A MARXIST NEWSLETTER

Forward Motion Forward Motion Forward Motion

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IWD 1984: women in non-traditional jobs

images of black women poems & letters

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Dear Friends,

Honoring International Womens Day 1984, our theme in this *Forward Motion* is non-traditional and traditional roles for women. Spurred by the women's emancipation struggle as well as economic necessity, women in growing numbers in the 1970's entered not just the labor market but traditionally male occupations. (Traditionally, that is, since the end of World War II and war-time labor scarcities. . .) Ten years later, the novelty may have worn off some, but the struggle is far from over. We interviewed three women about getting started in "non-traditional work," adjustments this required both of themselves and male co-workers, and solidarity among the women they work with. A letter shared by an *FM* reader and three new poems fill out the discussion with brief vignettes of the experience and the struggles women face in these jobs.

The other side of non-tradition is tradition, both on and off the job. But tradition itself can be a very contradictory thing for women in this country. We see this in a PUL rep's contribution to a Black History Month exploration entitled "Ain't I A Woman?" Her talk explores Black women's traditional "nurturing" role both as invaluable contribution and as oppressive restriction, a contradiction which only self-defined *choice* for Black women in the struggle can resolve. "Christmas Day at the Medical Center" brings out another sort of contradiction – the natural bridge in today's political climate between the traditional woman's profession as nurse and the role of community activist in today's political climate.

Why this focus on traditional and non-traditional roles? In this time of flux for the women's movement as well as other people's movements, debate of gender gaps, the feminization of poverty, the future of socialist feminism and other issues leads naturally to questions of, where is the base, the activist core of the movement today? We wanted to help fill in the panorama in a way that contributes to both the celebration and the stock-taking that is International Womens Day.

Elsewhere in this *FM* are articles on several other important issues. We have a follow-up on Grenada with a first-hand report from a member of a medical team that toured the island shortly after the invasion. And from a recent trade-unionists' tour of Nicaragua, we learn how the struggle for a just, democratic, and ultimately socialist society continues against the backdrop of growing U.S. intervention.

In this issue we continue our study series on the democracy and socialism.

Also in this issue, Kim Moody of the International Socialists responds to Jonathan Hoffman's series on electoral strategy, criticizing what he sees as a certain blindness about the Democratic Party. We hope this debate can continue, and bring in other contributors in coming issues.

Finally, we include a speech from a local conference on the impact of new computerized technology in basic manufacturing. This is a critical issue for the labor movement nationally, but it is most interesting to see how union locals have begun to strategize and organize.

