesters bravely taunted them with chants of "Hey, hey 83rd, how many kids did you kill

today?" Fearing a rebellion would break out from the angry youth, the police retreated from the scene.

The killing of Labron is not an isolated incident in New York City. During the first five weeks of the new year the police have killed eight black and Latino people. The new mayor, David Dinkins, has remained silent, not lifting a finger to put an end to these racist murders.

Nevertheless, respectable black leaders like Herbert Daughtry have pleaded with the masses to give Dinkins more time. More time for what? Dinkins has already announced an austerity program to cut jobs and social programs for the masses. And, although he is black, the racist police murders continue just as they did under Koch. The black masses can't give these black uppercrust politicians more time. No, the masses have to fight. They have to build up a militant movement relying on their own efforts. □



Demonstrators in Bushwick neighborhood denounce police murderers.

## Black people confront police rampage in Los Angeles

Los Angeles County Deputies stopped a young black man January 23 who had driven past their patrol car. When a crowd gathered to protest police harassment, the deputies ordered them back into their apartments. The people refused this arbitrary order and a fight broke out. The policemen shot and wounded the black motorist and killed a man in the crowd who was protesting the police abuse.

Police then flooded the area, arresting five young black men. Eyewitnesses report that the police kicked and beat the people they arrested, including the wounded man.

A few hours later, a block away from the first incident, policemen stopped another black motorist for "obstructing the vision through the rear window of his car." It had "only the strong survive" scrawled across the bottom of it. Again a crowd gathered to denounce this harassment. The police seized one man who had protested loudly. But under pressure from the angry masses, he was released without charges.

People in the neighborhood are fed up. They have told reporters "People are tired of being beat up and shot at. A

lot of us feel we'd rather die and go to hell than accept this." And "The way they're doing now, they're going to have to face the wrath of the people," one man said, and "I feel this ain't nothing but a police state." (*Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 24) The funeral for the murdered black man was marked by sharp denunciations of police repression. Some 2,000 people came out to the funeral.

Police are alarmed at the trend towards mass resistance. They called for a meeting with local black reformist politicians in the hopes of quelling resistance. Nation of Islam leader Farrakhan even made an appearance. He advised the police to accept a citizen's police review board in order to "save this city from eruption!" Such reformist tinkering may "save the city," but what's going to save the black people? Civilian police review boards have been in place all over the country for years, and still racist police murders continue with sickening regularity. The masses are right to fight back. Only building a strong mass movement against the racist police will get the black people any respect. □

## The Workers' Advocate



Monthly Theoretical-Political Newspaper of the Central Committee of the Marxist-Leninist Party, USA.

### Letters:

The Workers' Advocate  
P.O. Box 11942  
Ontario Street Station  
Chicago, IL 60611

### Orders and Subscriptions:

Marxist-Leninist Publications  
P.O. Box 11972  
Ontario Street Station  
Chicago, IL 60611

From distributor: 25¢

Via 1st class mail (U.S., Canada, Mexico): \$1.00 for single copy

Subscription: \$6.00 for 6 issues; \$11.00 for 12 issues

ISSN 0276-363X

## El Estandarte Obrero

Spanish supplement to 'THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE,  
Voice of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA



By mail: \$0.50 for single copy      From vendor: \$0.25  
Subscription: \$3.00 for 6 issues      \$6.00 for 12      ISSN 0276-4954

Order from: Marxist-Leninist Publications      P.O. Box 11972  
Ontario Street Station      Chicago, IL 60611

# DOWN WITH RACISM!

## 'War on drugs': Police surround L.A. neighborhoods

Barricades surround and cordon off the community. Policemen stop cars and check IDs of all who come and go. Only residents are permitted entry.

Two teenagers ride by the barricades in December, douse them with gasoline and set them afire. They are protesting the concentration camp conditions imposed on their community. Police are reportedly still hunting them down.

This is not apartheid in South Africa. No, it's Bush's "war on drugs" in two immigrant communities in Los Angeles. The police have cordoned off the Pico Union area, called "La Centroamericana," and the Sepulveda neighborhood

with signs reading "Narcotics Enforcement Zone," or "Security Community."

And have these police-state measures stopped the drugs? Very few drug arrests have been made. On the other hand, residents complain that the police have been working with the Immigration and Naturalization Service to intimidate undocumented immigrants and other Latinos who live in the areas. But then this is what Bush's "war on drugs" is really about. The government's propaganda about fighting drugs is just a cover for a war against minorities and working people. □

## Vassar students occupy building to denounce Moynihan

A protest broke out at Vassar College on February 14 against racist remarks made earlier by Daniel Moynihan, Democratic senator from New York. In a lec-

ture, the senator had praised the United States as a "model of ethnic cooperation." And in the reception following the lecture, Moynihan went on to

denounce a New York official of Jamaican background saying, "If you don't like it in this country, why don't you pack your bags and go back where you came from?" This is nothing but the typical "love it or leave it" abuse so often hurled by reactionaries to oppose any criticism of the U.S. and its government.

Students were outraged. The whole history of capitalist America is one of genocide against the Native Americans, enslavement of black Africans, Jim Crow segregation, lynchings, vicious discrimination and police abuse against peoples of color and newly arrived immigrants. Yet this is the "model" Moynihan promotes of how ethnic minorities should be treated around the world!

When the administration refused to renounce the racist remarks or take any measures against the senator, 75 students occupied the building which houses the administration and president's office. Many more students gathered outside to chant slogans against racism.

The 35-hour occupation came to an end when the administration agreed to hear the students' demands and after Moynihan handed back the fee for the lecture.

Other politicians on Capital Hill called it "preposterous" that Moynihan could have made racist remarks. Why, Moynihan is the liberal Democrat and an

"expert" advisor on social policy for the poor and minorities. But Moynihan's advice has always been racist to the core, with only a thin veil of liberal "concern." His 1965 report on "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action," and his more recent book *Family and Nation*, give the same thesis — that while the government has given blacks legal equality, blacks haven't been able to achieve real equality and climb out of poverty because of the breakdown of the structure in the black family. In other words, blacks have only themselves to blame for their poverty. What a whitewash of this country's racism.

Ronald Reagan used such racist analysis to justify deeper cuts in social benefit programs. And more recently, the Democrats rallied to the same ideas to pass Moynihan's "workfare" plan to drive women off the welfare rolls. It's about time Moynihan was denounced.

What Moynihan had to say to the Vassar students was no different than what he's been saying all along. In the 1960's he was branded for the racist he is. Now once again the students are organizing to put the racists in their place. □

### Struggle of the homeless

#### Homeless make UC-Berkeley turn tail

On the night of February 5th, 200 people forced the UC Berkeley administration to back down from their plan to "sweep" People's Park of homeless people and their belongings.

Defying a recently imposed curfew on the park, a crowd of homeless people, activists, and students confronted maintenance workers hired to carry away people's possessions. They pushed aside UC vice chancellor Dan Boggan when he tried to stop them. Shouting "Go, go, go, you won't win this one" and "Don't take our stuff away," the crowd persuaded the custodians to leave. Later, when the city and UC police arrived, they were also confronted. They were unable to enforce the curfew.

This was a victory for the homeless at the park. It exposes the liberal hand-wringing and phony "concern" of UC and city officials for the plight of the homeless. It shows the power of militant mass actions.

"Sweeping" the streets and parks is no solution to the serious problems of homelessness in capitalist society. But it is a way for the UC administration to try to sweep the problem under the rug. □

#### 'City of brotherly love' slaps the homeless

Homeless people in Philadelphia are up in arms against the latest outrages from City Hall.

Last fall, Mayor Wilson Goode cut funds for homeless programs by 50%, as part of an austerity budget. And now businessmen complain that there are more homeless people than ever crowding downtown streets. So what's the answer? Call out the police of course.

In mid-February Goode announced a new plan to drive the homeless people from downtown. Homeless people are to be banned from downtown streets from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Any possession left on the street will be removed by street sweepers. And police will be allowed to arrest people for begging. Mayor Goode also beseeched Philadelphians to stop giving money to beggars. Obviously, it's Scrooge capitalism that rules in the "City of Brotherly Love." □

## Demonstrators hound Bush

George Bush has been making a number of public appearances around the country. And in several cities, he has been greeted by angry demonstrators.

On February 6, Bush spoke at a \$1,000 a plate dinner in Los Angeles. Hundreds protested outside. They denounced him for warmongering in Central America and for opposing abortion rights. Demonstrators also denounced lack of AIDS funding. Inside, several activists stood up and heckled Bush, condemning his support for the death-squad regime in El Salvador.

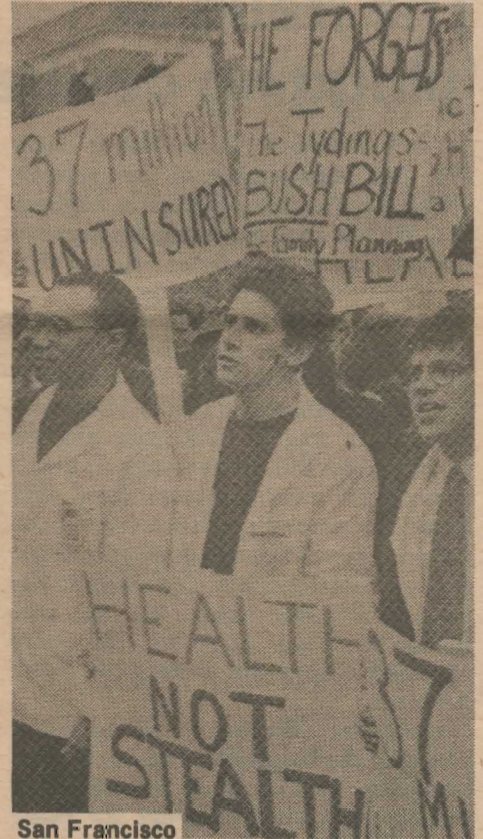
The next day, Bush went to the San Francisco Bay Area. Over a thousand people faced off against him in front of the Hilton Hotel. Activists here too denounced Bush for U.S. imperialism's aggression in Panama, Nicaragua and El Salvador. And they protested the government's attacks on the homeless and poor at home.

On February 22, Bush went to Baltimore to receive an honorary degree from the bigwigs of Johns Hopkins University. But here too, a group of protesters, mostly made up of medical stu-



Baltimore

dents, condemned Bush. They denounced the government's rotten health policies, including the fact that 37 million Americans have no health insurance. □



San Francisco

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Down With Racism!

