

# A Socialist ACTION

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**WHO WE ARE:**

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## Greyhound strikebreaking tests U.S. labor movement

By Nat Weinstein

A major confrontation is shaping up between the American workers on one side and the bosses and their government on the other. The battleground is the Greyhound bus depots across the country. The immediate combatants are some 12,700 members of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) and the powerful Greyhound corporation. The issue is a brazen demand by the company for a cut in wages, retirement benefits, health and welfare coverage, and other working conditions initially totaling 20 to 25 percent across the board. (Greyhound representatives claim the reduction to be 9.5 percent.) Other concessions on working conditions are difficult to measure in dollars and cents.

Forced to strike on November 3, ATU locals around the country began voting on the latest Greyhound contract offer November 20. The company's new proposal would cut wages "only 7.8 percent." (This does not include drastic cuts in benefits.) The vote, completed November 29, rejected the company's offer by 9,522 to 325--a 96 percent majority.

Despite the union's willingness to accept binding arbitration on all issues in dispute, management responded with a flat no! When the union offered to continue working under the expired contract without any improvements, Greyhound again said no, this time informing the union that--like it or not--they were going to impose the reduced wages and benefits, thus forcing the drivers and other Greyhound employees to strike.

Scabs have been recruited to operate the buses, and the courts have issued injunctions against effective picketing. The cops are herding scabs through the picket lines, employing brutal force to break the strike, thereby dealing a major blow to all working people. Leaders of the labor movement across the country have protested the strikebreaking role of the police and courts.

### Old-Fashioned Strikebreaking Revived

Older workers on the lines have noted the similarity in the events of November 17 with the picket line battles of the 1930s. One could see hired goons (private cops) in close collaboration with the Greyhound scabs and San Francisco police. This unholy combination was clearly putting preconceived strikebreaking plans into operation. Socialist Action observers in San Francisco, Minneapolis, and Boston noted the elaboration of the company/police battle plan during the first major day of confrontation. One could see it being perfected in stages with each bus that attempted to run through the picket line--particularly in San Francisco. Enough force was scientifically brought into play at each stage

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Two thousand strike supporters shut down Greyhound in San Francisco Saturday, December 3. (See story page 10)

## U.S. invasion - Lessons of Grenada revolution

by Jeff Mackler

At 5:40 a.m. on Tuesday, October 25, 1983, 2,000 U.S. Marines and Army Rangers stormed their way onto the East Caribbean island-nation of Grenada, ostensibly to ensure the safety of a thousand U.S. citizens. With a population of 110,000 English-speaking Black workers and farmers, Grenada is one of the smallest nations on earth. Yet in the four-and-a-half years since the March 13, 1979, overthrow of the U.S.-supported dictatorship of Sir Matthew Eric Gairy, Grenada, led by the New Jewel Movement (NJM), has set a shining example in social progress--an example that has inspired oppressed people throughout the world.

U.S. Commander Major-General Jack Ferris reported that a total of 8,000 troops had been transported to the island to take part in the invasion. They were met by a politically demoralized Grenadian army of fewer than 1,200 and the remnants of a militia that had been denied arms as a result of the arrest and murder of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and the internal divisions within Grenada's government and leading party.

### Myth of Cuban Troops

Accompanying the invasion was a torrent of lies emanating from the Pentagon and the U.S. State Department. This led to the resignation on October 25 of White House Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs Les Janka,

evidently concerned that his reputation may have been damaged by the administration's handling of information during the invasion. Top among the lies was the charge that U.S. troops were encountering heavy resistance from a Cuban army of 1,000-1,500 troops. It is now clear that the U.S. government had full knowledge that there were little more than 700 Cuban construction workers on Grenada.

Up to and immediately following the invasion, the Cuban government believed that it was still possible for Cuban workers to avoid direct military combat with U.S. troops. Cuban workers, carrying only small arms issued to them by the Grenadians and having inadequate time to establish even minimal fortified positions at the Point Salines airport, were ordered to avoid all contact with U.S. soldiers unless fired upon directly.

Yet a little more than two hours after the invasion, U.S. Marines were ordered to attack the Cubans at their airport worksites. What followed was a brutal spectacle of imperial cowardice and an example of Cuban courage. At least 47 Cubans were killed and more than 600 taken prisoner. Major General H. Norman Schwarzkopf reported that 160 Grenadians were killed, 100 wounded, and 68 captured. Other sources place the number killed at 700.

Of the approximately 750 Cubans on the island, some 40 were military

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**Premiere Issue**

# Greyhound strike tests U.S. labor



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to allow the buses to easily break through the cordon of 200 to 300 pickets.

The following day, November 18, further steps taken in the union-busting plan could be observed. In San Francisco, postholes were being drilled into the ground of the bus depot lot early in the morning. Later that day high chain-link fences were installed to allow openings for buses to pass through while restricting the flow of the picketers on what had previously been an open public lot. The new arrangements make it easier for the cops and hired goons to maintain effective control over what they are treating as a battlefield.

The Greyhound corporation is out to smash the union if they can. To do this, they must succeed in rolling the buses through the picket lines, gradually restoring full service and increasing passenger loads. The specter of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization experience in 1981 hangs over the head of the ATU. The air traffic controllers' strike was broken and PATCO destroyed when the pickets were unable to stop either the planes or passengers from flying.

Greyhound will not be satisfied with merely compelling the ATU to accept big contractual cuts if they think a kill is possible. They will surely go all the way if they can toward eliminating the union entirely, as Reagan did to the controllers. But the Greyhound union is a tougher nut to crack than was PATCO. Its experience and ties to the labor movement are more extensive, and people who ride buses are potentially far more sympathetic to striking workers than are airline passengers.

Nevertheless, the PATCO defeat should serve as a serious warning. Capitalism is undergoing a major long-term crisis that has been developing for over a dozen years. They are compelled to squeeze workers for more concessions in a desperate attempt to counter a decline in the profit rate. If the bosses fail to do so, experts warn that an economic collapse on the order of 1929 is probable. This is what drives the take-back offensive. But the strategists for big business know that sooner or later there will be a powerful counterattack by labor. We can be sure their current tactics fit into a longer-term battle plan to bring the unions to heel.

## Unions Built by Stopping Scabs

The unions were built by defying court injunctions and stopping scabs at the gate. To fulfill the corporation's aim of breaking workers' resistance to the take-backs, the unions must be crushed the same way that they were built--in picket-line battle!

In the course of this union-busting, the illusion that concessions are won by union officials' clever bargaining is being dispelled. This illusion was created by years of improvements in living standards easily gained "at the bargaining table" since the time of the last big battles won by labor after World War II. There are three contributing factors to this illusion:

1. The momentum of picket-line wars in the 1930s and 1940s, which successfully shut down workplaces, paid off in easy gains for many years. Union bargaining power is backed by the convincing threat of another such defeat for the bosses.

2. The unprecedented three decades of prosperity since then permitted the U.S. capitalists to grant concessions in exchange for class peace.

3. A bargaining strategy was employed by the labor officialdom that traded off working conditions and union security clauses--peeling away the substance of union power--for modest wage increases. In his book *Labor's Giant Step*, a history of the CIO from the early 1930s to the late 1950s, Art Preis aptly described this as the "hockshop method of bargaining." Preis accurately predicted that it would lead to the erosion of union power.

## New Mood of Combativity

But despite the power of their adversaries and the flabby state of the unions, the Greyhound workers are surprising everyone by their combative spirit. It may signal the beginning of a new period of growing resistance by workers to the decade-long employer offensive against their living standard. The outcome of this struggle will affect the relationship of forces between workers and capitalists for some time ahead. A victory for the Greyhound workers in the current strike would pay off with more than a better contract. It would give working people a powerful push to fight back against the cutbacks and open up a process leading not only to the recovery of past losses, but even to winning new gains. A defeat, on the other hand, would have the opposite effect.

## The Strike Can Be Won

The strike can be won, but only if the power of the entire labor movement can be brought to bear on the side of the strikers. The fact is that all of the power at the disposal of the employing class is already available to the Greyhound management. In San Francisco, there was sufficient force put into action during the first day of confrontation to counter the 200-500 pickets. Now, with the trial run over and the battle plan of the bosses tested, refined, and put into action, a

larger mobilization of workers is even more necessary to resist the next attack.

Better organization has already been initiated by the ATU in Boston and San Francisco. This includes gaining the active help and support of the labor movement and its allies on the picket lines and through systematic contributions of money. (See story on "Greyhound Strikers' Support Committee.") This will, no doubt, include help and support by Black, Latino, women's rights, and lesbian/gay activists and their organizations. (The San Francisco ATU pickets appear to be composed of equal numbers of Black, Latino and white workers, and the striking office employees organized in ATU locals 1471 and 1571 are mainly women.) Solidarity and strike committees are already being put together in a number of cities including Boston, Cleveland, San Francisco, and Minneapolis.

## The Limits of the Bosses' Power

There should be no misunderstanding; there are limits to the power the employers can bring to bear. Every act of brutality, every overuse of force on their part can arouse widespread indignation and bring more forces into the

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## Vote set on new contract offer

A tentative agreement between Greyhound and the Amalgamated Transit Union was announced in Washington on Saturday, December 3. Few details have been released except that the settlement had the endorsement of the Amalgamated Council of Greyhound Local Unions, the group running the strike. Local leaders have reported from San Francisco, Boston, and other cities that the agreement is substantially the same as the one just turned down by a 96 percent majority.

Unlike the current proposal, the previous offer had not been recommended by the national strike leadership.

According to Lee Paschel, vice-president of Local 1225 in San Francisco, the tentative agreement calls for a 7.8 percent cut in pay and mileage allowance for drivers, a reduction in the number of paid holidays from 10 to 8, and a deferral of any cost-of-living pay increases until 1986. He said the union did get some concessions including a 6 percent increase in pension payments in two stages, the elimination of split shifts for terminal employees, and an agreement that the company would not hire part-time workers.

The proposal previously rejected by the membership had been voted on at regional meetings, where reports and discussion had preceded the secret ballot taken there. This time, it was reported, the voting will be conducted by mail. Most informed observers believe that because of the favorable leadership recommendation and the altered nature of the voting, the vote result will not be so lopsided as the previous one. The result of this poll is not expected to be known until December 20.

In many areas local leaders opposed to the tentative settlement report their intention to maintain maximum strike pressure at least until the vote results are known.