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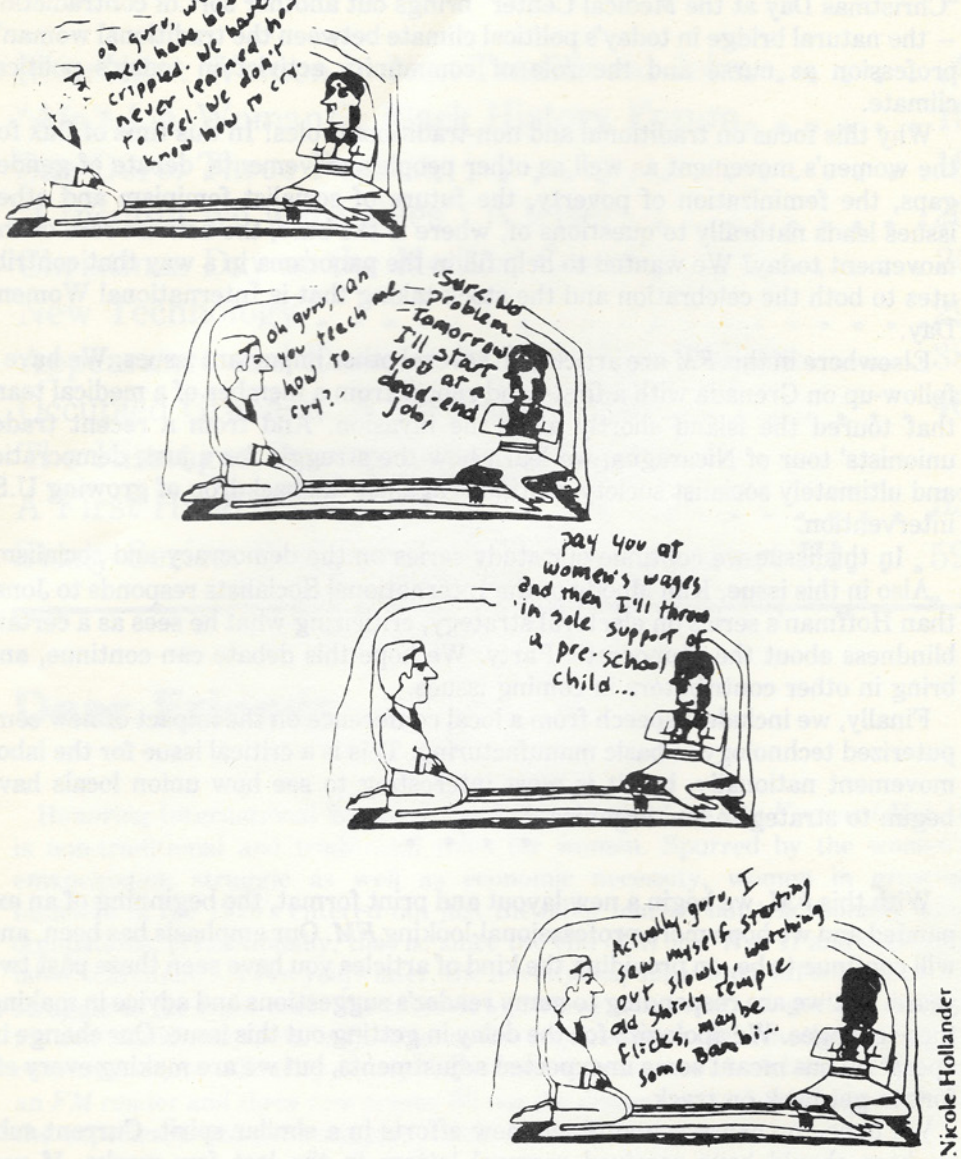
With this *FM,* we begin a new layout and print format, the beginning of an expanded and we hope more professsional-looking *FM*. Our emphasis has been, and will continue to be, on providing the kind of articles you have seen these past two years. But we are responding to many reader's suggestions and advice in making these changes. We apologize for the delay in getting out this issue. Our change in operation has meant some unexpected adjustments, but we are making every effort to get back on track.

We hope you can respond to our new efforts in a similar spirit. Current subscribers should have received renewal letters in the last few weeks. If you

haven't already, please send in your renewal, with an additional contribution if you can manage it. New readers will find a subscription form inside this issue, and we hope to hear from you!

– *FM* staff



Nicole Hollander

Interview: Women in Non-Traditional Jobs

[Note: Inspired by Sue Doro's poetry, and with International Women's Day 1984 approaching, we did this interview with three women working in non-traditional jobs. Susan, the welder, and Jenny, the machinist-turned-inspector, work in a large, predominantly male manufacturing plant. Pat is an apprentice ironworker. We wanted to see how these women were doing now that the initial excitement and novelty had worn off. We think the interview provides a frank, personal look into the satisfactions and disappointments that women experience in these jobs. – Susan Cummings and Nadine Meyers]

SC: On a personal level, how do you feel about doing a non-traditional job? What are the pros and cons for you?

Jenny: Well, when I first started in a non-traditional job it was learning machining. On a personal level, I really enjoyed it. It was something I didn't know about and I was learning a lot. And being able to do it gave me a sense of accomplishment. It was fun. There were all the problems you would expect working mostly with men and trying to break into the job along with the other women. But I enjoyed it.

Over the years... I'm not doing machining now. I'm doing an inspection type of job and it has become very routine. And boring. Actually inspection is one of the few higher-rated jobs that women have broken into. And it's also a job classification that's probably going to be eliminated over the next ten years or so as that function is automated. So that will mean that many women who have gotten into that higher rated job won't be there anymore and it's not clear where they are going to go. So that's a little depressing – on a personal level.

Susan: For me it's a lot of the same stuff. A sense of pride in learning something that's a little bit more complicated. I'm a welder. I started out as an automatic welder in another shop because it was a little better money. But it wasn't really very hard. Then the next place I went to work, I put down welding as my experience. So they gave me a job as a welder. There I picked up two different kinds of welding. And then I came to this job I have now. I've done probably three different kinds of welding now – more. So I'm kind of rounding out my experience.