Black students occupy Selma schools	2
Protesters denounce New York City police	2
Black people confront police rampage in L.A.	2
'War on drugs': police barricades in L.A.	3
Vassar students denounce Moynihan	3

### Strikes and Workplace News

GM workers shut down plant for safety	4
UAW fraud of 'plugging contract loopholes'	4
Postal workers fight harassment	4
Garment workers strike to organize union	4
In brief	4

### Step Up the Defense of Women's Rights!

Marxism on women in the workplace	5
What path for the clinic defense movement	6
Clinic defense actions	7

### Apartheid, No! Revolution, Yes!

What will ANC-De Klerk talks bring South Africa	8
Detroit marchers salute black struggle	8

### U.S. Imperialism, Get Out of Central America!

Bush's Panama invasion: drug bankers take power	9
---	---

### The World in Struggle

Sweden: government upset by strikes	10
Mexico Ford Workers win strike	10
Malaysian plantation workers strike	10
Romanian workers worried about market reforms	10

10 years of the MLP	12
---------------------	----



## Strikes and workplace news

### GM workers shut down plant for safety

Workers shut down GM's Orion Township assembly plant outside Detroit on February 6. They refused to work the "marriage line" — which joins bodies and engines — when it fell out of synchronization. This problem has been going on for some six years. It causes the line to lurch, threatening to cut off arms and cause other injuries. The workers demanded that GM install a safety switch that would allow them to shut down the line when problems occur.

But GM refused the workers' demand. Instead of fixing the line, GM suspended eight workers. And it is threatening to fire them and to discipline more than 20 other workers.

On February 9, about 500 workers defiantly marched out of the plant. They held a militant lunch-time rally to

demand that GM reinstate the suspended workers. The workers also blasted the international and local leadership of the United Auto Workers (UAW). Even though two committeemen were among those suspended, the UAW leaders have been siding with GM. Ernie Emery, president of UAW Local 5960, has even backed up GM's lies, claiming that union "experts" cannot find any problem with the line. The UAW leaders' only concern is to get the workers back churning out the Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles so that GM can be more "competitive" and profitable. Obviously, the safety and lives of the workers will only be defended by their own militant action.

(From the February 23 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-Detroit.) □

### Don't 'leave it to Bieber':

### The fraud of 'plugging contract loopholes'

UAW President Owen Bieber counsels the unemployed to be patient. "Wait for the new contract in September. We will plug the loopholes and win real job security this time!" Now where have we heard this song before?

For the last three contracts the UAW has been trumpeting major "break-throughs in job security!" Of course this hype was designed to justify more concessions in wages, work rules and job combination. But, in exchange, it didn't provide job security either! Since 1987 alone, 13 assembly plants have been closed. Tens of thousands of auto workers are jobless. Flint and Detroit are economic basket cases. Yet the auto monopolies are targeting 16 more assembly plants for closing in North America.

Loopholes? Bieber is talking about plugging the loopholes with even more loopholes. Past contracts forbade plant closings and layoffs **except for those due to weak sales**. So when plants shut down and layoffs occurred, the hacks ratified them, abandoned the unemployed, and promised to change the wording the next time! Now, the latest formulas being proposed are for "job security for some percentage of the

work force" (with all kinds of qualifications on how it is calculated). Or perhaps a pledge to avoid layoffs **except in "extreme circumstances."** What pointless play with words. Lawyers will argue the fine points in the courts for years while the unemployed are ground into poverty.

The workers have only one defense — a determined mass struggle. But is the UAW devoting its resources to such a fight? No. They are debating how they can get another worthless pledge from the Big Three **in exchange** for helping the auto companies reduce absenteeism and health costs. They are such toadies for the bosses that they have even begun a campaign for government help to cut the health care, pension, and capital costs for the auto billionaires. As if making the rich richer will somehow trickle down to the workers. Bull shit!

Don't leave it to Bieber! His talk of closing loopholes is just a cover for giving away more concessions to the auto bosses. It is wasting precious time while more jobs slip away. Mass struggle by the workers is the only language that the capitalists understand.

(From Feb. 23 "Detroit Workers' Voice," paper of MLP-Detroit.) □

### Postal workers fight harassment

Postal workers at Detroit's main office are demanding reinstatement, with full back pay, for Harry Hill. On light-duty for job-related medical problems, Hill was suspended in January for arguing with a postal doctor who refused to continue his light-duty restrictions. Workers say that Hill's suspension is part of a general harassment drive, especially against injured workers. They have circulated petitions supporting him.

Management's campaign of harassment is part of an intensified productivity drive across the country. The postal service is crying that it may suffer a \$1.6 billion deficit this year. To deal with the projected deficit, the Deputy Postmaster General declared "We are going to drive down employment this year through attrition. We are going to hold down staffing in the following years while workload growth increases significantly." (Postal Life, Jan.-Feb.)

And that's precisely what they're doing. Since last April the USPS has eliminated 14,000 jobs through "attrition" (firings, harassing the injured to quit, and so forth). Although their numbers have been reduced, postal workers moved 3.3 billion pieces of mail between Thanksgiving and December 29, up 4.7% from last year. This is speedup pure and simple. And management is cracking the whip against workers to force them to work themselves to death.

So what are the union leaders doing to fight the speedup and harassment? Little or nothing. They even agreed with management to hold down the mildest form of struggle — writing up grievances. As a result, it is reported that grievances from the National Association of Letter Carriers have been reduced by 66%, from the American Postal Workers Union by 50%, and from the Mailhandlers union by 30%. Clearly, the rank and file must take mat-

ters into their own hands.

(Based on the February 19 "Detroit

Workers' Voice," paper of the MLP-Detroit.) □

### Garment workers strike to organize unions



Striking garment workers picket Domsey Trading in Brooklyn.

An organizing drive is heating up in 150 garment industry shops in Brooklyn, New York. At one of the shops over 250 workers, primarily

Latino women, went on strike January 30. They are protesting the Domsey  
Continued on page 11  
See GARMENT

### In brief

#### Strikes for health insurance mount

During the late 1980's there was a four-fold increase in the percentage of workers who walked off their jobs over health benefits, according to a recent study released by the Labor Department. In 1986, health coverage was one of the main issues motivating 18% of all strikers. Last year, the figure climbed to 78%.

As hospital costs have increased, the capitalist bosses have tried to shift the health care expenses onto the backs of the workers. The capitalists will do anything to preserve their precious profit margin.

However, the workers have been fighting back. From the strike against the regional telephone companies to the struggle against Pittston Coal, workers are demanding their right to decent health care paid by their employers. □

#### Benefits to miner's widow cut

The government has still made no arrests in the murder of striking miner John McCoy. John was shot to death January 16 by gun thugs of the coal bosses, while he and 100 other miners were picketing a non-union mine near Welch, West Virginia.

Meanwhile, the leaders of the United Mine Workers (UMW) have shown their contempt for the fighting rank-and-file miners. Top officials refused to allow a memorial day strike to protest the killing, which many miners have called for. The union heads even failed to show up for John's funeral. And then in February the UMW honchos cut off strike benefits to the widow of John McCoy and her two children. She was told by the union bureaucrats that if she wants health care benefits for the children, she should apply for welfare. □

#### UMW leaders have strikers arrested

Dozens of miners occupied the headquarters of the United Mine Workers District 30 on February 5. The miners have been on strike for five years against the McCoy-Caney Coal Co. But recently the UMW bureaucrats cut off their strike benefits. The miners took over the district office to demand their restoration.

And what was the UMW leaders' reply? They called in the police and had 11 miners arrested on the spot. UMW President Trumka had promised that his "selective strike strategy" would work because by keeping other miners on the job, they could keep strike benefits flowing to the strikers. But now we see this was just a ruse to isolate the miners in small strikes and then leave them to twist in the wind. □

#### Child labor on the rise

In 1989, the government found 22,508 children working illegally. (Imagine how many the government did not find!) This is double the number found in 1982. It is the highest number ever recorded since child labor was outlawed over 50 years ago.

A Department of Labor report claims that the increase in child labor is largely due to the low unemployment rates — employers are hiring children because there is nobody else to hire. Rubbish!

The fact is that the capitalists exploit the lowest paid workers they can find to increase their profits. And children are having to go to work because their families are starving. Has it ever occurred to these government bureaucrats that the plight of the poor is worsening? Over 20% of all children under the age

Continued on page 11  
See CHILD LABOR

# Marxism on women workers

What is the significance of women working? The importance of the "proletarianization of women" can be seen in the enormous number of women workers today. In 1989, the number of women in the work place reached 55 million, 45% of all those employed. And this number has grown particularly rapidly in recent years. For example, the number of working women with small children roughly doubled during the last decade.

The founders of communism, Marx, Engels and Lenin, described how capitalism inevitably draws women into the work force, and how it subjects them to the worst abuse. But at the same time, they held that their presence in the work place helps prepare women to achieve emancipation through taking part in overthrowing the old, exploitative societies.

## Women Enter the Factories

Karl Marx, in his classic analysis of capitalism, *Capital*, noted that the widespread use of machinery in industry led the exploiters to bring women into the factories and mills. Machines transformed work that formerly required much brute strength. And, although individuals vary widely, on the average men have an advantage in such strength over women. Marx stated: "In so far as machinery dispenses with muscular power, it becomes a means of employing laborers of slight muscular strength, and those [children] whose bodily development is incomplete, but whose limbs are all the more supple. The labor of women and children was, therefore, the first thing sought by the capitalists who use machinery. That mighty substitute for labor and laborers was forthwith changed into a means for increasing the number of wage-laborers by enrolling, under the direct sway of capital, every member of the workman's family, without distinction of age or sex." (1) While these jobs no longer required the same muscular strength, they were extremely arduous. Moreover, women were also employed in "heavy" jobs as well.

## Brutal Exploitation of Women

Of course the capitalists employed women not as a favor, but to viciously exploit them. The communist writings exposed this. In his book *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, for example, Engels described how the use of machinery by the capitalists meant they could employ "cheap" female labor. He notes that "fewer men need be employed; and as women and children work more cheaply, and in these branches better than men, they take their places." (emphasis added) (2) Naturally women's labor was not cheap by a law of nature, but because of special oppression from the capitalists.

Marx described how, as the capitalists drew more and more members of the working class family into the factory, they paid each worker less than they had previously. "Machinery, by throwing every member of that family onto the labor market, spreads the value of the man's labor-power over his whole family. It thus depreciates his labor-power. To purchase the labor-power of a family of four workers [parents and two children] may, perhaps, cost more than it formerly did to purchase the labor-power of the head of the family, but ... In order that the family may live, four people [parents and two children] must now, not only labor, but expend surplus-labor for the capitalist. ... machinery ... raises the degree of exploitation." (3)

Here too, it is not a law of nature that machinery introduces exploitation, but a result of capitalist ownership of the means of production. Under capitalism, the increase in social wealth due to the larger number of workers results not in prosperity but in unemployment and privation.

Today too this can be seen. The statistics paraded by the bourgeois newspapers about how family income has increased slightly over the past period ignore the fact that more families require at least two wage-earners to get by.

## Against "Home Work"

Marx also denounced the use of "home work." This refers to capitalists employing wage labor to work at home, rather than at a factory or job site. Marx showed this to be a particularly harsh form of exploitation, mainly of female labor. Interestingly, "home work" has been promoted as a wonderful way to earn money by the Reagan-Bush administrations, those loyal tools of modern big business. For one thing, it becomes all but impossible to enforce wage and hour standards, safety standards, and other protective laws when "home work" is widespread.