On Wednesday, December 7, a leaflet was issued by the San Francisco Bay Area Greyhound Strike Support Committee announcing, "The Strike Goes On!" The leaflet calls for a mass memorial picket line in memory of Raymond Philips, the ATU picket murdered on December 5 by a scab driving a Greyhound training bus in Zanesville, Ohio. This memorial was set for Saturday, December 10, at the Greyhound depot at 7th and Mission Streets in San Francisco. □



# 5,000 march in Boston

by Dave Walsh

Boston -- Rank-and-file ATU members have spontaneously organized a citywide support campaign with the full approval of the ATU leadership. Working out of a floor of offices donated by the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, the strike committee organized a labor solidarity rally for November 16.

Greyhound strikers, who a few days earlier had been confronting the giant corporation alone, greeted 500 supporters at the rally. Speakers included Arthur Osborne, Chairman of the Massachusetts State Labor Council; and a broad range of representatives from the Boston labor movement.

The rally called a mass picket line for the following day. With banners flying and picket signs held high, 500 supporters joined the pickets and attempted to discourage the scabs from driving the buses out of the terminal.

The picket line was faced with the full power of the Greyhound Corporation, which had hired scab drivers and had the Boston police department at its disposal. Fearful that this "special cop force" would not be enough to stop the strikers, the mayor of Boston, a Democrat, had supplied increased city police to lend the company goons a hand and protect the scabs. At the Greyhound garage, strikers reported that the company had imported a notorious private police force, PRIDE USA, to protect scabs. Wearing flak jackets and carrying long batons, they ape regular police tactical squads. Instead of ordering Greyhound to back down in the interest of public safety, the city

police smashed any resistance to the buses coming through. Strikers reported that the cops' use of force was so unrestrained (mounted police and motorcycle cops had ridden directly into the crowd) that pickets resorted to the tactic of sitting down in front of the moving buses. The Boston police moved in with full force, arresting 51 pickets, including the entire Executive Board of the Carmen's Union--and 14 more carmen were arrested the next day. All demanded a jury trial. On November 24 another sit-in took place at the Greyhound terminal. Forty more carmen were arrested including Black community leader Reverend Hagler and Dominic Bozzotto, President of Local 26, Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union. They, too, demanded a jury trial.

Workers of Boston, aroused by the police and the company goon-squad violence, held a citywide rally on November 25 in support of the strike. The rally drew 5,000 people.

Support for the Boston strikers is growing. It is reaching beyond the unions into the community and the campuses, where eight strike-support committees have been formed. At Boston University over 60 students turned out to hear a striking Greyhound worker.

Not a day passes on the picket line without the word PATCO (Professional Airlines Traffic Controllers Association) being heard. Two years ago the government set out to show the bosses that it intended to break unions. The resulting PATCO defeat has become a symbol of union busting. Boston workers have shown they will not stand by while the bosses try to smash the ATU. □

## Scab kills union picket

by Jeff Mackler

Dec. 5 -- Ignoring the flashing red traffic light outside the Zanesville, Ohio Holiday Inn parking lot, scab driver-trainee Lewis Harris drove his Greyhound bus over Ray Phillips, a picketing union driver.

As Phillips' legs were crushed beneath the wheels, the instructor accompanying Harris ordered the bus forward. In full view of about a hundred ATU members, the bus continued, its rear wheels crushing Phillips' skull, killing him instantly. Eyewitnesses said his brains were spread on the pavement. The bus, pausing momentarily, continued on its way.

Zanesville Times Recorder journalist Dan Liggett, the only media person witness to the murder, said pointblank that the scab bus did not stop.

No charges have been filed against either Harris or the scab instructor by Zanesville police who, since the beginning of the strike, have been escorting scab training buses through the area. The police did arrest one striker, charging him with throwing a rock.

Anticipating national repercussions, Greyhound suspended operations in Zanesville, the center of its national scab driver-training operation. Accord-

ing to Greyhound, all personnel have been withdrawn pending the outcome of the scheduled December 20 vote on the latest take-away contract proposal.

In conjunction with local police and assisted by national news media, Greyhound is orchestrating a major cover-up of the Phillips murder, centering on the lie that it was an accident provoked by union pickets.

Within hours of Phillips' murder, Amalgamated Transit Union activists issued a call for union drivers and trade unionists in the region to assemble in Zanesville for a December 6 memorial rally and march to the scene of the killing. Jerry Gordon, an organizer for the United Food and Commercial Workers in the region, said that a central rally theme would be, "The whole country is watching. Arrest the killer scabs."

Busloads of ATU members were set to arrive from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Charleston, Richmond, Indianapolis, and other Midwest and Eastern cities. Contingents from AFL-CIO and Teamster locals there are also expected. Five hundred Cleveland area ATU Greyhound strikers were set to leave for Zanesville on Tuesday morning, December 6. □

## Cops attack S.F. pickets

[The following account was given to Socialist Action by a MUNI bus driver (MUNI is the San Francisco public transit system) who participated in the first day of confrontation between striking Greyhound workers, both bus drivers and office workers, and Greyhound Lines, Inc., in San Francisco on November 17. The Greyhound bosses had made their first trial run moving scab-driven buses through picket lines in their union-busting campaign.]

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San Francisco -- When I arrived, the police were setting up metal barricades along the street to separate the strikers from the scab buses. "Is this East Berlin?" one striker shouted. The police started herding the strikers be-

hind the barricades. "It seems like Poland!" another striker responded. "South Africa!" said another. "No, man," a Black baggage clerk said, "This is America! We've got to learn that police are strikebreakers right here in America."

The roar of a bus could be heard. The police lined up in formation to protect it. "Scab! Traitor!" the strikers yelled. After the bus sped into Seventh Street, away from the pickets, the windshield was smashed. (Now the damaged coach would have to pull back into the yard several blocks away.) A police van came up, screeching to a halt. The cops picked a man from the crowd at random, and pushed him into the van. "Let him go!" the workers chanted.

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## Greyhound strike notes

by Sylvia Weinstein

No amount of Dial soap, the largest selling deodorant soap in this country (owned by the Greyhound Corporation), can cover up the stench of union-busting and scab-herding by Greyhound. When the company claims it's not making enough, what it means is it's not making as much as it would like. In its drive to squeeze more profits from their hides, Greyhound aims to starve the workers out.

Far from being poor, the Greyhound Corporation actually made a profit of \$19.6 million on their transportation company alone. Chairman John Teets, who handled breaking the Armour strike, manages to bring home over \$600,000 per year, and President Frank Nageotte made \$453,000 last year.

The AFL-CIO has called a national boycott, and solidarity rallies and picket lines are being held all around the country.

The New York City Labor Council ran spot radio announcements urging workers to join the picket lines and to come to a rally held on November 23. More than 3,000 showed up.

In Minneapolis, Ford workers joined the Greyhound picket line after working a 10-hour shift. They were joined by other workers--including unionists from the United Transportation Union, International Association of Machinists, Communications Workers of America, United Electrical Workers, and Brotherhood of Airline and Railway Clerks--about 500 in all.

In Philadelphia 800 ATU supporters stopped the buses. ATU workers were joined by members of the Teamsters, Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, and other unions. At Penn station in Newark, New Jersey, ATU pickets were joined by auto workers from Linden GM, Oil, Chemical and Atomic workers from Essex, as well as community supporters.

Postal workers in Dallas refused to deliver mail to Greyhound, saying they will not cross the picket line. Dallas strikers were joined on the line by Ron May, former leader of the Professional Airline Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO).

In Phoenix, copper miners, who have been on strike for months against Phelps-Dodge, joined forces with Greyhound strikers. In San Francisco (see accompanying article) a Strike Support Committee has been formed by labor officials and community people. They are calling for a mass rally on December 3 at San Francisco Civic Center. Painters Local 4 in San Francisco voted to give \$1,000 now and \$200 per month to the strike as long as it lasts. □

Now part of the picket line ran down toward Mission Street, where two empty scab buses were attempting to enter the terminal to pick up passengers. "The bus from Oakland," one striker joked. "Probably left Oakland three hours ago,

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# Crisis of leadership in PLO

by Ralph Schoerman

[Ralph Schoerman, a long-time Trotskyist, is the former Executive Director of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. He is presently Director of the Committee in Defense of the Palestine and Lebanese Peoples. He had been designated by the United Nations International Conference on the Question of Palestinian Political Prisoners to write a report on that subject. That document will be published in book form under the title *Prisoners of Israel*.

The political conclusions contained in the article printed below do not necessarily reflect the views of Socialist Action.]

The virtual civil war between Palestinian fighters loyal to Yasser Arafat and those supporting former Fatah deputy commander Abu Musa expresses nothing so much as the ongoing crisis of the nationalist leadership of the PLO. It has been a long time coming.

The precipitating event was the appointment of Haj Ismail as commander of PLO forces in the Beqaa Valley last May. Although a reliable supporter of Arafat, Haj Ismail was widely felt to have deserted his fighters when he left Sidon ahead of the approaching Israeli forces during the invasion of June 1982. His imperious style replete with



Phalange soldier threatens Palestinian woman in Lebanon.

Mercedes and high living, was a symbol to many officers and fighters of a profound malaise within the Palestinian revolutionary movement.

Abu Musa on the other hand was a heroic figure. He is a former Jordanian officer who joined the Palestinian resistance to King Hussein during the terrible weeks of Black September and who commanded Palestinian forces from Southern Lebanon to Beirut during successive Israeli invasions. He is known as an incorruptible and brave fighter, loyal to the Palestinian cause and, unlike such figures as Ahmad Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command, in no way a Syrian creation.

The demands declared by Abu Musa and the rebels were widely shared by the fighters and by the population in the camps. They included (1) democratization of decision making, with far more collective arrival at policy and its implementation; (2) a committee answerable to the rank and file to handle Fatah finances, which had heretofore been in the hands of Yasser Arafat; (3) a rigorous elimination of privilege among Fatah political and administrative leaders; (4) repudiation of all the varied diplomatic maneuvers emanating from Washington and such surrogate regimes as the Saudi and Moroccan governments; (5) return to the principles of the Fatah movement, notable among them a commitment to armed struggle and to resistance to Israeli occupation as the focus of the liberation movement.

The rebels stated that they did not wish to remove Yasser Arafat but to reform al Fatah, the largest group within the PLO, and to revitalize the movement. Above all, they called for a frank balance sheet after the catastrophe of the summer of 1982, culminating as it did in the massacres of Sabra and Shatila.

In doing so they rejected the claim by Yasser Arafat that the net outcome of the Israeli invasion was a Palestinian victory because of the heroic Palestinian defense of West Beirut against 125,000 Israeli troops, 500 tanks, a siege, and saturation bombing.

It was painfully evident, the rebels said, that the withdrawal from Beirut under deceitful American guarantees of protection resulted in the massacre in Sabra and Shatila, the dispersal of fighters throughout the Arab world where they were disarmed and placed in camps away from population centers.