Welding is very complicated and technical. You're always learning something new if you want to. And that's something I couldn't get in any of the other kinds of jobs that I had. In a "woman's job" I felt that I was in a job and that's where the company expected me to stay. They had no intention of... they set the situation

up so that you couldn't improve yourself. It's partly company policy but it's also the nature of the work I was doing.

I think women tend to be less confident than men. Most of the young men I meet who haven't got very much work experience went to trade school all through junior high and high school. They might not have a lot of work experience but they know a lot about what they are doing. But myself, learning on the job the way I did, I didn't have very much confidence. But I always had a certain amount of confidence in myself just because of my own personality. I knew I could eventually get it. That it wasn't that hard. And I think the attitude of not knowing very much and admitting you don't know very much actually puts you in the position to learn more than some of the men do. So that's something in your favor.

Pat: I like being a ironworker. I enjoy the work a lot. It's pretty satisfying except that as an apprentice it's a different situation than when you become a journeyman. You're more of a gopher for people and you pretty much have to do what everyone else tells you to do. That part of it is hard to get used to.

SC: How long will you be an apprentice?

Pat: For three years.

Susan: That's a long time to kowtow.

Pat: I'm getting very good at it! I've had some problems with people, but on the whole I'd say I have a lot less problems than I ever expected to have. I guess a couple of years having worked with women and they're more used to it now. Once the initial shock or novelty of working with a woman wears off they see it's not so bad. Especially if you do your work. If you don't do your work – or even if you don't do it real well – they make comments. Maybe they don't make them to you but they get around. Men gossip a lot. I hear about all the other women, so I know that when I'm not around they are talking about me to other people.

But I look forward to going to work in the morning which is unusual. I don't know if that is going to last for a long time but compared to a lot of other jobs I've done...

Getting Started

SC: Have you ever done anything like this before?

Pat: I did carpentry for a couple of years, and painting, and some outside work and more physical work. So it wasn't a totally new thing for me, which it was for a couple of the women.

NM: As a woman, was it harder for you to learn the job, Pat?

Pat: In some ways. There's things that seem more common sense to some guys. Especially if their father's in the business. They grew up hearing about this crane and that. But if someone talks to me about cranes, I don't know one damn crane from the other. At first, I thought, "I'm never going to learn this stuff." But eventually you pick it up.

I did have some knowledge of tools before. And I figured if I could learn the stuff that I've learned in the last couple of years, I'd be able to learn how to weld; how to tie knots; how to do this, that and the other thing. It's different for me. Because I really have a strong motivation to learn everything. And a lot of the guys don't. Because to them, this is what they were born to do. Some of them are proud of it. But some of them couldn't care less, and they just look for ways to get out of as much work as possible.

NM: So it's not a physical thing so much as familiarity?

Pat: A lot of it is physical too. There's two schools of thought. Some people think, if there's anything heavy to do, that's why you have a crane. But then there are other people who are like: "Pick up that oxygen bottle and bring it upstairs." And you've got to do it. But especially if you try to do it yourself, people will almost always come and help you it it's really heavy.

SC: Susan, were you ever the only woman on the job since you got into welding?

Susan: Always! The first woman I worked with was three months ago. For the first day on that job I talked myself hoarse. It was so funny. I left for the day and I said, "Gee, I hope you don't think I'm crazy. I don't talk like this all the time." And she said, "I know what you mean." I hadn't worked with a woman in a long time. It was really nice.

It can be lonesome. I just started a new job in a building where there's not one other woman. I mean even in the office or anything. You're just such a strange being. I mean whether they want you to be there or not. You're just different. You can't just waltz in like other guys can. And, of course, it's always hard being new on the job.

Jenny: Yeah, it's true. No matter how many years you're there. You can be friends with guys; they can respect you; they can elect you to the union office; but you're still from another planet basically. And you know that when you leave, the conversation changes. You're still an outsider in some senses. It's hard.

SC: Pat, didn't you ever get nervous? Like if you weren't getting along with one of the men? Being an ironworker way up there?

Pat: Well, it's funny. Before I got in, I told some other women who were doing different kinds of construction work that I had applied. And they said, "You are crazy. They'll kill you. They'll throw you off the building." And I said, "I don't believe that."