Lenin also described the ugly essence of home work. He explains: "It is among these [poverty-stricken] women that the capitalists are most eager to engage workers who work at home and who are paid a monstrously low wage to 'earn' an extra crust of bread for themselves and their families." (4)

## Family Hardships

Under capitalism, the drawing of women into the work force also intensifies the difficulties faced by working-class women who are trying to raise a family. In *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels vividly describes the lack of child care and the rotten housing conditions. On top of this, he writes: "The husband works the whole day through, perhaps the wife also and the elder children, all in different places; they meet night and morning only, all under perpetual temptation to drink; what family life is possible under such condition?" (5)

## Liberating Effects of Proletarianization

Despite the misery and pain inflicted on women workers by the capitalists, communism considers that the entrance of women into large-scale industry is "at bottom, progressive." Lenin explained how the women of the exploited classes "formerly never emerged from the narrow circle of domestic family relationships." And, he pointed out, "...by drawing them into direct participation, large-scale machine industry stimulates their development and increases their independence" and breaks up patriarchalism. (6)

Since women could earn a livelihood in industry, they were no longer completely economically dependent on men. This works to break down the foundations of inequality. As well, the escape from the stifling atmosphere of confinement to the home, especially into large work places, helps women broaden their horizons. It facilitates the entry of women into all the progressive and revolutionary movements. In particular, women not only are involved in supporting their husband's or partner's struggle against the capitalists, but are faced directly with carrying out this struggle. Indeed, women are faced not only with general demands on the capitalists but with the need to protect their special interests: health needs, anti-discrimination measures, etc. In general, the drawing together of men and women in the work place helps unite the working class and organize it in the fight against the capitalist exploiters.

Thus the entry of women into large-scale production is a vital step in overcoming the foundation of inequality. As Engels stated: "...the emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible and must remain so as long as women are excluded from socially productive work and restricted to

housework, which is private. The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large, social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree. And this has become possible only as a result of modern large-scale industry, which not only permits of the participation of women in production in large numbers, but actually calls for it and, moreover, strives to convert private domestic work also into a public industry." (7)

Here, in discussing the liberation of women from exclusive preoccupation with domestic matters, Engels refers not just to employment, but also to the socialization of what would otherwise be an overwhelming load of drudgery for the family. The advance of large-scale production has produced the possibility for a mass development of public education, child care, laundries, labor-saving devices, restaurants, etc. Women's role in social production not only puts on the agenda equality in family duties between women and men, but large-scale production creates the possibility of the family not being absorbed in domestic drudgery. But under capitalism, these possibilities remain curtailed at best for the downtrodden mass of society.

## Women's Active Role Is a Necessity

The participation of women is necessary for the victory of any profound class movement. According to Lenin: "It has been observed in the experience of all liberation movements that the success of a revolution depends on the extent to which women take part in it." (8)



Women workers during Watsonville cannery strike, 1986.

Thus the recognition of the progressive nature of millions of women being drawn into the work place under capitalism by no means requires supporting capitalism. As Lenin said, referring to the torture to which capitalism subjects women workers, "The business of the bourgeoisie is to promote trusts, to drive women and children into the factories, to torture them there; to corrupt them, to condemn them to extreme poverty. We do not demand such development, we do not support it. We fight it. But how do we fight? We

explain that trusts [giant companies and monopolies] and the employment of women in industry are progressive. We do not want a return to the handicraft system, pre-monopoly capitalism, domestic drudgery for women. Forward through the trusts, etc., and beyond them to socialism!" (9)

Thus recognizing the liberating role of the growth in the number of women workers does not mean supporting capitalism. We must eliminate the harsh conditions that wage-slavery imposes on women workers, but it is wage-slavery, not women, that must be driven out of the work place. Recognizing the progressive nature of women working means recognizing what are the additional forces that can fight capitalist oppression and usher in a new society. It means knowing how to strengthen the struggle against the exploiters. In short, it means recognizing how an ever greater role will be played by working women.

## Mobilize Women Workers!

Our Party thinks the huge army of women workers, tens of millions strong, is a powerful factor that can strengthen the fight for liberation from wage-slavery and for women's liberation, and that it will enhance the role of the women of the toiling classes in general. Today the women workers are being thrust into conflict with the capitalist employers, the class that profits from exploitation in general and from the system of male supremacy in particular. A growing number of women workers are in the thick of strike struggles and organizing drives. And their role in the economic and political struggles of the

working class can only increase as time goes on.

If the movement for abortion rights is to grow really powerful, it must tap the vast potential of working class women. After all, working class and poor women bear the brunt of the assault on women's rights. Meanwhile it is the bourgeoisie which seeks to enchain the workers through the denial of rights, including women's rights. Therefore it is the working masses who have the most interest in a resolute fight, while it is the

Continued on page 11  
See MARXISM

## Reference notes:

(1) Karl Marx, *Capital, A Critique of Political Economy*, Vol. I, Part IV, Chapter XV, Section 3a: "Appropriation of supplementary labor-power by capital. The employment of women and children."

(2) Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, in the chapter entitled "Branches of Industry. Factory Hands," on p. 179 of the Progress Publishers edition, Moscow, 1973.

(3) Marx, *loc. cit.*

(4) V.I. Lenin, "Capitalism and Female-Labor," (April 27, 1913), *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, p. 230-31.

(5) Engels, *op. cit.*, in the chapter en-

itled "Results," p. 188.

(6) Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Ch. VII, Section XII, "Three stages in the development of capitalism in Russian industry" or *Collected Works*, 1972 edition, Vol. 2, p. 347.

(7) Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, about one-quarter of the way into Chapter IX.

(8) Lenin, "Speech at the First All-Russian Conference of Working Women," *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 180-82 (article written on November 19, 1918).

(9) Lenin, "The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution," (September 1916), Section II, or *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 81.

# What path for the clinic defense movement?

The clinic defense movement has played an important role in the revival of the struggle for women's rights. It has brought forth a number of new activists. The clinic defenses have shown the effectiveness of mass action and punctured the arrogance of the Operation Rescue (OR) bullies. Our Party has actively participated in the movement.

On March 23-25, a section of clinic defense activists will be meeting in Detroit. The conference organizers say they want to form a national clinic defense organization. We think it is good for activists to get a chance to exchange experience and discuss the burning issues facing the movement. But whether the conference and the contemplated organization will help advance the movement depends on what positions they take.

We believe there are serious problems in the orientation being put forward by those preparing the conference. The Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) has persisted in pro-choice actions, and is the main force organizing this conference. The problems that have so far appeared reflect wrong, reformist stands of the Trotskyist RWL, as well as similar stands by other reformist groups involved with the conference.

## For a Resolute Stand Against NOW

One of the issues facing any clinic defense activist is responding to the attacks on clinic defense by bourgeois and liberal women's organizations like National Organization for Women (NOW), National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) and Planned Parenthood. The NOW leaders have been zealously trying to drive any militancy out of the movement. They preach the bankrupt path of relying on the courts and cops to defend women's rights, or even on repressive laws like RICO. They are opposed to mass confrontations with the anti-abortion fanatics. In a number of areas, such as Michigan, they have issued written statements demanding that the activists stop confronting OR and instead engage in behind-the-scenes collaboration with the police. And everywhere they promote this line verbally, as far as they dare in the circumstances of the local movements, and do their best to pour cold water on the activists.

What is the attitude of the conference organizers to the attacks of the NOW leaders and the bourgeois liberals on the clinic defenders? They have criticized this or that stand of NOW, but they don't seem to think that this is a task of the movement. The announcements for the conference mention "the 'respectable' leadership" and "existing national organizations" or even "Democratic and Republican party politicking," but they go no further, and have no elaboration. Instead of stressing the class and political differences in the movement, they tone this down as far as possible. Indeed, the proposed "basis of unity" for the proposed national clinic defense organization makes no criticism at all of the bourgeois women's organizations. Period.

It seems that the conference organizers have not realized that one of the burning tasks of activists is to become conscious of the stands of various classes. This includes not just condemning the stand of the "pro-life" fanatics, but politically clarifying the difference between the views of the bourgeois liberals and the views of those who want to mobilize the working class. It is not enough to simply hold some actions that the NOW leaders disapprove. It is necessary to speak openly to the masses about the class differences. It is necessary to work to develop a mass trend that is consciously independent of the bourgeois trends, a trend with its own political and class basis separate from that of NOW.

The conference organizers however seem to have a different view. They ap-

## Issues facing the Detroit conference

parently believe that really important actions depend on the help of NOW, or some faction of the NOW leadership, or of other "respectable" organizations, and that this is what makes a movement "broad-based." RWL, for example, may criticize NOW in its paper, but it seems to think that NOW can be forced to organize the movement. It has even speculated, in one of its articles criticizing NOW, that NOW's president Molly Yard would issue calls to mobilize the masses, if only she weren't influenced by more conservative elements. (See RWL's paper *Fighting Worker*, Nov.-Dec. 1989, p.2)

This type of attitude undermines the spirit to build up a militant movement based on the masses, and instead engenders constant illusions in the NOW leaders. So it's not surprising that earlier, when Michigan NOW issued a vicious statement red-baiting the pro-choice militants for opposing OR, and blamed the pro-choice activists for OR's violence, the idea came up in discussion around Detroit's clinic defense circles that, well, Detroit NOW is better. And when later the head of Detroit NOW issued her own statement demanding total reliance on the police and denouncing even hostile "eye contact" with OR, well, there's always West Coast NOW. As if NOW had a different class basis there.

### What Is Behind the Attack on the Clinic Defenders?

The rotten stands of the NOW leadership are not some accident. They speak in the name of women in general, but they represent the class interests of well-off women and those who aspire to become bourgeois. Their highest goal is winning positions for elite women in the corporate boardrooms and the government. Hence they do not want to see a class movement of working class and poor women fighting against the exploiters. And this is why they want the movement to confine itself to "respectable" actions that do not upset the capitalist establishment.

NOW, of course, is a big organization. Among rank-and-file NOW members are women with many different views and occupations. Undoubtedly there are those who sympathize with clinic defenses, and if they can be drawn into progressive action, well and good. But NOW as an organization is utterly dominated by its pro-capitalist leadership, and it is not going to give up its class character. The Molly Yards and other leaders organize NOW in a way to channel the activity of its members towards the establishment.

And the struggle over abortion is part of a broader capitalist offensive against

the conditions of the mass of women. The productivity drive against the working class hits women hard, and there is an epidemic of repetitive stress injuries among women. The cutbacks in social programs strike hard at working class and poor women. On these questions, the stand of those who want to be members of the boards of directors is naturally different from those who see themselves as workers on the assembly lines. This is why striving hard to link up with the workers is incompatible with always hoping that NOW will finally do something good.