It was shortly after these declarations by Abu Musa and the rebels that Yasser Arafat went to Beddawi camp near Tripoli. Trade union leaders of Beddawi informed him that the people in the camps would not welcome him because of what had happened at Sabra and Shatila and that the mood was one of great restiveness with the appearance of drift and disarray in the leadership.

Abu Musa also met with the Palestinian trade union leaders who went to the Beqaa and to Damascus to discuss the dissident demands. One trade unionist in particular had led major strikes in Beirut Port by Palestinian workers over the years. (The PLO leadership, out of deference to the Sunni bourgeoisie of Beirut, had urged the workers to call off the strikes and were categorically turned down by the workers.)

This man now urged Abu Musa to take his struggle to the people, to wage a political campaign in the camps, and to go into the councils of Fatah to call for a new program, a new strategy, and an honest accounting of where the movement had gone wrong and the necessity of new directions if new disasters were to be avoided.

"If you wage this political battle, you will sweep the camps, for our people are with you. You will carry the day in Fatah."

"But above all," warned my trade union friend, "do not attach yourself to that dog, Hafez al Assad. Do not let him harness your struggle to his ends. Do not resort to arms. If you are perceived as a Syrian instrument, you will not only lose all support in the camps, but you will, instead of advancing our cause, deal it a grave blow."

## Syrian Duplicity During the Civil War

The trade unionist knew whereof he spoke. At the culminating moment of the civil war in Lebanon in the autumn of 1975, Henry Kissinger brokered a strategic alliance between the Phalange, other right-wing Christian militia, and the Syrian regime of Hafez al Assad. An outright military deal was also made between Hafez al Assad and the Israeli government of Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. This reversed Syria's previous support of the left in Lebanon during the civil war of 1975-1976.

On January 22, 1976 Syrian controlled regular troops of the Palestine Liberation Army entered Beirut while Israel supplied the fascist militia with arms and advisers. As the *Washington Post* reported at the time, the Syrian-Israeli alliance meant that "Israel and Syria were now free to gang up on the Palestinian commandos."

1. Throughout 1976 Israeli and Syrian naval vessels patrolled the Lebanese coast to interdict Palestinian supplies.

2. Syria and Israel jointly supplied the heavy arms, tanks, small arms and ammunition during the Phalange siege of the Palestinian camp of Tal al Zataar, culminating in a massacre of the populace.

3. This Syrian help occurred when the right-wing militia were on the verge of defeat with but 72 hours of ammunition left. It was coordinated in a meeting that took place on U.S. orders with Israeli Minister of Defense Shimon Peres on an Israeli destroyer at Junieh harbor near East Beirut.

4. The Syrian team that negotiated the consolidation of right-wing Christian control under Syrian tutelage was composed of Foreign Minister Abdel Hakim Khaddam, Army Chief of Staff Hikmet Shahabi and Air Force Commander Naji Jamil.

5. When the Syrians and Israelis moved to crush the Palestinians and their allies in the Lebanese National Movement, Zuhair Mohsen, of the Syrian-controlled units of the Palestine Liberation Army, told the *Washington Post*, "Lebanon can only be saved by the U.S. Sixth Fleet or the Syrian Army. There can be no other solution."

6. PLO Saiqa commandos under Syrian control, broke the Palestinian siege of Zahle in the Beqaa valley, whereupon the Syrians invaded with two divisions to link up with the Phalange.

## Limitations of the Lebanese National Movement

It must also be noted that the "Left" in this civil war--although indisputably less reactionary than the fascist Christian militia--left much to be desired. Kamal Jumblatt, winner of the Lenin Peace Prize, was also a feudal lord, a huge capitalist and the titular head of the coalition of Moslems, Nasserists, and Pro-Soviet Lebanese Communist Party, which comprised the Lebanese National Movement.

Jumblatt had, moreover, the closest links with L. Dean Brown, former U.S. ambassador to Amman, head of the "Middle East Institute," a U.S. intelligence conduit, and the very man assigned by Kissinger to "control" Jumblatt by restricting the program of the Lebanese National Movement to one of "minimal political reforms."

Shortly after Israeli-Syrian intervention, Kamal Jumblatt was murdered a short distance from a Syrian checkpoint. The United States and Syria then joined to force the "left" Christian, Sleiman Franjeh, out of office to consummate the defeat of the Lebanese National Movement.

## Syria's Role During the Israeli Invasion of 1982

To the Palestinian masses in Lebanon, the Syrian regime is the kiss of death--a kiss widened to an embrace in the spring of 1982. For just preceding Ariel Sharon's visit to Alexander Haig in May was that of Rifaat al Assad, brother to the president and head of his security. Rifaat al Assad arrived in Washington in conjunction with Ariel Sharon. These consultations in Washington underline the fate of the PLO during the Israeli invasion--an invasion sanctioned by the U.S. rulers.

Within days of the Israeli blitzkrieg, Hafez al Assad, who now points the finger of betrayal at Yasser Arafat, agreed to a cease-fire freeing Israel to destroy Palestinian camps and Lebanese towns and villages at will.

Hafez al Assad has always viewed the struggles of the Palestinians and Lebanese peoples with the same jaundiced eye with which he has viewed those of his own oppressed population. They are either to be controlled or crushed. And control, where both the Palestinian and Lebanese are concerned, has meant their deployment as bargaining counters from which to exact concessions from U.S. imperialism and the Israeli juggernaut.

He demonstrated his skills as a policeman during the Lebanese civil war, just as he is engaged in the destruction of the PLO today--the better to show the Americans and Israelis that he is both necessary and worthy of reward.

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# Pittsburgh unemployed organize to prevent utilities cut-offs

by Dianne Feeley

Pittsburgh -- On the day before Thanksgiving, a delegation of about 30 members of the Mon Valley Unemployed Committee handed the Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission a petition bearing the signatures of more than 1,300 Pittsburgh-area residents. They demanded an end to utility shutoffs and institution of a reconnect policy, based on the individual family's ability to pay, for those whose service had already been terminated. Just a few hours before, an 84-year-old woman had been found dead from smoke inhalation on Pittsburgh's North Side. Because her electricity had been shut off, she had been burning candles, and a fire had blazed out of control. This was the area's second death within a month as a direct result of utility shutoffs.

## The Mon Valley Unemployed Committee

The MVUC is an outgrowth of collective activity on the part of steelworkers from a number of different locals who were faced with long-term layoffs in the mills around Pittsburgh. In May 1982 the group--having not yet adopted a name--organized a demonstration of over 2,500 in support of extended unemployment benefits.

The MVUC is open to both union and nonunionized workers, employed and unemployed. It is marked with the stamp of blue-collar industrial workers who are used to decent wages and to working under a union contract. But many have been forced to take low-paying jobs in the service sector, where unionization is weak. Others are back in school--after 20 or 30 years of work--in retraining programs for "displaced" workers.

One of the MVUC's most successful campaigns, resulted in a widely publicized moratorium on mortgage foreclosures for unemployed workers' homes in the county. A state bill providing state loans for up to three years to the unemployed and disabled who fall behind in their mortgage payments has passed the House with a two-to-one vote and is expected to pass the Senate by early December. This legislation was designed by the MVUC and a similar formation in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Unemployed Project.

This summer MVUC helped initiate a network of more than two dozen unemployed groups throughout the country. The coordinator of the National Unemployed Network has his office at the MVUC headquarters.

The MVUC has demonstrated an awareness of the links between the struggle of the unemployed and other social issues. It endorsed and helped organize the August 27 National March for Jobs, Peace and Justice, as well as the November 12 March Against U.S. Intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, raising the slogan "Jobs, not war!" Most recently, it has actively extended its support to the embattled Greyhound workers, noting that the assault on the living standards of unionized workers and Greyhound's union-busting attempts hurt all workers, including the unemployed.

## Speak-out Against Utility Shutoffs

Organized by the MVUC, a November 10 speak-out on utility problems, which was attended by representatives of the PUC and five utility companies, attracted over 100 people. One woman, Gail Milac, out of work for 17 months, came with a utility shutoff notice in hand. She outlined her family's attempt to pay their bills and still make sure that there was enough food in the house. The family was facing termination of their electricity because of a \$76 bill.

Evelyn Welling, a Neighborhood Legal Services lawyer specializing in utility problems, noted how difficult it has become to find a doctor willing to sign a medical certification form for those who would suffer medical complications

if their utilities were to be turned off. By harassing doctors and threatening them with the possibility that they will be forced into court to testify in person, utility companies have attempted to reduce the number of medical certifications that suspend termination notices for 30 days.

## The Problem

After a months-long battle, the MVUC was able to force the banks and loan companies to accept partial payment of the mortgage of an unemployed homeowner. And since the beginning of 1983, there has been a moratorium on foreclosures for unemployed homeowners in Allegheny County. But after winning this important fight, the committee found that people could not continue to live in their homes with their utilities shut off. For unemployed families, MVUC asserts that the right to utilities must be guaranteed.

Rob Toy, currently coordinator of MVUC, noted that at the beginning of last winter, almost 4,000 people were without gas. But the problem is even greater this winter. Officially, unemployment in Allegheny County stood at 14.1 percent in October.

Several Pittsburgh-area steel mills are operating, but with half the work force. Steelworkers with years of seniority will never be recalled. The so-called economic recovery may mean that profits are up, but this has little impact on areas such as Pittsburgh. According to an AFL-CIO study by the Committee on the Evolution of Work, as many as 6 million unemployed workers may become a permanent "labor-surplus underclass," and a number of experts put the figure even higher ("Recovery Irrelevant to Workers Left Behind," William Serrin, *New York Times*, 9/6/83).

A recent statement issued by the MVUC placed the utility fight within the context of the current economic crisis: "The problem of unemployed workers falling behind--and further behind--in their utility payments is growing. More and more the unemployed eligible for unemployment compensation have exhausted their benefits. And in this economic crisis the majority of the unemployed have received no such benefits. There is no federal or state or city jobs program that can put people back to work. The recent federal extension of unemployment benefits will reach only a few for a handful of weeks."

## Campaign for Utilities as a Right

The publicity generated by the November 10 speak-out resulted in an avalanche of phone calls to the MVUC office from people facing immediate shutoff or from families who had been living without heat or lights. Many had been living without utilities since the spring. Some had voluntarily asked that their utilities be turned off, choosing to use their limited income for mortgage payments or food.

A team in the MVUC office helped callers-in prevent shutoffs or helped work out negotiated settlements with various utility companies. Of those who phoned for help, many joined the MVUC Utilities Committee and circulated petitions to their friends and neighbors, asking the PUC to adopt a moratorium on utility shutoffs and establish a reconnect policy after payment of \$50 or 5 percent of the back bill, whichever was less.

Even more difficult than preventing utility shutoffs is reconnecting lines already terminated. Utilities usually require full payment of the back bill plus a security deposit equal to two months' usage. Even when most of that money can be obtained by applying for benefits under a variety of public and private programs, families find it difficult to have services restored without a sizable amount of up-front cash--far beyond the reach of a family

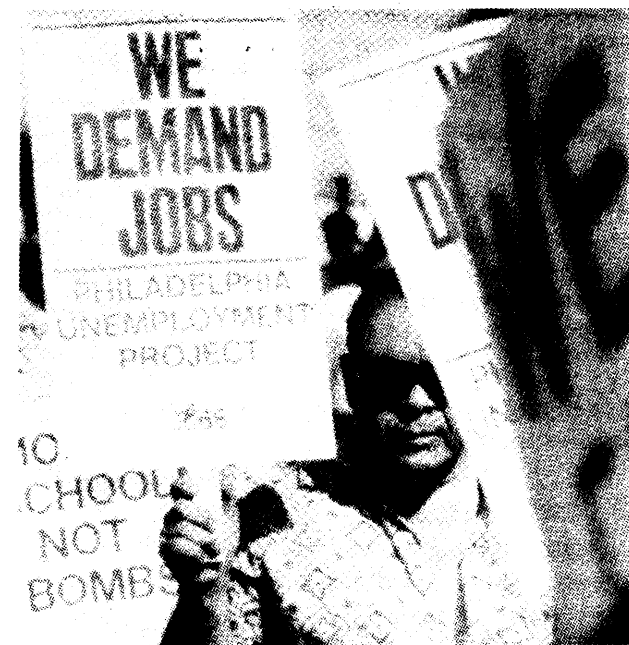
on a limited income. The committee believes that the promise of money from the various assistance programs should be enough to obtain immediate reconnection. That is, bureaucratic red tape or delay in sending out the aid that has been promised should not delay reconnection.

Outlining their demands in a letter to the PUC, the MVUC requested a meeting with the three commissioners. Committee members appeared on TV and spoke on radio to explain the urgency of their campaign.

When MVUC members crammed into the PUC office for the meeting--bringing banners, signs and petitions--they were disappointed by the agency's response. The commissioners were "not available," not even by phone hookup. In view of the two deaths the month before that could have been avoided by implementation of their demands, MVUC members did not have much use for a vague statement from a PUC representative that their demands "have been taken under consideration."

MVUC's Barney Oursler announced the committee's intention to continue to pressure the PUC for a ruling. One utility, Equitable Gas, has pledged that any customer facing financial difficulty who contacts the company will not face a shutoff during the winter months. Oursler welcomed their statement and promised to monitor their record. He called on Equitable Gas to pledge itself to a reconnect policy based on the MVUC proposal, and he encouraged the other utility companies to follow suit.

Such determination is a hallmark of the MVUC. In the past the committee has disrupted sheriff foreclosure sales by blocking the doorway and by packing the courtroom with unemployed workers, who chanted, "No jobs, no sales."



Unemployed demonstrate for jobs.

Members of the MVUC, along with representatives from other unemployed groups affiliated with the National Unemployed Network, were arrested last October in Washington, D.C., in a protest against Congress's refusal to pass unemployment legislation that would meet the needs of the unemployed. The 1,800-member committee has sponsored legislation, organized hearings, and taken direct action--whatever is necessary to demonstrate the determination of the unemployed workers to stand together and demand a decent life.

The committee is conscious of the power of united action and of its close ties to local unions--from which a large portion of its membership has been drawn. Like the unemployed movement of the 1930s, MVUC sees the need for a revitalized trade union movement that will forcefully take up the issues of the working class. By defending the most oppressed sectors of the working class--including the unemployed worker--the MVUC challenges the unions to defend the entire working class and reeducates the workers in the tradition of solidarity. □

# Why Socialist Action formed . . .

by the Editors

Every new political group is obligated to explain its origins and aims. This preview issue of our newspaper (we begin regular publication early next year) is to introduce ourselves to you, who we hope will become our regular readers. **Socialist Action** is a newspaper. It is also the name of a national organization founded at a conference in Chicago at the end of October 1983. It was initiated by a group of long-time socialists and activists in the antiwar, women's liberation, and union movements who had been expelled from the Socialist Workers Party in the course of the last two years.

We have taken this step because the SWP is in the process of abandoning the principles upon which it was founded. Denied the opportunity to reverse this course and forced outside the SWP, we in Socialist Action have no choice but to attempt, from the outside, to stop the degeneration of the SWP. We strive to be reintegrated into the SWP on the basis of the democratic rights traditionally guaranteed to party members. This includes our right to maintain our faction inside the SWP. In the meantime we continue to carry on the political and organizational work of the revolutionary party of socialist workers. The importance of the steps we are now taking can best be explained by placing them in the context of the historical development of the socialist movement in this country.

## The Main Currents of Socialism in the United States

The socialist movement arose in France in the 1790s. In the next hundred years, it became the political movement of the industrial working class throughout Europe and created most of the European trade unions and mass workers' parties. By the turn of the century, it spread to the United States, Britain, and into the underdeveloped parts of the world. (In this country, the main line of the socialist movement evolved through the Socialist Labor Party of Daniel DeLeon to the Socialist Party of Eugene V. Debs. Debs, who also was widely known as a revolutionary leader of the early American union movement, helped found the first industry-wide union embracing all crafts--the American Railway Union.)

For a century and a quarter the socialist movement was nothing more or less than the political organization of poor people against the rich, of the dispossessed against the privileged and powerful, of internationalists against every form of national chauvinism and racial hatred. Existing in countries where the political parties of the wealthy set a standard of corruption and brutality toward their "inferiors," it should not be surprising that the less experienced political organizations of poorly paid and poorly educated workers were themselves vulnerable to internal corruption of one kind or another. Most frequently they succumbed to control by entrenched bureaucratic leaderships that then imposed a conservative policy of acceptance of the status quo in one form or another.

It is true that there are many small and diverse socialist groups in the United States, but all of them trace their ancestry to three or four broad currents, the majority of which took shape in the period just before and after World War I, when external social pressures broke the workers' movement into rival tendencies.

The main world socialist organization at the turn of the century, the Social Democracy, had pledged itself to refuse to endorse the killing of workers in one country by workers in another for the benefit of the capitalist parties that controlled the governments of Europe. But in World War I the pressure of wartime patriotism became too much for the cautious and conservatized

social democratic leaderships, and each found its road to the military recruiter's office. From that point on, the socialist parties have been characterized by a policy of timid reform, national patriotism against workers of other countries, and a fear of spontaneous revolutionary movements of the oppressed that would anger liberal politicians they sought to work with.

In Europe this current is represented by the West German Social Democrats, the British Labour Party, and Francois Mitterand's Socialist Party in France. These parties are supported by large numbers of workers, but try to keep their policies in a framework of small-scale reform of the existing capitalist economic system. In the United States this current is represented by a right wing, the Social Democrats, USA and a left wing, the Democratic Socialists of America led by Michael Harrington.

It was in reaction to this nonrevolutionary form of socialism that Lenin, Trotsky, and the Russian Bolsheviks took the initiative in forming the international Communist movement after the 1917 revolution in Russia, the first place in the world where the workers succeeded in overthrowing the ruling rich and setting up a government based on workers' councils.

After an initial period of expansive popular democracy and worldwide support, the Russian Communist movement also fell prey to an internal degeneration. This took the form of a retreat from its democratic and internationalist perspectives into a concept of national isolation. Conditions of extreme poverty and civil war, exacerbated by invading armies from the United States, France, and Britain, left the country devastated. A strata of careerist bureaucrats displaced the original Communists and created the Stalin tyranny, which then spread into Eastern Europe at the end of World War II.



This bureaucratic Communist current, commanding the resources of an enormous nation, created a following for itself in countries throughout the world. It seemed to many workers, especially in Europe after the holocaust of Hitler and Mussolini, to represent at least a lesser evil to capitalism, if not a sort of "hardline" socialism that had discovered democracy to be too great a luxury in the era of capitalist world wars and fascist concentration camps. Of course, while a minority of workers were drawn to the Stalinists because of their power, much greater numbers drew away in revulsion at the privileges of the ruling strata and the thought-control repression of elementary democratic rights that was all too real in the Soviet bloc. In the United States the defenders of the Soviet bureaucracy have, since the 1920s, been gathered in the Communist Party, USA.

## The Continuity of Revolutionary and Democratic Socialism

The debacle of Russian Communism swamped the highly effective fusion of socialist democracy and revolutionary militancy pioneered by Lenin; but it did not erase it. A minority in the Russian CP, based in the trade-union centers of Moscow and Leningrad and led by Leon Trotsky, co-leader with Lenin of the 1917 revolt, fought a long rear-guard action against the rise of the

Stalinist bureaucracy. Trotsky, who had been the leader of the Soviet Red Army in the civil war, formed a political bloc with Lenin to fight the bureaucratic menace during Lenin's last year of life. After Lenin's death, the pro-democratic wing of the Communist Party was crushed in Russia, and in 1929 Trotsky was sent into exile.

In the 11 years before he was assassinated by an agent of Stalin, Trotsky succeeded in founding an international organization of socialist revolutionaries. They differed from the Social Democrats in their commitment to revolutionary means in the fight against a ruthless capitalist opponent; they differed from the Stalinists in their commitment to the defense of democracy as an essential component of socialism; and they sharply opposed both Social Democratic and Stalinist policies of class collaboration. That organization was called the Fourth International (to distinguish it from the Social Democratic Second International, which still exists, and the now defunct Third International, which was controlled by the Stalinists from the mid-1920s until its dissolution in 1943).

Though it is not a familiar name in the United States, the Fourth International, with which we are in political solidarity, today has sections or sympathizing groups in more than 40 countries. It went through an important growth in the late 1960s and in the 1970s, today numbering more than 10,000 members, and is a small but well-known force in French, Spanish, British, Swedish, Mexican, Brazilian, and Peruvian politics.

## China and Cuba

There are, of course, a number of new currents that have appeared on the American and international Left, mainly in the late 1960s. Most significant were the various groups inspired by the Chinese and Cuban revolutions. Both of these revolutions demonstrated the capacity of ordinary people to build powerful movements to free themselves from foreign domination. (The Chinese revolution had taken place in 1949, but it was not until the 1960s, after China's political break from Moscow, that a distinct pro-China current appeared as a tendency on the Left.)