These class questions are also connected to the stand towards the Democratic and Republican politicians. NOW of course promotes the "pro-choice" capitalist politicians. But as representatives of big business, the "pro-choice" politicians have shown themselves much more interested in driving down the conditions of working class women than putting up a serious fight for abortion rights. To fight the influence of the pro-capitalist politicians, it is necessary to deal directly with the class interests involved.

To deepen the pro-choice movement, there should be an orientation towards the interests of the exploited mass of women, and towards encouraging the independent organization of working and oppressed women and men, separate from and consciously opposed to the bourgeois trends.

This does not mean that activists should boycott actions or demonstrations sponsored by NOW or other groups even farther to the right. But we call on all activists to lend a hand in building up an independent mass trend, and to participate in all mass actions on that basis, no matter who dominates the official leadership or speaker's platforms. We disagree with the view that the point of taking part in actions is to find something good about this or that NOW leader or chapter or other establishment organization. The point of taking part in actions is not to cement some fancy deals with the "respectable" leaders in NOW or the trade union bureaucracy, but to put forward an independent political stand to the masses and to strike at the anti-abortion fanatics and other enemies.

### How Will the Working Masses Be Mobilized?

All this raises another major issue facing the conference, namely, how to mobilize the workers and poor into the movement. We hope that there is a good deal of fruitful discussion of this, as it is a crucial task.

For example, the masses of workers must be reached directly. The pro-

choice movement must learn how to link up with the concerns of working women, and appeal for support to the working class as a whole. It should develop widespread agitation among the working class through leaflets at factories and in working class communities, through marches in working class areas, through organizing discussions among workers and seeking to draw workers into pro-choice actions. Attention must be concentrated on encouraging the militant spirit of the masses. And this means encouraging defiance of the union bureaucracy, not propagating illusions in the union apparatus.

Similarly, attention must be paid to the methods of developing links with youth, students, and other progressive elements.

The conference organizers talk about mobilizing the masses or linking up with various struggles, but we feel their approach to the question is mistaken.

For example, they do talk about linking up with labor and "unity in action with unions." But they fail to draw any distinction between the trade union bosses and the rank-and-file workers. Yet in this country the top trade union leaders are notorious for their pro-capitalist stands, their corruption, and their sellout of the working masses. The AFL-CIO Executive Council hasn't even taken a pro-choice position, but has just this February appointed a committee to study the pro-choice issue. And individual union leaders who are pro-choice carry out little in practice. It would do more to link up with militant workers if the conference denounced the foot-dragging and obstruction of the AFL-CIO than simply to talk about "labor" in general.

Some of the conference organizers like RWL write articles in their newspaper denouncing this or that act of the labor bureaucracy. But they nevertheless pin their hopes on finding this or that niche in the official union apparatus. When they talk of support by "labor," they are hoping that the official union apparatus will pass a nice-sounding resolution and do the work of mobilizing the working class. This is similar to their attitude towards NOW.

But if the clinic defense movement were to pin its hopes on the trade union bureaucracy, it would be pursuing an illusion. Only by consciously distinguishing between the corrupt pro-capitalist labor leaders and the working class militants can the clinic defense movement really appeal to the ordinary workers.

The same principle holds with respect to the anti-racist struggle and other movements. To reach the mass of the oppressed, one must organize independent of the reformist and liberal organizations. Otherwise talk of linking up with this or that struggle is no more than the typical politicking of Democratic Party liberals.

Continued on next page  
See CONFERENCE



Women's rights activists protest Supreme Court's Webster decision restricting abortion rights — Boston, July 3.

# Clinic defenders thwart Operation Rescue

February 17 saw militant activists give a drubbing to "Operation Rescue" holy bullies in a number of cities around the country.

## Oakland

"Who will keep the clinics open? We will, we will!" This was the battle cry of the militant clinic defense in Walnut Grove, northeast of Oakland, California.

About 80 Operation Rescue thugs were attempting to shut down the clinic by blocking the door with a small group and protecting them with a human wall. But the pro-choice activists were not about to let them get away with this. In an intense hour and a half confrontation, they were able to drive the OR "wall" back about 50 feet. They then made short work of the handful left blocking the door. Once again militant mass action had inflicted defeat on the OR goons.

## Police harass patients

Pro-choice forces opposed 100 OR holy hypocrites who picketed in silence on February 24 at Womancare Clinic in Lathrup Village, Michigan. About 20 spirited pro-choice activists shouted slogans, adding to the usual slogans "Nicolai Ceausescu, Operation Rescue."

As well over a dozen NOW stood on either side of a driveway to the clinic. They were silent, refused to give slogans, and tried to get people away from the pro-choice picket line on the pretext of "firming up lines" on either side of the driveway.

Meanwhile the police harassed patients trying to go into the clinic. They especially focused on black patients, interrogating them, demanding to see ID, and refusing to allow them through for several minutes. A number of activists denounced the police with slogans. But NOW tried to stop the denunciation of the police, saying it was being dealt with. □

## CONFERENCE

### Continued from previous page

#### Clinic Defense or Just Escorts?

The conference organizers have held clinic defenses against attempts by Operation Rescue or other anti-abortion fanatics to close the clinics down. But OR has been running into difficulties, and sometimes it doesn't attempt to close clinics but simply to engage in harassment of women coming to them. Some of the conference organizers seem to be vacillating on whether mass clinic defense should be carried out in those situations where OR is weak, rather than simply having escorts (and nothing else).

For example, this has been suggested by the leadership of BACAOR (Bay Area Committee Against Operation Rescue) and discussed at a BACAOR conference in January. And a similar view has come up around CDAR (Committee in Defense of Abortion Rights) in Detroit and AACDAR in Ann Arbor. This is connected to the view that militancy allegedly scares away the clinic patients. And it has been put forward that the escorts should not shout slogans, confront OR, be too numerous, etc. These organizations still carry out clinic defenses against OR attacks. Indeed, OR didn't fade away in the Bay Area but instead stepped up its attacks, and in response BACAOR has carried out some of its most militant actions. But at the same time the other idea is still around.

But while OR is faltering, it hasn't gone away. And it is the mass clinic

The police sat on their hands so long as OR controlled the door and did nothing against OR's illegal gathering. Only when it became apparent that OR had lost the game did they move in. The cops then ordered both sides to disperse. They also arrested two activists at the request of OR and four OR at the request of Planned Parenthood officials, all the arrests apparently on minor charges.

## Los Angeles

When an OR caravan arrived in the early morning to shut down the Latina Women's Clinic in east Los Angeles, clinic defenders were waiting to "greet" them.

Some 65 activists had gathered together in one solid mass at the front door of the clinic, determined to keep it open. When 50 OR bullies marched toward the clinic, slogans rang out condemning them. And OR was ridiculed in song as well.

OR paraded in front of the pro-choice demonstrators for a couple of minutes. But seeing the resolution of the activists, they soon retreated back to their car caravan and left.

Meanwhile, at the Women's Medical Center about a mile away, another battle against OR was under way. Despite torrential rains, 300 pro-choice protesters came out to square off against 150 OR scum. The clinic stayed open.

## Detroit

Pro-choice activists gathered at three Detroit area women's clinics to counter Operation Rescue's religious crusaders.

OR didn't try to close the clinics, and instead deployed small groups at each clinic to harass patients trying to enter. They tried to scare the patients off by yelling and spreading hysterical lies that the clinic would mutilate them, that they would never be able to have children, etc.

At each clinic, pro-choice activists provided escorts for patients being hassled by OR. The most effective action, however, occurred at the clinic in

defense that has demoralized OR. Even when OR's presence is too weak to threaten to close a clinic, the political demonstrations by the pro-choice forces are essential to mobilize the masses in defense of women's rights and to puncture OR's arrogance. Slogans, chants, picket signs, and militancy are not just useful for keeping clinics open, but also are quite effective in demoralizing OR in those situations where it simply organizes small groups harassing women coming to the clinics. And they are essential for building a movement against OR. For that matter, if the pro-choice people at the clinic don't have signs or slogans, no one, including the women coming to the clinics, can be clear which side they are on.

This idea of restricting many actions to only being quiet escorts, is, in practice, a big step on the road of capitulation to the demands of the NOW leadership that militancy be banished in favor of escorts and reliance on the police. And by propagating the idea that militancy is counterproductive, it tends to weaken all clinic defense actions. The task of a national conference of clinic defenders should be, instead, to help strengthen the political basis of clinic actions and to show how to extend their mass basis. By vacillating in the face of opposition to militancy, the conference organizers are jeopardizing the mass actions that have been the bright spark of the movement. Indeed, if militant clinic defense were to be replaced by passive escorts, then what would be the point of talking about a "National Clinic Defense Organization"? □



Clinic defenders push back OR at Walnut Grove clinic.

the suburb of Livonia. Here the dozen pro-choice activists were especially active in supplementing the escorting of patients with confronting the OR bullies. They sent tears out to denounce the OR thugs face to face all around the clinic. This knocked the wind out of the sails of the OR fanatics,

who became quite demoralized.

At Summit clinic, the idea was spread at first of just escorting. This was opposed by a pro-choice activist and some discussion ensued. As time went on, practice showed that a more active stance was needed, and slogans and other action were taken. □

## International Women's Day

### Continued from front page

women.

This can be seen in the struggle on abortion rights. NOW and other bourgeois women's organizations are in favor of abortion rights. But they demand that women rely on the police and the courts, and they are scared of the militancy of the clinic defenders. They want to garner votes for their favorite Democratic and Republican candidates, and they don't want to see women raise their fists against the establishment. They don't want to see women organizing and marching and fighting against the corporations and the wealthy who stand behind the anti-women agenda. They are opposed to seeing working women unite with working men in a struggle against the rich, against the Democratic and Republican parties of the rich, and in defense of all the oppressed and exploited.

Meanwhile working class women are being driven into the work places in larger and larger numbers. Faced with low wages and deteriorating conditions, they are joining unions. They are interested in defending the particular interests of women, and they are also uniting with men workers in the struggle against the exploiters.

For all workers, men or women, the struggle of women is a vital issue. The working class cannot liberate itself without the active role of the millions upon millions of working class women. There must be a solid connection between the workers' struggle and the women's movement. Not between sold-out labor bureaucrats and pro-capitalist women's leaders, but between the class conscious workers of both sexes.

#### Let the Struggle for Women's Rights Be a Class Struggle

The women's movement has long been connected to the class struggle. The antagonism between the interests of bourgeois women and working class women has always been there. And so

has the connection of the workers' struggle against capitalism with the women's liberation movement.

International Working Women's Day itself was declared by an international gathering of the socialist workers near the beginning of the century.

A few years later, International Women's Day came during a strike wave in Petrograd in 1917. The communist workers, organized in the Bolshevik Party, called for a political demonstration on Women's Day. The massive outpouring of women, backed by a general strike of all Petrograd workers, was one of the main actions triggering the first big revolutionary event of 1917, the overthrow of the tsar.