On their home ground there was a fundamental difference between the Chinese and Cuban revolutions. The Chinese Communist Party of Mao Tse-tung for many years had close ties with the Stalin dictatorship in the Soviet Union. As a consequence, the Chinese upheaval was a mixture of great advances and severe limitations. It freed China from foreign domination, virtually eliminated unemployment and illiteracy, provided the best health care for a country at its level of development in Asia, and made impressive strides in industrializing China's backward economy.

At the same time, however, the new Communist government granted large salaries and other privileges to its top functionaries. To protect its elite status, the party outlawed dissent and imprisoned thousands of its critics, of the Left as well as of the Right. In world affairs, the Chinese government, particularly in the last 17 years, since the beginning of Mao's Cultural Revolution, has sought a modus vivendi with Washington and has given reactionary aid to many right-wing governments, including Pinochet's Chile, in hopes of ingratiating itself with the American ruling class. Supporters of the Chinese position in Europe and the United States have been quite diverse, including many serious revolutionaries who have made a contribution to many movements of social protest despite their retrograde positions on other questions.

The Cuban revolution was the first successful socialist revolution after the rise of Stalinism to free itself from the methods and social structure of the bureaucratized Soviet Union.



# ... Who we are, what we stand for

The team around Fidel Castro has for almost 25 years resisted the creation of a privileged elite, retained and broadened a more tolerant attitude toward dissent, although with important limitations on the creation of democratic institutions. Moreover, it has been a consistent and effective fighter against imperialist domination throughout the world. The Cubans have played a particularly exemplary role in working to unify the revolutionary forces in Central America and the Caribbean, and in their political defense of the pro-socialist Sandinista government in Nicaragua and the ongoing revolution in El Salvador.

Socialist Action is deeply committed to working with others in a campaign in the United States to stop the Reagan government's brutal counterrevolutionary war against Nicaragua and El Salvador and to stay its hand from its implicit threats to invade Cuba. Over and above that elementary duty for all defenders of national sovereignty, we seek common work and close relations with the revolutionaries of Cuba and Central America.

At the same time, our appraisal of some important world events is different from theirs. Most significant is our assessment of the character of the Soviet government and its allied regimes in Eastern Europe. This is posed most sharply over Poland, where we believe that Solidarnosc, the now-outlawed mass union organization of the Polish working class, is the legitimate representative of the Polish people while the Jaruzelski dictatorship is not. The Cuban Communist Party at this time offers critical support to the Polish Communist Party against Solidarnosc.

It is understandable that the able and heroic fighters of Cuba, living under continual threat of invasion and destruction by Washington and dependent on what aid the cautious functionaries in the Kremlin are willing to provide, have chosen to accept the existing Soviet leadership as an ally. Nevertheless we believe that some of the positions they have taken as a consequence of that alliance are seriously wrong. Moreover, we are not in their precarious situation, so it would be even more wrong for us to adopt these positions.

We have an obligation not only to the Cuban revolution, but also to the workers of Poland. We must strongly and forthrightly defend them from the repressions of the Kremlin puppet regime. This dual responsibility is one of the major issues that came into dispute within the SWP, where the present party leadership decided that its hope to establish friendly relations with revolutionists in Central America could best be served by moving as close as possible to sharing their current attitude toward the Soviet Union and the Polish government. We, as well as the great majority of the Fourth International, sharply disagreed.

## The History of the SWP

The movement that became the Socialist Workers Party was founded in 1928 by a small group of leaders of the Communist Party, led by James P. Cannon, who chose to follow Trotsky in the fight with the Stalin bureaucracy. After their expulsion, they too formed a public faction of the CP, becoming a separate political party only after the CP had irretrievably moved from revolutionary positions. In the 1930s the new organization led a number of important battles of the U.S. labor movement, most notably the teamster general strikes in Minneapolis in 1934. It participated in building the CIO unions in the late 1930s and in the post-World War II labor strike wave. Eighteen leaders of the SWP and of the Teamsters Union in Minneapolis were railroaded to jail for a year at the beginning of World War II for their militant unionism and their socialist objections to placing confidence in the



American ruling class's objectives in the war. Two of the four of those 18 who remained in the SWP were expelled in 1982, and one of them, Jake Cooper, is a member of the National Committee of Socialist Action.

In the 1950s the SWP, although reduced to a small isolated group by the anticommunist witch-hunt, put up an effective fight for civil liberties against the McCarthyite witch-hunters. Its best-known victory was a many-year national campaign by Jimmy Kutcher, a legless World War II veteran fired by the thought-controllers from his clerical job at the Veterans Administration for his socialist ideas. His campaign for reinstatement won the endorsement of unions numbering millions of members and was championed by such well-known civil libertarians as I. F. Stone. Kutcher succeeded in getting his job back and setting a precedent that saved the jobs of many others whose views the government disapproved of. This year Jimmy Kutcher fell victim to a purge in his own party.

In the 1960s the SWP was one of the first organizations on the Left to campaign for the construction of a mass, nonexclusive coalition to oppose the U.S. invasion of Vietnam. Its representatives became leaders of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, and of its youth affiliate, the Student Mobilization Committee. These committees were instrumental in calling demonstrations in Washington, San Francisco, and New York in which as many as a million North Americans participated at one time (November 1969). Many of us in Socialist Action took part in building those actions, which we are convinced helped to persuade the American people to oppose the war, isolated the Johnson and Nixon administrations, and saved the lives of many draftees and many of the heroic people of Vietnam.

## A Dispute Over Perspectives for U.S. Marxists

It is not our intention in future issues of Socialist Action to dwell on differences with the Socialist Workers Party. Nevertheless, an account of the political dispute as it concerns major issues on which all sections of the Left have taken and must take positions can only help to define our own trajectory as well as that of the SWP. Even after some years of rapid decline in membership, the SWP remains one of the four or five largest organizations of the U.S. Left, and its experience in seeking to build a party of committed revolutionists should have interest to everyone engaged in a similar enterprise.

Immediately following the August 1981 party convention--the last that will be held before next summer, a year overdue--a sharp dispute erupted in the SWP over three issues. These proved to have some relationship: our assessment of Trotsky's Marxism; our attitude toward capitalist and Stalinist governments in conflict with imperialism but simultaneously engaged in political repression within their own borders; and our willingness to participate in and build formations such as the women's, antinuclear, and antiwar movements, as well as the unions, of which a majority of the party's ranks were members.

Marx and Engels, the founders of the modern socialist and communist move-

ments, originally posed the idea of a socialist reorganization of society as a possibility only for relatively industrialized countries. They reasoned that without large-scale industry, national planning would be impossible. Further, small farmers, shopkeepers, and artisans would be against nationalization of their workplaces, while factory workers, who did not own the factories previously, would be in favor of nationalization as a means to take over control from private capitalists. Hence, without a majority of workers in the population there seemed to be no basis for any substantial government ownership on which the planned development of production for human needs could rest.

In the early years of the 20th century, large revolutionary movements arose in many under-developed countries. This posed for the first time the question of whether revolutions in primarily peasant nations could move relatively swiftly to socialist nationalizations and the beginnings of planned economies, or whether they would have to retain private ownership of industry with its consequent draining off of resources into the pockets of a wealthy minority.

It was the Russian Marxist movement that first began to discuss this question seriously, around the time of the 1905 Russian revolution. Leon Trotsky was the first of the Russian Marxists to propose the possibility of a revolution against the tsar that would set up an openly socialist government. This was the essence of his famous "theory of permanent revolution." "At that time virtually the entire Marxist movement doubted the possibility of such a course. Even Lenin, the greatest of the Russian Marxists, disagreed with Trotsky's idea. Later, in 1917, Lenin concluded independently that nothing short of a socialist government could solve Russia's problems. His thinking in effect converged with that of Trotsky's in the period leading up to the Bolshevik revolution in October 1917.

Afterward, during the rise of Stalin, the conservative bureaucracy sought to discredit its opponents on the Left by slandering Trotsky and working to discredit all of his ideas, including that of permanent revolution. Although this was really an attack on Lenin as well, it fit in with the general retreat by the Stalinists from any serious attempt to organize revolutionary movements. In place of the struggle for socialism, they called for broad antiimperialist or antifascist movements and governments that in practice proved loose enough to leave the power in the hands of the liberal capitalist parties. The usual consequence was the defeat of revolutionary mass mobilizations through their failure to take decisive action in a period of revolutionary crisis.

Immediately after the party convention in 1981, with no possibility for anyone who disagreed to reply, Jack Barnes, the SWP's central leader, announced that he no longer accepted the idea of fighting for a directly socialist revolution in underdeveloped countries. This led in the summer of 1983 to the publication of a special issue of the SWP's theoretical magazine, *New International*, in which Barnes insisted that "our movement must discard permanent revolution" (p. 13).

To reject one of the fundamental ideas of the organization in a public magazine, without ever having allowed a discussion of it, was a gross violation of the democratic rights of the party membership.

Politically, many party members were convinced that this break with the strategy of Lenin and Trotsky marked a serious adaptation to Stalinist ideology. Many of the same arguments used by Stalin in the 1920s against the Leninist Opposition in the Soviet Communist Party were used by the SWP leadership, in this magazine and in other articles, to attack the party's

*Continued on page 8*

# Why Socialist Action formed

Continued from page 7

own previous positions, which it had held for more than 50 years. In 1982 supporters of Trotskyist ideology and supporters of the Fourth International began to be expelled from the SWP on a variety of organizational pretexts.

## Poland and Iran

On December 13, 1981, martial law was declared in Poland and the Stalinist government began the decapitation of the 10-million member Solidarnosc union led by Lech Walesa. In 1968 at the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the SWP had participated in joint demonstrations and protest meetings with other groups on the Left. The same was true of all the organizations of the Fourth International. At that time the Trotskyists sought to exclude from such protests anticommunists or groups that did not have a record of forthright opposition to the crimes of capitalist governments, such as the U.S. war in Vietnam.

In 1981 it was clear the SWP did not want to be too prominent in support of the Polish workers--this might embarrass the party in its relationship with revolutionaries in Central America who did not agree with this policy. This time the SWP rejected demonstrations of any kind, refused to participate in virtually all meetings of the Left to support Solidarnosc, and held only a few pro forma meetings of its own.

The SWP's program since 1935 has been to designate the Soviet bureaucracy as something less than a new ruling class, but nevertheless unreformable. Its official position is for "political revolution," that is, to state that the restoration of workers' democracy is possible only through the removal of the bureaucrats by revolutionary means while preserving the social advances made possible through the property nationalizations. Shortly after the beginning of 1982, this concept also virtually disappeared from *The Militant*, the newspaper reflecting the SWP's viewpoint. In its place ambiguous formulas appeared that could be interpreted as calling merely for the reform of the Polish CP.