#### The Situation Today

Today the large women's organizations in the U.S., such as NOW, are led by establishment leaders, tied mainly to the Democratic Party, and longing after ruling class positions. They are opposed to the class struggle.

But all those who want the pro-choice movement to grow, and to see the development of a powerful all-round struggle for the improvement of the conditions of the masses of women, must seek to break the stranglehold of the pro-establishment leaders. Bring forward the mass of working class women into the struggle! They are the majority of women, they are the ones who bear the burdens of this system, and they are the force which stands for change. Rally the masses of working class and exploited women and men, and all progressive youth and students, into the struggle! Leaflet the working class communities, organize discussions at the work place, bring the masses into the confrontations with the anti-women fanatics! Expose the capitalist exploitation that lies behind the attack on women's rights!

This International Working Women's Day, let all who want to see a really powerful struggle for women's rights dedicate themselves to bringing the working masses to the fore of the women's movement. □

# What will ANC-DeKlerk talks bring S. Africa?

In February, South African President F.W. de Klerk announced a series of changes in the political life of that country. There has been a lot of hype in the U.S. media about these reforms. There has been a rush to declare that a new day has already dawned for the long-oppressed black people.

The media wants to portray things as if everything the black people have fought for is close at hand. But this is simply not so. Of course, it is undeniable that a new political situation has been created, but what does it all mean for the black people's fight for liberation?

## What Has Changed, And What Hasn't

So far, the changes that have been announced by the De Klerk regime only amount to a partial loosening of political repression over the anti-apartheid movement.

De Klerk has unbanned the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party (which is influential within the ANC), and the Pan Africanist Congress. He has also lifted restrictions on a series of other anti-apartheid organizations and on many individual political activists. Executions of activists on death row have been suspended.

But this does not mean that the

people have won the right to fully express themselves without fear of suppression. At least 1,000 political prisoners are still in jail under the pretext of being "terrorists." Many opponents of apartheid in exile face the risk of arrest if they return home. Most of the restrictions of the state of emergency remain, as does much of the heavy military and police presence in the townships. And this isn't a benign presence: while some demonstrations can be organized legally, police still set upon and beat and shoot other protesters.

Meanwhile, the system of racial discrimination very much remains in place. The Group Areas Act, the legal basis of segregation in the society, remains the law of the land. Political rights for the blacks remain unattained. And the superexploitation continues to weigh down on the workers and poor. They have the worst jobs, the greatest unemployment, and worst conditions of housing, schooling, medical care, etc.

The lessening of repression provides an important crack and could well prove advantageous for activists to spread mass struggle and organization. But in order to develop that struggle, it is necessary to keep targeting the De Klerk regime as the people's enemy. There must be no confidence in this regime.

## Anything That's Been Gained Is A Result of the Mass Struggle

But there is another point of view that's being expressed. This is the opinion which praises De Klerk as part of the solution, as the door opener to a "new South Africa."

That's understandably how the regime wants to portray itself. And it's also no surprise that Bush and Thatcher feel the same way. After all, the imperialist governments are old friends of the racist regime.

But such praise also came in Nelson Mandela's speech after he was released. It was echoed by Bishop Tutu and others.

Such words are completely misplaced. Why should the South African masses be expected to thank De Klerk? He heads the same regime which kept Mandela in prison for over a quarter of a century. The same regime which imprisoned thousands of others for the "crime" of defending their rights. The same system which mas-

sacred people repeatedly in the streets. Which unleashed death squads against activists. Which ruled, and continues to rule, through a system of hideous discrimination and violence.

No, the changes announced by De Klerk are not the product of his goodwill. The leopard has not shed his spots. No, the reforms that are taking place are the outcome of the mass struggle. In the 1980's the black people mounted the most powerful challenge to racist rule in South African history. They braved whips and bullets and jails — in strikes, demonstrations and countless confrontations. So many children, men and women gave their lives in determined battle against extreme odds.

The racist rulers thought that repression would solve the problem. And what did they not do to crush the people? But the spirit of the masses to fight for freedom remained unquenched. Even under the forced "peace" of recent years, South Africa remained a tinderbox. Waiting to explode again.

Meanwhile, the South African econo-

my had gone into a tailspin. This crisis was aggravated by the popular upsurge. As well, worldwide solidarity with the black people had forced many capitalist governments to impose certain economic sanctions on South Africa. These were fairly mild, and in most cases, riddled with loopholes; but it appears that in the conditions of the economic malaise of the last decade, even such mild economic restrictions squeezed the South African capitalist regime further.

The threat of renewed revolutionary struggle and a problem-ridden economy are what finally forced the white ruling class to come around to the idea of seeking a reformist way out. This is why De Klerk declared recently, "Everything we do is to avoid revolution."

## Behind the Rhetoric, ANC Leaders Ready to Cut A Deal

The apartheid regime knew that a  
Continued on page 9  
See TALKS

## Detroit marchers salute struggle in South Africa



On February 14, over 2,500 people marched in Detroit to celebrate the release of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. The marchers, including a lot of black high school and college students, raised fists, danced as they do in South African demonstrations, and yelled slogans. Passers-by on the street hailed the demonstrators and honked horns in support.

MLP activists participated in the march, supporting the path of revolution in South Africa. Many demonstrators liked the Party's banner and took up its slogan: "Death to apartheid!"

In contrast to the marchers' militant spirit stood the hypocrisy of the local politicians who spoke at the closing rally. There the demonstrators were addressed by Mayor Coleman Young, Congressman George Crockett and John Conyers, and the Detroit City Council. All of these members of the Detroit establishment posed as anti-apartheid freedom fighters, saying: "keep up the pressure on the South African government." But what is their real attitude towards the revolution in South Africa?

Take Coleman Young, for example. No amount of his shouting, "Amandla!" can erase a filthy record when it comes to dealing with U.S. companies doing business in South Africa.

Young is known for insisting, despite loud protests, on contracting with Combustion Engineering (CE) to build the toxic waste burner in Detroit.

Besides the fact that the incinerator will poison the people of Detroit, CE is a company with extensive ties to South Africa, operating three subsidiaries there and building power complexes directly for the white racist government. Where was Young's anti-apartheid rhetoric when he made this deal?

● And where was Young's support for the South African masses in 1984, when he tried to contract with John McGoff, a known agent of the white minority government, to set up his floating restaurant on the Detroit River, the *Star of Detroit*?

● Worse still, it was Young's administration which, in April 1983, sent a representative of the Detroit police department to South Africa to visit police installations there. How nice for the Detroit and the apartheid cops to be able to confer with each other on their common cause — how to keep down the oppressed black masses! Young's cop was full of praise for the racist apartheid police, saying they were "better trained and better disciplined" than many in the U.S.

The Youngs and other politicians of the black bourgeoisie do not support a revolution against apartheid in South Africa. Congressman Crockett openly stated this at the rally when he said "we" are not for the violent overthrow of the apartheid government, but for a peaceful transition.

The speakers at Detroit's "Mandela Day" rally gave a confusing jumble of militant-sounding rhetoric combined with craven reformist views. But the crowd expressed its own sentiments by giving the loudest applause to the most revolutionary-sounding phrases. Anything to do with the armed struggle or continuing the struggle until victory got a standing ovation. Numbers of young black marchers were commenting afterwards that just because the racist government let out a few prisoners doesn't mean apartheid has changed — the anti-apartheid struggle must press on to freedom for all South African blacks.

Meanwhile, it was not all cheers and applause for Mayor Young. When he came forward, despite cheers from his loyalists, he was also greeted with a large number of boos. Not everyone was willing to be dazzled by his rhetoric. After all, Young has a long record of helping out the rich, enjoying a fat salary and privileges, supporting other corrupt officials — all the while as the black poor of Detroit get ravaged by unemployment and blight. □



The limits of change in South Africa: South African police manhandle anti-racist protester.

## Apartheid totters

Continued from front page

apartheid racism meant hideous poverty and superexploitation at the hands of white capitalist exploiters.

The situation in South Africa is very much in flux today. The most influential forces within the white establishment, supported by world imperialism, have come around to the idea of making a deal. The ANC too, backed up by the Soviet Union, is ready to work towards a deal with De Klerk. But the terms of this deal will still be determined by the struggle of various political forces in the streets of South Africa. It could be affected or even thwarted, by the racist backlash that white fascists are attempting to build. And it will certainly reflect the level of struggle mounted by the black masses in the months and years to come.

It is not peace and harmony which are around the corner, but a new period of struggle, within a more complex political environment. The black people are poised to make some new gains, but how much they gain will depend on their ability to build their mass struggle.

No matter what De Klerk may have hoped for, the cracks opened up in

apartheid have given rise to huge new expectations among the black masses. No matter what the ANC leaders may counsel, these expectations may not prove all that easy to contain. Conditions could develop for a mushrooming of the popular upsurge. But that will depend on the ability of activists in the thick of the masses to go beyond the advice of moderation being advocated by Mandela and the ANC leaders.

To make their own impact on the events of today and tomorrow, the workers and poor of South Africa urgently need their independent movement. They cannot trust their fate to the deals at the top between the aspiring black elite and the white ruling class. Because in this deal, it is the toilers' interests above all which will be sacrificed.

In recent years, South African workers have shown great militant capacity. They have also shown that they will not passively sit by without expressing their own demands. Still, the workers' consciousness of having interests separate from the aspiring black elite is weak. They are not yet organized as an independent revolutionary trend. It is this weakness that must be tackled head on as the task of the day. □



# Marchers denounce 'traditional values' bigots

On February 19th, 300 people denounced the "Traditional Values Coalition" (TVC) at one of its monthly meetings in the Walnut Creek City Council chambers in the San Francisco Bay Area. The protesters marched from the Walnut Creek BART (rapid transit) station to the council chambers. Although the TVC had nervously abandoned the chambers to avoid being denounced, the protesters held a spirited rally.

The demonstration was called for by a coalition of a number of groups. The Marxist-Leninist Party distributed well over a thousand leaflets, calling for participation, at work places and a clinic defense action two days previously. This was apparently the main leaflet on the demonstration with any substantial circulation. Below is the lead article from this leaflet.

The so-called "Traditional Values" Coalition is at it again. TVC is a crew of right-wing fanatics that helped repeal an AIDS anti-discrimination ordinance in Concord last year and elected their local honcho, Lloyd Mashore, to the city council. Now they're bragging about going on a national "crusade."

What kind of "crusade" are they talking about? What are these "values" promoted by the TVC? Their Concord campaign gives us some answers. To oppose the ordinance TVC spread ignorance and lies about AIDS, how it is contracted, and who gets it. These fanatics used the fact that many people

with AIDS are gay, in order to spread hysteria and scapegoat gays. Emboldened by its puny success at the ballot box, TVC intends to use it as a stepping-stone for overturning such measures everywhere and for the further spread of their rabid prejudice.

But there's more to TVC than anti-gay hysteria. This is just the tip of the iceberg. These fanatics try to hook people into their bigotry against gays and lesbians as a means of recruiting to wider "conservative" politics that are not only anti-gay but also pro-war, anti-women, racist and anti-worker.

For example TVC is foremost among the crusaders against abortion rights and sex education in California. And last year they campaigned in favor of ignorance when they lobbied the state education board on school textbooks to prevent evolution from being taught as the origin of the human species. The board eventually caved in to TVC pressure to present evolution as a "theory," but not a fact.

In addition, TVC is among the most fanatical supporters of the whole anti-working class agenda of the Bush administration — supporting everything from cutbacks in social services to the racist "war on drugs" which targets the poor and minorities for repression. TVC leaders boast of their political ties to Bush and the conservative politicians in Congress. And it's no surprise that TVC has the big money of the ruling class behind it.

The TVC crusaders promote ignorance, fear and bigotry to cover up who is really to blame for the horrendous problems facing poor and working people in this society. Instead of placing the blame where it belongs — on the rich and the capitalist politicians — TVC uses the method historically employed by all fascists. They push the blame off on sections of the working people. In this way they hope to save the rich by diverting the resistance and anger of the workers and poor into a right-wing movement.

Working and poor people have their own response to the decaying conditions of capitalist society — to build up militant mass actions against every attack of the rich and the government.

The workers and poor have an interest in organizing a struggle to solve the

problem of AIDS. Science, knowledge, and the anger of the masses against the obstruction of the capitalist authorities and the profiteering of the drug companies is needed. Struggle against the rotten social conditions fostered by Reaganite capitalism, against the growth of poverty and the cutbacks in health care and other social programs, is needed too. For such conditions and cutbacks help foster disease.

Part of this fight must be building opposition to reactionaries like the TVC and smashing their attempts to organize bigotry. A demonstration is being organized in Walnut Creek to protest a meeting of TVC. Spread the word in the community. Come out to protest the TVC. Fight bigotry and build the struggle against the offensive of the rich! □

## Bush's Panama invasion: Replacing drug runners with drug bankers

The U.S. invasion of Panama murdered some thousands of people, injured many more, and left some 35,000 to 50,000 homeless. And what for? Well, according to Bush it was to get rid of a dirty drug-runner, Noreiga. Now forget the fact that the U.S. has no right to take over other countries, who has Bush installed to run Panama? The bankers for the drug-runners.

A recent review of Panamanian banking records and court documents shows that most of the senior officials of Bush's Panamanian government are heads of banks that have been indicted or shut down for money laundering. The new president, Guillermo Endara, has for years been a director of Banco Inter-oceanico. It is used extensively by Colombia's Medellin drug traffickers. The second vice president and chairman of the banking commission, Guillermo (Billy) Ford, is a part owner of the Dadeland Bank of Florida. It was named in a court case two years ago as a central financial institution for one of the biggest Medellin launderers, Gonzalo Mora. The new Attorney General,

Rogelio Cruz, has been director of the First Interamericas Bank, owned by Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela, one of the bosses of the Cali drug gang in Columbia. And the list goes on. (See *New York Times*, February 6.)

Did the U.S. government know this? Of course it did. For example, Federal prosecutors dropped charges of drug smuggling and money laundering against Carlos Eleta Alamaran February 12. Why? Because he was a close friend of new President Endara who the CIA had been using for at least a year prior to the invasion to funnel money to the "opposition." The CIA was thick with the drug runners to oppose Noreiga, just as it had previously used Noreiga himself to oppose Nicaragua.

So why was Noreiga overthrown? Although a vicious capitalist exploiter just like Bush, he didn't dance to every single tune the U.S. played. The "war on drugs" is just a pretext used by U.S. imperialism to attack anyone that won't follow its every whim. Down with the fraudulent "war on drugs." U.S. imperialism, get out of Panama! □



## TALKS

Continued from page 8

revolutionary upsurge not only would continue to bog it down, but if it succeeded it could spell the utter end of the whole system of white privilege. The big businessmen knew that a revolution in which the workers are a strong force might end up dispossessing the white capitalist bloodsuckers.

Fear of such an outcome is what led them to search for a deal with the ANC. For most of its history, the ANC was a self-admittedly reformist organization. However, since the early 1960's, when the regime stopped allowing it any legal room to operate, the ANC leaders have made many a revolutionary-sounding declaration — but at heart they have remained a reformist force. They have seen the mass struggle not as part of building a revolution over apartheid, but as pressure towards reaching a reformist, half-way deal.

De Klerk's reforms are designed to open the way to a deal with the ANC leadership. Mandela was released only because the regime has become convinced that the time is ripe for such a deal.

In turn, Mandela and the ANC leaders are trumpeting the view that the reformist road will bring victory for the people real soon. Oh, yes, there is still

militant-sounding rhetoric, but all that is talk. The ANC leaders have already admitted: everything can be subject to negotiation.

### What Type of Deal Is in the Making?

The exact deal that will come out of the De Klerk-ANC talks cannot be predicted. Because it will not just be the outcome of these talks, but also reflect what goes on in the streets.

There is a possibility that the ultra-racists could force De Klerk to scuttle the whole thing altogether. In any case, the ultra-racists will organize to prevent too many concessions, and De Klerk will use that as a pretext to argue for the slowest and most miserly approach. Meanwhile, the struggle of the black masses will also influence the course of events. The ANC leaders are counseling that the masses stay "disciplined." This isn't an appeal for organized struggle but to calmly trail behind whatever the ANC leaders say. And their view is that the masses should not press too hard but merely trust the negotiations at the top.

Still, there are enough hints from the regime and the ANC to suggest the outlines of the deal that is in the making.

At the very least, the rest of the discriminatory laws, which make up what

is known as "petty apartheid," will be done away with. Most of that has already been swept away. Even the Group Areas Act which dictates housing segregation may well go. But as the U.S. experience shows, the end of laws against segregation does not necessarily amount to ending segregation in fact. Affluent blacks may be allowed to live in certain white areas, but class differences between whites and blacks will maintain the bulk of the segregation in the society.

As well, the rest of the emergency restrictions may also go. But there are plenty of non-emergency laws which can be used to restrict and suppress activism among the oppressed. Just as they do here in the U.S. and other lands of bourgeois democracy.

The doing away with the segregation laws of apartheid, or the lifting of emergency repressive measures, would by themselves only mean a return to the situation in South Africa before the days of apartheid proper. It may be recalled that the system of apartheid as it has existed until now was only put in place in the late 1940's and early 50's. But the South Africa of those earlier times was no paradise for the masses either. White supremacy was still the order of the day.

At the same time, it is also clear that the deal being contemplated today

would not simply mean a return to the pre-apartheid era. Too much has happened economically and politically among the black masses for the ANC to simply agree to return to those earlier times. There will be arrangements worked out to provide some type of voting rights to the black people. There will be some structure set up to allow blacks access to the political system.

The demand of the anti-apartheid movement has been for one person, one vote, but the regime is not yet willing to grant this. It is willing to grant political rights to blacks only in a way that they say would prevent domination by the black majority. Mandela says that he is committed to one person, one vote, but he too says that a way must be found to prevent the white minority from feeling dominated.

What this in fact amounts to is that the black elite, especially the ANC leaders and kindred politicians, will be brought into the power structure, and eventually could even be given the reins of government, provided that arrangements are worked out so that whites retain their economic and social privileges. In other words, the black elite will be allowed entry into a share of power, so long as the exploitation of black labor by the wealthy white

Continued on page 11  
See TALKS



# The World in Struggle

## Sweden's social-democrats upset by workers' strikes

Strikes, and the threat of further strikes, brought down the social-democratic government in Sweden in mid-February.

The work stoppages began in late January, when 1,500 banking employees went out demanding a 21% pay increase. Sweden's banks then locked out the remaining 50,000 employees, plunging the country into financial crisis. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of public sector workers were scheduled to go on strike within a few weeks.

The Swedish public sector workers have been demanding nearly 15% wage increases in order to defend themselves against rapidly rising prices. In recent months, the working people of Sweden have become angry with price hikes on such necessities as transport, food and fuel. And there is more of the same predicted; inflation is forecast at 8-9% for the next two years.

The Swedish government is run by the Socialist Workers Party, which has dominated Swedish politics for many decades. They have governed on behalf of the Swedish capitalist class and are no friend of the workers. They met the latest strikes and workers' demands by proposing a two-year wage freeze plan, including an outright ban on strikes. Under this proposal, workers would face fines of 5,000 krona (\$821) a month if they defied the wage freeze. The social-democrats attempted to placate the people by saying that in exchange for the wage and strike freeze, the capitalists would be forced to accept a freeze on prices too.

The other bourgeois parties agreed with the strike ban plan, but the workers angrily denounced it. Faced with this

protest, the government was forced to withdraw the plan. Soon afterwards, the social-democrats lost a parliamentary vote of confidence and were forced to resign.

The crisis in Sweden comes at a time when social-democracy, and especially the "Swedish model," is being touted as the way forward for Eastern Europe by the revisionist, formerly self-proclaimed "communist," rulers. Revisionist parties in Hungary, East Germany and Poland have recently officially renamed themselves social-democratic parties and they plan to hook up with the international grouping of social democracy, the Socialist International.

Sweden, they say, is the model of a country where the economy is run along market (i.e. capitalist) lines, but the social interests of the working masses are protected too. Sweden, they say, shows what good things can happen through the cooperation of capital and labor.

But the revisionists ignore that economic crisis exists in Sweden too. Sweden may have had a wider system of social benefits than many other developed-capitalist countries, but it is a capitalist society nevertheless. And here too, as elsewhere in the capitalist world, welfare measures are being eroded, and the living standards of the working class are under assault. The class struggle is far from extinguished. Here too capital is the enemy of labor.

Social-democracy promised that the workers would advance forward through cooperation with the exploiters. But even one of the best examples of the welfare state model is being undermined by the present-day capitalist crisis. The real liberation of the working

class will only come through workers' rule and the elimination of capitalism,

not tinkering with it. □

## Mexican Ford workers force company to back off

A bitter five-week long strike by workers at the Ford auto plant in Cuautitlan, Mexico is over. An account in the *Financial Times* suggests that the settlement is mostly to the workers' satisfaction.

As reported in last month's *Workers' Advocate*, workers occupied the plant for three weeks in January until expelled by riot police. During the occupation they withstood a murderous attack by gun thugs organized by "their own" CTM union leader. (The CTM is the union confederation affiliated with the Mexican ruling party.) One worker was killed.

During February the workers continued their strike and staged a mass march in Mexico City. Ford fired all of them and refused to negotiate further.

In mid-month, Ford came to a settlement. The company agreed to workers'

demands to take the workers back without reprisals, to withdraw armed security thugs from the plant, and to guarantee the safety of the workers. Ford also agreed to the election of a new executive committee of the union. It appears that part of the reason prompting this agreement was Ford's desire to maintain the CTM as the official union — in the course of the struggle, workers had been more and more moving towards support of a different union.