A similar course was followed in the SWP's coverage of Iran. After the bitter struggle between the Khomeini regime and Mujahedeen began in the fall of 1981, the SWP's press refused for many months to defend any victims of repression in Iran, whether they were Mujahedeen supporters who had fought the government or innocent bystanders. The SWP advanced a general argument that it served the aims of reaction to criticize, from within an imperialist country, governments under attack by imperialism. The consequence of this stance was self-censorship. Universally known facts about torture of every variety of dissenter in Iranian prisons, military assaults on the Kurdish national minority areas, use of private progovernment armed organizations to halt the land reform--none of this could be found in *The Militant*.

The consequence was that a newspaper that had once had the reputation of being among the most accurate and truthful on the Left was transformed into a propaganda organ that withheld basic information in order to create the desired impression. We could put this delicately, but in effect it meant that you could not tell what was going on in places like Iran, Poland, Afghanistan, North Korea, Vietnam, or Ethiopia from reading the manipulated accounts in the *Militant*. Many party members began to subscribe to other left-wing publications simply because they no longer believed what their own press told them.

We understand the problem of playing into the hands of the many reactionary propaganda campaigns orchestrated by the Reagan government and its agents in the press. We saw the anti-Iranian hysteria, the hue and cry over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the meetings where the unspeakable General Haig declared his "Solidarity with Solidarity." But we are also convinced,

as Trotsky used to say when pressured to make similar adaptations and not criticize the Stalin regime because the capitalist press would use it, that "only the truth is revolutionary." We think the SWP is profoundly mistaken in the approach it has recently adopted in covering world news. Its aim is to protect the victims of imperialism by not mentioning some unsavory facts that are being exploited by the imperialists. The result will be that no one will believe its version of international events.



## For Common Work Against Our Common Foe

The SWP has patently been going through a dramatic internal transformation over the last two years. Its leaders explain it as an effort to draw ever closer to the revolutionaries of Cuba and Central America, on the one hand, and to root the party more deeply in the industrial working class, on the other hand, through the extensive colonization of party members into basic industry. We believe that a different process has been taking place.

Since the last party convention, the SWP has publicly renounced the most basic ideas of the Trotskyist movement, of which it was a leading part for half a century. This momentous decision was never put up for a vote or even discussed, and this in a party that had a long and highly respected democratic tradition. A purge has been launched against supporters of the Fourth International and of Trotskyism in the party, and they are being systematically expelled. The majority of the Fourth International has become alarmed at this development. At the October meeting of the world organization's leading body, the United Secretariat, an overwhelming majority characterized the wave of expulsions from the SWP as a political purge aimed at the International and recognized the right of those expelled to form a new organization that would have all rights of fraternal collaboration with the world organization permitted by reactionary U.S. laws - the same status held by the SWP.

Such sharp twists and turns and the driving out of much of the older generation of the party could be accomplished only through a deep erosion of internal democratic rights. This was done by declaring the leadership to be completely correct; by definition, all of its critics were "enemies of the party" (this cliché from old Stalinist pamphlets was actually used in Oakland, California, to characterize Jeff Mackler, one of the main leaders of Socialist Action). This kind of attitude could not help but spill over into the SWP's approach to organizations outside its own ranks.

In the last several years the SWP has tended to view everyone else engaged in the struggle against the evils of capitalism as a "petty bourgeois." The exceptions are leaders of faraway revolutions whom the party does not have to work with anyway. This designation swallowed up the SWP's work in the women's movement, then the antinuclear power movement, later the antinuclear weapons movement. Finally even the trade unions, where the membership had all gone to escape the "petty bourgeois" Left, also became nothing but "petty bourgeois bureaucrats."

Party members in the unions confine their activity largely to general so-

cialist propaganda work with individual workers. Because this is not oriented around actual issues that appear in workers' lives or around the organizations they belong to now, such work has proven ineffectual and has won very few members to the party.

We are for a sharp break from this policy of self-isolation. We regret that many good people in an organization to which we devoted many years have worked themselves into such a corner. We have a special concern here because while we are no longer members of the SWP, both we and the SWP are sympathizers of the same world movement. Moreover, it is a movement in which our perspective holds a strong majority, although the relationship of forces is reversed here in the United States. We would like to see all supporters of the Fourth International in the United States belong to a single organization. To express that idea we have decided to organize ourselves as a public faction of the SWP, since it is the larger of the two groups in this country that are in solidarity with the Fourth International. Organizing ourselves as a public faction expresses our hope that the party will restore its prior democratic norms, readmit the expelled as a body, and open a discussion of the wrong political line it has embarked on in the last two years.

We hope to work with all others, including the SWP, who want to engage in real struggles against the masters of our society. Although we are beginning as a small organization, from the outset we have committed ourselves to participate as fully as we are able in the central fights of our day. As this issue of *Socialist Action* indicates, we are working to build solidarity with the Greyhound strikers across the country. Many of our members were organizers of the November 12 demonstrations in solidarity with the peoples of Central America and the Caribbean. In the Monongahela Valley of southwestern Pennsylvania we are participating in the movement of the unemployed. As Reagan mobilizes the ultraright and the raw power of the Marines, our responsibilities become more pressing: Every organization of the Left must contribute what it can to bring to bear the counterpower of the U.S. working class. We think that can best be done today through broad struggle coalitions such as the ones being built around opposition to U.S. intervention in Central America. We are also convinced that only a national organization linked to a world movement, with a disciplined membership, a press, and an overall strategy, can hope to have an effect on events that change their focus from day to day and from city to city. That is why we have chosen to carry out our work through *Socialist Action*. We hope that many of you will join us. □

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# Grenadian revolution

Continued from page 1

advisers. The rest were airport construction workers, medical personnel, technicians, diplomatic staff, and children.

## Were U.S. Students in Danger?

The claimed military objective of the U.S. action, to ensure the safety of 500-600 medical students at St. George's University School of Medicine, was exposed as a fraud even prior to the invasion. Medical school classes had been in session the day before the invasion, with transportation between the two campuses provided by Grenadian officials. A week prior to the invasion, the Reagan administration had been informed by Dr. Charles Modica, the chancellor of the school, and Geoffrey Bourne, the dean, that the students were in no danger.

Despite the efforts of Geoffrey Bourne to head off the invasion (Bourne was responsible for arranging the on-site visits to the medical school by Ken Kurze and Linda Flohr, two U.S. embassy representatives in Grenada who thereafter stated that the students were in no danger), Reagan gave the final order for the invasion early Monday morning, October 24. This action was taken despite a telegram to Reagan, signed by 500 parents of the students, pleading with him not to invade, and even though a number of students had already shown it possible to leave the island on resumed charter flights.

## Reagan's Legal Pretext Exposed

The U.S. president's "legal" pretext for the invasion was equally shattered in a matter of days. The so-called invitation to "intervene" issued by four members of the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS) was, according to Bernard Gwertzman writing in the *New York Times*, "drafted in Washington and conveyed to the Caribbean leaders by special American emissaries." The invasion request, wrote Gwertzman, was made in response to U.S. urgings, which cited Article 8 of the 1973 OECS treaty. This article concerns "arrangements for collective security against external aggression" and requires a "unanimous" decision by the seven member states. Only four OECS members "requested" assistance, and there was no assertion of "external aggression."

A token force of 300, mostly policemen from the East Caribbean states of Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, and St. Christopher-Nevis, was flown in after the invasion to give the appearance of a "multinational" force. They were assigned no combat role.

## An Army of Occupation

Within minutes of the marine landing, a U.S. radio station was hooked up to broadcast warnings to the Grenadian people to "remain in your home until advised it is safe to go outside."

Grenadians were told to cooperate with "friendly forces if it should become necessary to enter your home."

Since the invasion, these "friendly forces" have imposed a reign of terror on the Grenadian people. Roadblocks have been set up at key intersections and all vehicles are regularly searched. Mass arrests have resulted in the imprisonment of trade unionists, NJM members, leaders and activists in the mass organizations, and army and militia members. Hundreds have been detained in special camps set up by the U.S. military. House-to-house searches are part of the daily routine of the U.S. invasion force. Prisoners have been beaten and terrorized.

The U.S. government and its appointees in Grenada today decide all policy questions and administer all major government operations. Purge lists have appeared and are used to eliminate "unfriendly" Grenadians from government posts. The United States has appointed Sir Paul Scoon, who was the British queen's representative under the Gairy dictatorship, to be the new head of state. Scoon is charged with setting up an interim government and holding elections. While the Reagan administration originally claimed that its troops would be withdrawn in a matter of weeks and that elections would be held shortly, it is now clear that neither assertion is true.

While 5,000 U.S. troops remain indefinitely on the island, the State Department has earmarked \$15 million to train and maintain a regular military occupation force, a key indication that Washington understands that the Grenadian people have no desire to return to their former colonial status.

## Why the U.S. Invaded

The real reason for the U.S. invasion has nothing to do with the presence of Cubans in Grenada, the safety of medical students, or other lies about Grenada's supposed aggressive international military intentions. From day one of the revolution, when the Grenadian people ousted the Gairy dictatorship, the United States set out to reverse the process of social change that had begun. Under the leadership of the NJM, Grenada had made major gains in improving the standard of living of its people. Included were the following:

- Reducing unemployment from 49 to 14 percent.
- Eliminating all discriminatory laws against women and guaranteeing equal pay for equal work.
- Reducing illiteracy to 2 percent through a mass literacy campaign and providing free education for all.
- Establishing a system of free medical and dental care.
- Unionizing 90 percent of the work force.
- Developing a national fishing industry that, for the first time in Grenada's history, enabled it to export fish.

- Distributing unused land to farmers, with low interest loans, to form cooperatives.
- Transforming 40 percent of the farms and plantations in Grenada, previously owned by Gairy and his supporters, into collective farms, which began to utilize modern agricultural techniques.
- Achieving a 1982 national economic growth rate of 5.5 percent, one of the highest in the world.
- Increasing real wages in 1982 by 3 percent (after adjustment for inflation).

Similar gains had been registered in housing, in regularizing and increasing the supply of water and electricity, in diversification of agriculture, and in construction of a new international airport.

## Bishop's Murder Opens the Door

The October 13 arrest of Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, and his murder six days later, provided Washington the opportunity it had been waiting for to end the process of social transformation that had begun in Grenada, a process that had inspired oppressed people throughout the world.

On October 19, a demonstration of some 4,000 Bishop supporters, led by Foreign Minister Unison Whiteman, marched to Bishop's house to release him from the detention ordered by the NJM Central Committee on October 13. A crowd estimated at 10,000-15,000, led by Bishop and other government ministers, then proceeded to the Fort Rupert army headquarters, where weapons for the people's militia were kept. According to eyewitnesses, the crowd was unarmed with the exception of a few weapons taken earlier from the guards at Bishop's house.