At the same time, there is no word about what happened to the workers' demand for a Christmas bonus, the original issue which prompted the strike. Still, the workers' struggle showed that by standing firmly together and carrying out militant action, the workers were able to puncture Ford's arrogant firings and stonewalling. □

## Plantation workers strike in Malaysia

Malaysia — the southeast Asian land of huge rubber and palm oil plantations — was hit by a strike of plantation workers at the beginning of February. About 65,000 plantation workers in the state of Perak, who are organized in the National Union of Plantation Workers, stopped work.

They were fighting for the demand that they receive a monthly rather than a daily wage. This is an issue the workers have been raising for the last 10 years. The plantation workers feel that a daily system of wages makes their incomes vulnerable to weather changes and fluctuating prices. The workers are

reported to make an average income of \$4.40 a day.

The Malaysian government immediately stepped in and ordered the conflict over to the Industrial Court. This made the strike illegal, and workers who continued to stay out could face arrest. The union leaders immediately caved in and urged the workers back to work. However, 3,000 workers rejected their union leaders' counsel and defied the government order.

There has been a report that the employers organization has agreed to the monthly wage, but no details are available. □

## Romanian workers worried about market reform

Romanian dictator Ceausescu fell in December. He was forced out because the masses poured into the streets in defiance, and the bulk of the army decided to abandon the old regime.

Still, it was not workers' committees or democratic councils of the people which took power, but the newly-declared National Salvation Front. The core of this front is dissidents from Ceausescu's revisionist "communist" party who had fallen out of favor in earlier years and the army chiefs. In the first days after the tyrant's fall, the new government passed a number of popular measures, and there was great euphoria in the air.

Since then, things have become more complex as various sections of the society and different political forces have gone into action. There have been mass protests in the streets, both for and against the new government.

In one of the more recent of these protests, about 3,000 people demonstrated on February 18 in downtown Bucharest against the National Salvation Front. Several hundred of them broke into the government office building, vandalized offices, and threatened Front leaders.

In response, the next day about 6,000 coal miners from rural western Romania came to Bucharest by train and demonstrated their support for the Front. The miners met with President Ion Iliescu and pledged their support.

This isn't the first time that sections of workers have come out in support of

the new regime. The Western media says that it's simply Ceausescu-style dragging of the workers out to cheer the regime. But a number of facts suggests that there's more to it.

### Workers Oppose Market Reforms Sweeping Eastern Europe

The miners and industrial workers of Romania played a major role in the overthrow of Ceausescu. The workers were sick of the dictator's nepotism and tyranny, and could no longer live with his harsh austerity measures. But the workers' rebellion against Ceausescu was fairly spontaneous. No revolutionary organization was built among them. At the same time, the workers were not brought into any pro-West, pro-capitalist organization either.

The National Salvation Front has been able to gather some support among the workers because of the measures it took to reverse Ceausescu's hated policies. The Front released stored foodstuffs, work uniforms and equipment that was being hoarded by the Ceausescu regime. Of most benefit to industrial workers, the Front cut the work week from six days to five, and reduced the number of hours in the working day. The Front has so far resisted demands for market reforms and declared itself against layoffs of industrial workers.

Meanwhile, the workers are suspicious of some of the newly emerging po-

litical forces of the opposition, because they smell their openly anti-worker character.

Since the overthrow of Ceausescu, Romania has seen an explosion of new political parties. But the largest of these are simply old-time reactionary parties which helped suppress the workers in the 1920's and 30's. The Peasants Party, for instance, promoted in the Western media as a "populist" party, is a revival of the old party of the rural landlords. Its leaders demand that Romania return to the good old days of a "Christian monarchy." And the other major new party is a revival of an old reactionary bourgeois party. These parties dominated Romania in the years when the government evolved into a fascist dictatorship allied with Hitler during World War II.

These are the parties receiving money from abroad and being promoted as "the opposition" to the Front. These parties are enthusiastic about the market reforms sweeping other Eastern European countries; they would like to see wage cuts, unemployment, and subsidy cuts imposed on Romanian workers as they are now being imposed on workers in Poland, East Germany, Hungary, etc. And these parties try to paint any opposition to market reform as support for the old Ceausescu-style revisionist tyranny.

It is an important development that the workers refuse to support these types of forces. But it is a mistake for

the workers to fall behind the present regime.

The National Salvation Front is no friend of the workers either. It is based on preserving much of the old bureaucracy which brought disaster to the Romanian people. It does not believe that the masses should be the base of the new power. It is already trying to restrict and altogether ban the right of people to demonstrate. And it is cynically using the workers against the opposition. The fact of the matter is that while the new regime may have made some declarations against layoffs, in general they are committed to moving towards a Western-style economy. The regime has a close relationship with Gorbachev who is a big champion of moving from bureaucratic state-capitalism towards a Western-style capitalist society.

Romanian workers cannot rely on the Salvation Front to save them from the mania for market reforms sweeping Eastern Europe. The workers need their own independent class organization to defend their interests in the complex situation unfolding in the country. They need a workers' socialist alternative to both the cruel, "free market" capitalism of the opposition as well as the warmed-over state-capitalism of the remnants of Ceausescu's regime. □

# 10 years of the MLP

## Continued from back page

its independent stand toward the debates in the world movement. It can be seen, at the beginning of the decade, in the MLP's critique of the West European controversy over how to conduct work in the anti-war movement, where we set forward Leninist united front tactics against the views of both sides of the debate. And it can be seen in the latter part of the decade in the Party's critical stand toward the grouping of parties around the *Theory and Practice* magazine.

This was a period of struggle against international opportunism. For example, there was a deepening analysis of Maoist revisionism. As well, the Party opposed the petty-bourgeois nationalism and liquidationism that increasingly emanated from the Party of Labor of Albania. And a good deal of attention was paid to the history of Soviet revisionism, including the denunciation of the treacherous views presented by the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International (CI) in 1935 and championed by Stalin and other

Soviet leaders. At the same time, the Party deepened its criticism of Trotskyism and the basically social-democratic views which Trotskyism hides with left phrases. At the end of the decade, the Party was deeply involved in studying the classical Marxist concept of socialism, and contrasting workers' socialism to the revisionist counterfeit of socialism. This anti-revisionist stand has allowed the Party to deal with the galloping crisis and collapse of Soviet revisionism which broke out in dramatic form in mid-1989.

Throughout all this, the MLP maintained its conviction that communists must work as part of a world movement, and must examine and learn from the experiences of other communists. It continued to render support to revolutionary struggles and communist movements around the world. This is one reason why this independent international work has resulted in the MLP being among those who are taking an active attitude to building up a world trend of workers' communism. The struggle against opportunism, and the more clear-eyed assessment of the

strengths and weaknesses of various forces, has not led to vulgar cynicism about everything and everyone. Instead there is enthusiasm to work with the communists of other lands to build up a truly communist international trend, a trend truly representing the class interests of the workers, to replace the trends that have collapsed into opportunism.

## Forward Into the 90's

The Marxist-Leninist Party calls on revolutionary workers and activists to join together with us to develop a mass communist trend in the United States.

One instability after another is developing in American capitalism. The Reagan "boom" of the 80's devastated the working masses while filling the coffers of the rich with a higher and higher proportion of the national wealth, and it has left one crisis after another waiting to break out. But these crises, and the renewed struggles they will inspire, will not spontaneously give rise to a revolutionary working class. The most conscious elements must join together to

serve the interests of mass revolutionary work in a united and dedicated fashion. The increasingly draconic laws and bourgeois preparations for repression show that this work will require determination. But reliance of the bourgeoisie on the three r's — racism, religion and repression — show that, underneath their victory chants, they fear the inner hollowness of their system.

The experience of the Party's work shows that Marxism-Leninism remains the correct description of the capitalist exploitation and the guide to fighting it. It shows that it is possible to apply Leninism right in the imperialist heartland. But no period of work exactly duplicates the past. The 90's will be a period where new circumstances concerning the struggle will come into being. Already the collapse of revisionism is changing world alignments and intensifying the ideological offensive of capitalism. It is our task to rally the oppressed to the red flag of communism under these new conditions. □

## TALKS

### Continued from page 9

capitalists continues. And privileges for other whites will be used to keep them cemented to the side of the white bourgeoisie.

It is this issue on which the racist regime will haggle to the utmost and drag out any changes over a lengthy period of time. A lengthy period of transition is contemplated because, while the white rulers are willing to make a deal with an aspiring black elite, they want to test it in practice — to make sure that it really does defend the privileges of the white capitalists, to make certain that it can indeed control the black masses from erupting. If all goes well, the white rulers are willing to consider that eventually the black elite could even be handed over governmental power.

## GARMENT

### Continued from page 4

Trading Corporation's firing of four workers for filing a petition for union representation.

The workers at Domsey average about \$4 per hour with no premium for overtime, no medical benefits and no days off. Domsey workers are required to wear numbered tags while on the job. The company calls the employees by their numbers, not by their names. And if workers forget to bring their number tags to work, they are fined. On February 7, more than 200 workers held a noontime solidarity rally for the Domsey workers.

Meanwhile, garment workers also struck Proulx Stitch Inc. in downtown Los Angeles. The bosses fired a worker February 6 for wearing a pro-union identification card. When he and a dozen fellow workers started a walkout they were beaten by company security guards. Other workers have joined the strike. They are demanding higher pay (now just above minimum wage), medical insurance, and union representation. □

## CHILD LABOR

### Continued from page 4

of 18 live in families that suffer below the government-defined poverty line. And the rate is 43% for black children.

Child labor is an horrendous fact of life under capitalism. It will continue to worsen until the workers beat back the capitalist offensive. □

## Look What Happened in Neighboring Zimbabwe

This would be a variant of the "Zimbabwe solution." There the black leaders who led the movement against racist rule were eventually allowed to control the government, but the deal which allowed this was based on keeping the key sectors of the economy — the corporations and the wealthy farms — in the hands of their white owners. And for ten years now, the Zimbabwe leaders have practiced this policy. They have kept the workers and peasants down, but in the meantime they have enriched themselves and thrown some crumbs to the black middle class. The biggest advance ordinary blacks have made is that larger numbers than before have become educated — but there are too few jobs for them after they graduate.

The Zimbabwe solution is also similar to the conditions in many U.S. cities where the capitalists have conceded to black mayorships, like Detroit, Atlanta, etc. The big corporations owned by white capitalists continue to run the economy (or destroy it) while the

Coleman Youngs and Andrew Youngs and their hangers-on have become rich. The black workers and unemployed remain crushed and impoverished, but now they are kept from rebelling by black leaders at the head of City Hall and the Police Department.

Mind you, while the Zimbabwe solution is being considered as a possible eventuality by the South African ruling class, even this is seen as something which would come some years down the road. And the South African rulers do not want an exact replica of the Zimbabwe model, but a modified version of it. Unlike Zimbabwe, where the blacks did get full voting rights and the reins of the government, in South Africa the white rulers want some type of structure which allows the white minority a constitutional means to block a black-run government on key issues.

The struggle in the coming months and years will determine exactly what kind of changes end up being implemented. It cannot altogether be ruled

out that the mass movement could rise to the point of bypassing a half-way deal altogether and build up to a more revolutionary solution against racist rule. That would of course be the most favorable outcome for the masses of working people, because that could wrench the most gains favorable to the toilers.

But even if a reformist solution ends up being implemented, it will still mean a new situation for the class struggle. The level of democratic rights won by the masses will help in organizing the working class battle against the exploiters. And the passing over of the aspiring black elite from leader of the opposition to power sharing with the white establishment will intensify the class awakening of the black workers, it will hasten the consciousness of interests as a class distinct from the black bourgeoisie. And that is an essential condition for the workers to be able to organize their movement for socialist emancipation. □

## MARXISM

### Continued from page 5

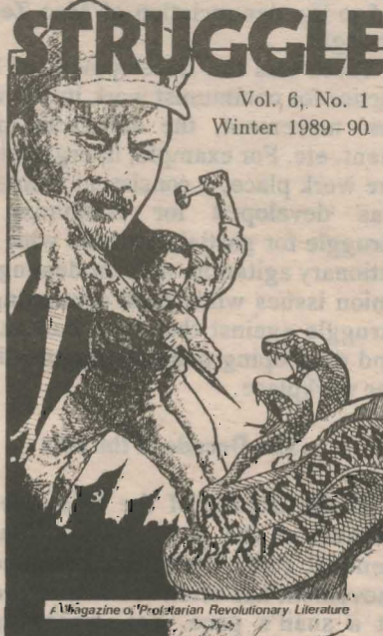
bourgeoisie whose interests are hurt by such a fight.

The bourgeois leaders in the women's movement, such as NOW, preach that the key to women's liberation lies with the capitalist establishment. Get a few well-off women in the corporate boardrooms and all will be well, they say. As for the tens of millions of working class women who will still face poverty, discrimination and domestic slavery — well, one can't be a corporate executive and worry much about the well-being of the poor. There are even bourgeois women, self-righteously convinced of how liberated and forward-looking they are, who oppose pregnancy leave laws and other measures that are desperately needed by the mass of women workers.

The struggle for women's rights requires that the vast masses of working women — and men — are mobilized for the cause. Women's liberation requires that the societies of exploitation of person by person be abolished. The Marxist-Leninist Party calls on all activists to join with us in shouldering the defense of women's rights, in striving to bring the mass of working class women and men into the struggle, and in undermining the capitalist societies of privilege and exploitation. □

## STRUGGLE

Vol. 6, No. 1  
Winter 1989-90



A Magazine of Proletarian Revolutionary Literature

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## Let the working class put its stamp on events

# 10 YEARS OF THE MLP

The opening of the 90's marked the tenth anniversary of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the USA, which was founded on January 1, 1980. To not just resist this or that outrage, but put its stamp on events; to not just protest, but to change the world, the working class must give rise to its own political party. The class conscious workers, and revolutionary activists that adopt the stand of the working class, must unite. There must be a center that can spread organization and orientation among the progressive masses.

A Party doesn't come into existence all at once. It takes time for the communist activists to learn how to work together, and to find the ways to rally the masses to action. It takes time to develop revolutionary theory and tactics.

As the Party enters its eleventh year, and *The Workers' Advocate* its twentieth year, it is a time to get an overview of this process. It is a time to look beyond the week-to-week struggles and see the panorama of what has been accomplished over the years. For the Marxist-Leninist Party has not just affected this or that struggle, but has itself developed in the course of revolutionary work.

Here we present a snapshot of this process — not a definitive statement, but a broad overview.

### 60's and Early 70's

The roots of the Marxist-Leninist Party go back to the mass upsurge of the 1960's. We had no direct connection with the old traditions of communist organization from the long ago days when the CPUSA was revolutionary. Instead we stem from the passionate protests and renewed struggles of the 60's — from the anti-war movement, the GI newspaper *FTA* (*Fuck the Army*, in mockery of the recruiting slogan "Fun, Travel, and Adventure"), the draft resistance movement, the anti-racist struggle, the women's movement, the ferment among the workers, etc.

Activists from these movements founded the American Communist Workers Movement (Marxist-Leninist) on May 12, 1969 in order to set upon the path of reconstituting a new Communist Party, which would once again be revolutionary. What were the features our Party has inherited from this period?

There was a tradition of militancy. Our comrades came from the section of activists that stood up to fight the bourgeoisie. We had experience of struggle, even to earn the right to sell communist newspapers on the street, and experience of jail. And from this period we maintained our orientation to regard politics from the point of view of developing the initiative of the masses, and not of fancy compromises and maneuvers with the powers-that-be.

The comrades of this period stood up against bourgeois and petty-bourgeois liberalism. They stood for building the revolutionary movement and steadfastly exposed liberal and reformist views and tactics as a roadblock to the struggle. They aimed not at nudging the liberal trend bit by bit to the left, but at separating the masses from liberalism.

They believed firmly in the revolutionary capacity of the working class. One of the main reasons for founding the ACWM(ML) was that they did not see other groups carrying out work of a revolutionary nature among the working class. The ACWM(ML) openly put forward its communist convictions before the masses. And it stood for the replacement of capitalism with socialism, tirelessly promoting workers' rule as the alternative to the hell of exploitation.

They were inspired by internationalism, the example of the revolutionary struggles of other countries. They not only supported the struggle against U.S. aggression upon Vietnam and other lands, but sought to learn

from the communists of other lands.

And they took up Marxism-Leninism, not as a cut-and-dried set of formulas but in order to apply it to the problems of the movement. They threw aside university-style Marxism and other-worldly Marxism and sought to develop Marxism concretely in relation to the tasks of revolutionary struggle.

### Rest of the 70's

The early years were tumultuous, with dramatic struggles and with severe setbacks. The setbacks led some to assume that the ACWM(ML)'s successor, the Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists (COUSML), had been torn apart as a serious force by '74 or so. But after a period of painful internal struggle and readjustment, the COUSML began a fruitful period of rebuilding and progress that lasted through the rest of the 70's. It led directly to the founding of the Marxist-Leninist Party on January 1, 1980.

The comrades learned how to develop a united organization, with its own organizational integrity. After the defeat of the last major attempts at factional activity, the COUSML learned a good deal about how to unite centralism and local initiative. It developed methods to answer problems of revolutionary tactics through the development of revolutionary experience, through related research into revolutionary principles, and through united effort. The experience of progress without factions showed the truth of Leninist principles of organization.

The COUSML stepped up its struggle against opportunism in the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. The comrades threw themselves into the struggle against a rising wave of social-chauvinism, which combined socialist words with support for American militarism. They denounced as betrayal the view of "striking the main blow at Soviet social-imperialism" instead of against our "own" bourgeoisie. They exposed the "three worlds theory," which replaced the revolutionary class struggle with prettification of the bourgeoisie, and they put forward the struggle against "three worldist" opportunism as the key to revitalizing the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. This was intimately connected with the fight against Chinese revisionism, and led to the denunciation of Mao Zedong Thought.

There was the development of basic tactics for communist work in the workers' movement, the anti-racist movement, etc. For example, in organizing at the work place, a consistent framework was developed for combining the struggle for partial demands with revolutionary agitation. And for dealing with union issues while both continuing the struggle against the labor bureaucracy and developing political organization at the workplace.

### The Decade of the 80's

In the decade of the 80's, the first decade of the work of the Marxist-Leninist Party itself, the revolutionary movement has often seemed to proceed at a snail's pace. Yet, reviewing the decade as a whole, the Party's development is dramatic.

The MLP succeeded in keeping contact with the masses in a period of ebb in the movement. Actually, we had already had experience dealing with this ebb in the latter 1970's. But during the 80's the ebb was far worse than the latter 70's, and the stagnation was protracted. We strengthened our ability to put forward revolutionary tactics in a form that is comprehensible to broader masses even in such a period, and we extensively developed this agitation in a way that dealt with the controversies of the movement of today. The MLP did



Torchlight march against apartheid in Berkeley, October 1988. The MLP was in the thick of the mass struggles that broke out during the decade, fighting for a militant orientation against the capitalist ruling class.

not shrink back into a narrow shell of its own, nor merge with social-democracy and liberalism in the name of approaching the masses.

This contact with the masses was crucial for maintaining the communist organization itself. A Leninist party is not an isolated sect or grouping, but it is based on its connection with the ferment and desire for change among the working and progressive masses.

The Party continued to sharpen the struggle against opportunism. The fashionable social-chauvinism of the latter 70's had given rise to liquidationism in the 80's, or merger with social-democratic and liberal trends. Organizations professing communism or revolution dissolved right and left, or sought solace among liberal academics, petty-bourgeois nationalists, AFL-CIO hacks, or various of the world revisionist trends. The Party began the decade with a fierce struggle against this liquidationism. This was a vital necessity for maintaining the party as an organized force, and as a revolutionary force. At a time when the opportunist organizations, no matter what radical-sounding words they used, ran to find a niche as a left fringe of the bourgeois politicians or the labor bureaucracies, the MLP continued to work for the political independence and revolutionary organization of the working class.

The Party continued as a united, organized force, and it improved the forms of inner-party democracy. For example, from 1979 on, the frequency of national conferences and internal bulletins dramatically increased. There were three Party congresses and five additional national conferences in this period (two in 1979), which covered much material and involved the Party as a whole in their preparation. Through discussions, conferences, Party-wide votes, national study programs, wide-scale participation in historical and

theoretical research, and other means, the Party membership as a whole — and many sympathizers as well — was directly involved in the many facets of coming to a decision on controversial issues. As always, the Party's basic principle was that a communist must be a conscious maker of history, with responsibility both for planning and carrying out revolutionary work.

Theoretical work moved forward on many problems of tactics and strategy, and of the history of the world communist movement. It proceeded slowly and painstakingly, constantly comparing conclusions to the experience of revolutionary work. But over a decade, many problems were tackled. There was the work on the united front, on the black national question, on the nature of the deviations of the Albanian trend, and the beginning of the work on Soviet history, for example. This has allowed the Party to orient itself to new problems and tasks. For example, the work on the united front has provided the MLP with a framework that allows us to approach united front issues that are different from those we have been accustomed to in the past.

There was continuing progress in the publications of the Party, based on the further development of tactics, on the theoretical work, and on the requirements for keeping contact with the masses.

This also proved to be a decade of independent international work. It opened with the attempt of the CP of Canada (ML) to isolate and destroy the MLP. And throughout the decade, among the opportunists and deviators, who didn't try to isolate the Party? Yet the MLP continued to seek ways to make contact with the world movement. And it did this by developing, not suppressing, its independent assessments of various forces and parties. This can be seen in

Continued on page 11



MLP activists on 'solidarity' boat march in support of Nicaraguan tollers in Leon, Nicaragua, July 1986. During the 80's, the MLP extended its ties with forces of workers' communism abroad.