There are several versions as to what happened at Fort Rupert. General Hudson Austin, one of the coup's leaders, stated in a broadcast that the Grenadian army fired in self-defense after it was attacked by Bishop and his supporters. Bishop, along with Foreign Minister Whiteman, Education Minister Jacqueline Creft, Housing Minister Norris Bain, and trade union leaders Vincent Noel and Fitzroy Bain were allegedly killed in the cross fire.

Several eyewitnesses, including Bishop's mother and the wife of Norris Bain, dispute this account. Both assert that the army fired on the crowd, leading Bishop and the others to raise their hands immediately and surrender. They were taken into the fort and summarily executed. Seventeen people were killed on the spot and another 59 were wounded.

Regardless of which version of the events at Fort Rupert proves to be true, certain facts cannot be refuted:

- According to all accounts, including those of surviving Bishop supporters such as former Agriculture Minister George Louison and Bishop's press secretary Don Rojas, the differences between Bishop and the supporters of the apparent majority faction, led by

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# Grenadian revolution

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Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard and General Austin, did not involve any substantial political question. The central debate was over power and authority in the party apparatus and government.

- While Bishop was out of the country and prior to his arrest, the Coard-Austin faction began to demobilize and disarm sections of the army and militia.

- Following Bishop's murder, arms were collected from the various military posts where they had been previously stored for use by the militia.

- Austin declared an immediate round-the-clock curfew. Violators were to be "shot on sight."

These actions effectively disarmed and demoralized the Grenadian population in the face of an imminent U.S. invasion.

The October 20 statement released jointly by the Cuban government and Cuban Communist Party underlined the gravity of the situation: "No doctrine, principle or proclaimed revolutionary position, nor any internal division can justify methods as atrocious as Bishop's physical elimination and the death of the group of outstanding, honest and honorable leaders who were killed yesterday. Now imperialism will try to use this tragedy and the grave errors committed by the Grenadian revolutionaries to sweep away the revolutionary process in Grenada and subject it to imperial and neocolonial power."

This is precisely what happened. The invasion plans drawn up and rehearsed by Washington as far back as October 1981 were activated and implemented.

## Washington Rehearses Intervention

Two years ago, the U.S. government, together with 14 of its capitalist allies, organized the largest amphibious military maneuvers since World War II. Code-named "Ocean Venture," the maneuvers involved 250 ships, 120,000 troops, and 1,000 aircraft. The Caribbean component of these maneuvers was a dry-run mock invasion of Grenada. It was code-named "Operation Amber and the Amberdines," a thinly disguised reference to Grenada and its sister Grenadine islands, Petit Martinique and Carriacou. Using the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, the United States developed and practiced the entire invasion scenario down to the last political and military detail. "Amber," a client state of "Big Red" (Cuba) had taken U.S. "hostages" and was said to be exporting subversion and refusing to conduct "free elections."

A new set of Ocean Venture exercises was held in 1982. In March 1983 NATO forces again conducted maneuvers in the

Caribbean. U.S. Admiral Robert Watkins explained that one reason for the operation was "the construction of an airfield in Grenada for use by Soviet planes."

## Lessons of the Coard-Austin Coup

At least for the moment, the social progress achieved in Grenada has been brought to a dead halt. "Elections" supervised by the guns of U.S. troops and organized by an occupying power will have no meaning for the Grenadian people, who will undoubtedly continue under the most difficult circumstances to struggle for their sovereignty. Defending this right is a major responsibility of the antiwar movement in the United States.

At the same time a rigorous study of the events leading up to the U.S. invasion is essential in order to learn from Grenada's experience. It is now clear that key institutions of the Grenadian revolutionary process--the New Jewel Movement, the mass organizations, and the armed forces--require a thorough evaluation.

## The New Jewel Movement

The NJM in 1983 was a party of 700-800 members. Most if not all of the differences among its central leaders were unknown to the rank and file. This contributed greatly to distancing the party from the people in a time of crisis, not to mention during "ordi-



nary" periods. The NJM lacked real democracy. This is an essential element in a revolutionary party for discussing, evaluating, and resolving internal differences without resort to threats and power struggles, which elevate personal differences and bureaucratic control over collective decision-making and teamwork.

The right to form tendencies and factions for the purpose of participating in an organized way in the internal life of the party was not fostered. The NJM as a political party had not evaluated its relationship to the government, often acting as if the two were the same. The fact that Prime Minister Maurice Bishop could be arrested by a political party, the NJM, and not by the government, indicates grave confusion on the part of NJM leaders. This implies that in their view political power could be exercised by a small party minority rather than by a government based on mass institutions of the workers and farmers. While many individual leaders of the party like Maurice Bishop were close to the Grenadian masses and frequently expressed their deepest desires for progressive change, the masses themselves apparently had little control over the party.

## The Mass Organizations

Grenada's mass organizations, including the six parish or zonal councils and their various subdivisions, the National Women's Organization, the youth organization, the trade-union federations and others, were essentially mass bodies organized for discussion and exchange of ideas. While they provided a forum for the NJM to test and affirm the popularity of its programs and a mechanism for the people to express their opinions, these bodies still had little or no real power. They lacked virtually all administrative, executive, and legislative functions. Grenadian leaders often referred to the mass organizations as vehicles through which the masses would participate in government, but they were not yet conceived of as governmental institutions themselves.

## The Army and Militia

The people of Grenada were not armed. The militia, which at times grew to a sizable proportion of the population, had no immediate access to weapons. These were under the control of the army and were distributed only on those occasions when practice drills and maneuvers were conducted. An armed people, governing themselves, deciding their future through the construction of genuinely mass and popular institutions of rule, is essential for the consolidation of the gains of a revolu-

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## Labor support committee formed

# Greyhound shut down in San Francisco

by Carl Finamore

San Francisco, Dec. 3 -- In their first powerful demonstration of labor solidarity, 2,000 militant Bay Area workers, organized by the recently formed Greyhound Strikers' Support Committee, braved 92 mph gale winds, heavy rain, power outages, and jammed bridges today to shut down the Greyhound depot.

Following a spirited rally addressed by leaders of the Bay Area union movement, contingents of Greyhound strikers, construction workers, teamsters, machinists, oilworkers, longshoremen and others marched on the San Francisco Greyhound terminal, overflowing the streets and entrances leading to the scab-run operation.

From that moment on, not a single Greyhound bus dared to enter or leave, despite the heavy presence of squads of mounted police and heavily armed cops. Regular mass mobilizations of ATU mem-

bers and the labor movement are now set for the coming weeks.

Plans for the day's action were set on November 30 at a meeting organized by the Greyhound Strikers' Support Committee, attended by more than 200 trade union leaders and activists in the San Francisco Bay Area.

James Herman, international president of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), set the tone for the meeting when he said, "We in the trade union movement have not been as tough as we should have been. When we're prepared to brawl in the streets on an equal basis with these dirty bastards who have no idea of what it is to work for a living, we'll win this strike."

Herman, like other speakers during the evening who recalled the bitter defeat of the PATCO strike, called on the more than 200 assembled trade unionists to plan to mobilize the power of the labor movement by "packing the

streets with picket lines and angry workers who say 'no way' to union busting."

He reported that the ILWU has decided, if called upon by the Greyhound workers, to "shut down the port and march uptown to the picket lines."

Stan Smith, Secretary Treasurer of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council, followed suit with a pledge to "shut down all union construction jobs in San Francisco and march with the ILWU and Teamsters and AFL-CIO to the picket lines."

Greyhound strike leader Ed Kellert, vice president of the striking Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 1225, reported on the company's last "offer," which was rejected nationally by a 96 percent vote of union ranks. Kellert said the company take-away package, amounting to an overall cut of 23 percent in wages and benefits, would save the profit-hungry Greyhound Corporation \$204.5 million over three years.

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# Testing U.S. labor

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fight on the side of the strikers. This can set an objective limit to the bosses' use of force. So long as clubs are sufficient, the bosses will not use guns against strikers. To do so would entail paying a heavier price than the results gained are worth. But since the bosses and their hired hands are a small minority of the population, they are compelled in the final analysis to rely on their courts, jails, and guns to force the workers into submission.

## The Source of Workers' Power

The power of the workers, on the other hand, comes from their vast numbers. The cops could not have dispersed a thousand pickets as easily as they did a few hundred on the first day's confrontation without spilling much blood and running the risk of arousing outrage and more sympathy for the strikers everywhere. This is the key to understanding the potential power of working people. Workers and their allies constitute the overwhelming majority. A strategy that can draw this enormous force into action is the key to victory.

This brief outline is no more than the application of the lessons of the past. This strategy of mass mobilization was grasped and set into motion in the 1930s. These mass labor struggles established U.S. workers as the most powerful organized labor movement in the world. The great victories won by workers at that time explain why many workers here were able to coast along and gain steady increases in living standards without major class battles. The impact of big past victories weighs in the balance a long time after the events. But the capital accumulated in past battles has been nearly used up.

## New Leaderships Will Emerge

The majority of fighters who led the big union battles of the thirties and forties are no longer active participants. The few who are left have become comfortable in their jobs and more conservative, or have been replaced by narrow-minded, self-serving careerists. The current rise of combativity will bring new, fresh forces forward. These new forces can renew the unions and transform them into effective instruments to defend the living standards of working people.

We in Socialist Action will be part of this fight--one that can finally be resolved only by a government made up of working people. A new society will be born, based on workers' control over the workplaces and social ownership of the means of production and other facilities necessary to a modern economy. The name of this new society is Socialism. □

# Grenada

Continued from page 10

tionary process. Had the Grenadian people and their party organized in this manner, the political and military price Reagan would then have had to pay could have been multiplied considerably, even to the point of being too costly to consider in the first place.

Under the heel of imperialism, the Grenadian people now require the full solidarity of working people and their allies the world over. The lies and distortions of the Reagan administration, fostered by an almost total press blackout during the first six days of the invasion, are just beginning to unravel. As the truth becomes known it will become clear that the U.S. government's real aim is to roll back every forward step taken by the victims of oppression and exploitation. Emboldened by their "victory" in Grenada, the U.S. rulers are now preparing to push back the gains of the people of Nicaragua, Cuba, and El Salvador.

Our responsibility is to work together in the construction of a massive, democratic, and united antiwar movement to demand the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Grenada and Central America. □

# PLO

Continued from page 4

What the Assad cabal, for all their cunning, have not yet learned is that now that they have performed their service, they are next on the list of Arab states to be balkanized.

## The Omnipresent Saudis

A nice irony is that the funds come from one source, the real instrument of imperialist control, the petro-dollars of the Saudi monarchy. Saudi Arabia has subsidized the Syrian regime to the tune of nearly \$10 billion since the Lebanese civil war. The Saudis, of course, are also the paymasters of the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan. And they have as well been the primary supplier of funds to the Palestine Liberation Organization, to which Abu Musa has taken such proper exception.

Moreover, Saudi funds have been delivered directly to Yassir Arafat who maintains control over PLO purse strings to the disadvantage of other tendencies.

Apart from Saudi or Kuwaiti money, a principal instrument of Arab governmental backing for the PLO has been King Hassan of Morocco. Thus the PLO has become dependent upon the very regimes in the region who fear its success and act for American interests.

The tragedy being enacted, therefore, in the Palestinian camps of Nahr al Bared and Bedawi on the outskirts of Tripoli is that of the crisis of nationalist leadership, not not only in the country-selling regimes of the Arab East but in all factions of the PLO.

George Habash, of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and Nayef Hawatmeh of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine are the left leaders of the PLO. They have maintained for years that the Syrian and Libyan regimes were "progressive," unlike those of Jordan or Saudi Arabia, and that the Syrian leadership had seen the light after Camp David.

I have spent time suggesting to them that the only light seen by Hafez al Assad was that reflected off coins. The primary programmatic difference between the Popular and Democratic Fronts and the pro-Saudi advisers to Yassir Arafat had been to urge upon him a working relationship with Syria or Iraq.

The summer of 1982 at least, put an end to these illusions about Hafez al Assad, except, it seems, on the part of

# S.F. cop attack

Continued from page 3

but couldn't find the Bay Bridge! They trained these scabs in a week, told them to turn the steering wheel this way to go left and the other way to go right, and keep their mouth shut to go forward." Now the cops began to march with their batons held menacingly in front of them, driving the pickets into small groups. Smash! Another windshield was broken in the melee caused by the cops.

"No one's allowed on this block," a cop told us. "Across the street!" another ordered.

"Do you have a court order?" several strikers challenged. "This is a legal picket. You have no right to make us move."

"Just keep walking!" the cops commanded.

When I left to go to work, about a hundred angry workers were still assembled in pockets on the sidewalks. Members of the longshoremen's union (ILWU), the Municipal bus drivers in the TWU, the Retail Clerks, and the Hotel and Restaurant workers were there. Several strikers thanked me for helping walk the picket line. "There's more here than meets the eye," one man told me. "Greyhound is a multibillion-dollar corporation and the other big companies are looking for Greyhound to take the lead in breaking the labor movement. First PATCO, then what they're doing to the copper miners, now us, and tomorrow it'll be you, too."

"Good luck!" I said.

"And good luck to you!" they shouted back as I left. □

Abu Musa and his comrades. It was Ezra Pound who wrote that the technique of infamy is to invent two lies and get people arguing heatedly over which one of them is true.

Neither the "moderate" leadership of Yassir Arafat, the "progressive" leaders of the Popular and Democratic Fronts, nor the "dissident" Fateh rebels have formulated a strategy for the Palestinian people independent of the rotten regimes of the region. These regard the Palestinian revolution as a clear and present danger, because the extraordinary struggle of the Palestinian nation--even under nationalist leadership--is the living reminder to their own suffering populace of what is to be done and who is in the way.

It has never been possible for the Palestinian revolution to be made by substitution--neither by small and random military operations from outside or by reliance on corrupt Arab governments. The failure of the PLO in all its currents flowed from its inveterate incapacity to use the one weapon crying out to be brought into play: the mass of the Palestinian people who inhabit the occupied territory of the West Bank, Gaza and of pre-1967 Israel.

They have, in all this, been abandoned and are, in consequence, in constant jeopardy. In Chile and the Philippines we have the living proof of what socialists must seek for the Palestinian cause--the self-activation of the masses. A people deprived of land, rights and civil liberty, subject to racist exclusion and the menace of expulsion punctuated by imprisonment and torture, can mobilize mass meetings, marches, and strikes. They can project their vision of a democratic and socialist Palestine by sustained popular struggle. A PLO faithful to its promise of a secular state will include in its leadership those anti-Zionist Jews who have fought the settler-colonial State. In this way, the Jewish masses themselves will be able to see who really speaks for them, who offers them a way out of perpetual war, insecurity and deprivation.

The Palestine Liberation Organization will, through the crucible of its present agony, find its way to a strategy of mass struggle or pass into history having left a legacy of indisputable achievement in dignity and hope, but also a pattern of terrible and avoidable pain. □

# Greyhound shut down

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The meeting was also addressed by Jack Henning, head of the 1.5 million member California Labor Federation, who reported on the AFL-CIO position favoring a national Greyhound boycott, and by Chuck Mack, head of the 65,000 member Teamster Joint Council. Mack indicated that, like their Teamster brothers and sisters in Philadelphia who helped stop Greyhound buses there, local Teamsters were more than willing "to find creative ways to assist the Greyhound strikers."

The meeting was chaired by Walter Johnson, president of the San Francisco Department Store Employees, Local 1100. "We may have to mobilize another 70,000 workers in the streets and on the picket lines like we did last year at our solidarity rally," said Johnson.

Don Harmon, a rank-and-file member of Local 1100 assigned by his union to work full-time to help coordinate solidarity activities, presented the support committee's initial plans of action. These included the December 3 mass rally and march to the picket line, regular union mobilizations to aid the strikers, and mass leafleting.

Harmon evoked an enthusiastic round of applause from the crowd when he said, "This is a mad dog company we're facing and we need real labor solidarity to leash it up." □

# Solidarnosc calls December 13 action

By P. I. Webber

December 13 marks the second anniversary of the declaration of martial law in Poland. Two years have passed since the military regime attempted to crush Solidarnosc, the independent trade union representing 10 million Polish workers. The union not only survives, but is calling for protest actions to mark the day of infamy. The union's underground Provisional Coordinating Committee (TKK) has appealed for mobilizations against the Jaruzelski government's deepening austerity measures and for the release of jailed union leaders and other political prisoners.

Although unable to function legally, Solidarnosc clearly continues to command the allegiance of the Polish people. This is revealed most of all in the negative, by the utter failure of the Stalinist government to achieve the

A press release of the French Medical Association in Solidarity with Solidarity (November 1983) states that two French doctors visited political prisoners in Poland and expressed alarm at the poor state of health of some of the imprisoned unionists:

- Seweryn Jaworski suffers from a serious digestive infection, but has not been taken to a hospital.
- Andrzej Gwiazda has a kidney infection of an "alarming character," but has not received medical attention.
- Jacek Kuron is in dire need of a kidney operation.

"Public opinion must demand that these three political prisoners be given medical treatment," declared professors Jean-Claude Dreyfuss, François Guerin, and Jean-Louis Le-Guay.

"normalization of Polish society" that is its stated goal. By "normalization" it means a bureaucrat's paradise wherein the workers are intimidated into silence.

The Polish authorities are now bracing against a mounting wave of anger that greeted the announcement in Novem-

ber of their latest austerity measures. A tightening of butter rationing and the scheduling of food price increases have sparked widespread public resentment. It doesn't require an especially keen sense of history to recall that protests against rising food prices have mushroomed into mass movements that have brought down previous Polish governments.

Lech Walesa, the most prominent Solidarnosc leader, met on the weekend of November 20 with underground TKK members and then issued a call for a mobilization of the Polish people to block the further deterioration of their standard of living. The fact that Walesa has been able to meet with underground "fugitives" is an indication of the limits of the government's ability to repress Solidarnosc out of existence.

The Polish economy's deep problems have two very different sources. On the one hand, the Stalinist bureaucrats have mortgaged the country to banks in the United States and Western Europe, running up a debt of some \$26 billion. The imperialist banks have put the squeeze on Poland, cutting off further credits after making its economy dependent on imported raw materials and spare parts.

## The Economic Crisis

On the other hand, productivity has not increased, reflecting a form of workers' resistance against the hated Stalinist regime. Since the imposition of martial law, productivity has actually declined in almost all industries, with the exception of coal mining. The bureaucrats thus try to blame the economic crisis on the workers themselves, but the millions of Solidarnosc supporters know full well who led their country into its present blind alley.

The initial public outrage that greeted the recent austerity announcement brought an unusual apology from the government, and the ouster of the head of the Planning Commission. But General Jaruzelski also moved to have new legislation adopted granting him broader repressive powers. A new National Defense Committee was formed, with Jaruzelski as chairman, empowered to oversee wide areas of the economy and government and to decide when a state of emergency should be declared. This reveals, once again, that the regime has no program other than repression for the "normalization" it seeks.

In addition to protests against price increases, the TKK has launched a major national and international campaign to demand the freedom of jailed unionists and their supporters. The regime is apparently preparing show trials for 11 prominent political prisoners, all of whom were arrested on December 13, 1981. Although they have all been behind bars for the past two years, the government only recently announced its intention to bring them to trial. The 11 include four leading members of the former Polish Workers Defense Committee (KOR) and seven leaders of the Solidar-

nosc union during its period of legal existence.

Charges carrying possible sentences of life imprisonment have been brought against KOR leaders Adam Michnik, Jan Litynski, Jacek Kuron, and Henryk Wujek. They are accused of "calling for the creation--and founding--of illegal organizations and associations." Lech Walesa and 87 other witnesses have already been summoned to appear at the trial, although no trial date has been set. It could begin at any moment.

The seven Solidarnosc leaders facing trial--all of whom are being held incommunicado--are Karol Modzelewski, Jan Rulewski, Marian Jurczyk, Crzegorz Palka, Andrzej Gwiazda, Seweryn Jaworski, and Andres Rosplochowski. They have been accused of seeking to "overthrow the regime by force and violence," a frame-up charge with no basis in fact. If convicted, they could face the death penalty.

These 11 prominent leaders are but the tip of a very large iceberg. Many others have already been tried and sentenced. Focusing protests on these



The 1981 Solidarnosc Congress

cases, however, can help call attention to the plight of the hundreds of other political prisoners in Poland.

In a call issued earlier this year for May Day actions, the TKK appealed for international workers' solidarity. "Here in Poland we are not fighting for ourselves," they wrote. "We are profoundly convinced that our struggle has a universal dimension. It widens the area of liberty and justice in today's world. We need your support."

It is the duty of internationalists in the United States to heed that call now. If American socialists fail to organize active support for Solidarnosc's struggle, it will reinforce the Reagan propaganda lie that the real friends of the Polish workers are the anticommunists and capitalist politicians. On December 13 we will have an opportunity to show the Polish resistance that we have heard their internationalist appeal for solidarity. □

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