I had some guys talk and try to scare me. And people told me don't pay attention. But people have done things to other people before so it's not out of the question. But I don't feel there was ever anybody I worked with who I had any thought that they would try to hurt me. Most of the men took extra care and safety. I think a lot of the men feel more paternalistic than anything else. They might give a guy a hard time, but they teach you better. A lot of them are older, so they maybe have daughters my age. And they feel like, "If my daughter was here, how would I want her to be treated?"

SC: With more and more women working, men may think, "Well, that could be my wife or daughter." But doesn't that break down when it comes to a white male worker and a Black woman worker? It becomes too far removed for some of them.

Pat: They can't identify.

But there are other kinds of problems. For example, when I first came to the job I'm on now, there were two guys who were apprentices. So I get there the first day and there's four journeymen and three apprentices. A lot of companies will use a lot of apprentices because it's cheaper but they're really not supposed to do it.

Well, the BA found out there were three apprentices and he said, "I've got to get rid of two of them." I stayed and those two went. So I thought, "Oh, Jesus Christ. They're all going to be talking about me." I was a little bit upset about it, but this guy I was working for said, "They've got relatives in the business. They're going to have a job. Don't worry about them." And I said, "Yeah, but they're going to be talking about me." And I know that there's hard feelings between people. And they're always going to look at me, or another woman, as the cause of the problem.

Challenging Inequality

SC: What made it possible for you to be trailblazers? I'm sort of surprised just how few of you there are. Somehow I imagined there were more women in jobs like yours after all this time. Are you aware of what made it possible for women to start getting these skilled jobs?

Susan: In the company I first worked in as a welder, they had no explicit affirmative action at all. It probably was floating around up in personnel somewhere that they had to advance women and that's probably why they put me in the welding department. There had never been a thought of a woman welder in the place. And they had no procedure for how to go about it. So it was just this sort of bizarre thing. People used to come by and peek in the curtains at me while I was working. "Is she really doing it? There she is!" I didn't know what was going on because you're underneath the helmet. The guy who was training me.... I heard these clinking sounds and he was throwing little pieces of wire at the people staring to make them go away. I didn't even know what was going on.

In this company now, which is a major manufacturer, you see women getting promotions and it's going on with other women, not in just one isolated instance. But I guess that happened over the years too. Each time a new person starts doing something it makes it a little bit easier for the next.

Over the last five, six, seven years the number of women has built up. And the company just settled this suit where they will be giving unskilled women inside the plant the opportunity to train for skilled jobs. So there will be more skilled women around. But there hasn't been that much hiring off the street even though there's probably more talent available for them to hire these days. There are probably more women going to technical schools and things like that.

Jenny: Well in my case it was definitely federally mandated affirmative action laws that required the company to hire women for training in skilled jobs. A certain number of women were hired into the training program. And from there women have gone into different types of jobs. But I have noticed that women definitely tend to end up in lower-rated jobs after their training than men do. Men tend to go into management and higher level management positions which just isn't true of women.

Also, a man coming in off the street can say, "Well, I learned to run a lathe in the service." They can basically bullshit their way into a job. While with a woman... you sort of have to show... how did you learn to run a lathe? You're less likely to go right into one of the higher-rated jobs than a man.

SC: What were the circumstances under which you got your job, Pat?

Pat: Well I looked into apprenticeship programs because I wanted to be in a union job and I wanted to do some kind of construction work and I wanted to make a decent wage. And this was my first choice if I had a choice. It was the first year they accepted women into the apprenticeship. They took three women out of 113 apprentices. I don't know how many women applied. It was probably around three times or four times that number. I don't think they would have taken any women if they didn't have a class action suit pending.

SC: The suit was for women and minorities?

Pat: No. It was Black men, basically.

I know a woman who applied a few years before me. She went there to apply

for an apprenticeship, and the woman who was in the office said, "Oh, we don't take applications from women." My friend said, "Oh, you don't?" So the woman called her back later that afternoon and said, "Oh, yeah, I'll be glad to take your application." Obviously somebody said to her, "How could you do this! We have enough trouble as it is." They are in serious trouble. I think the International told the local a long time ago, "You'd better start doing things to keep yourselves out of trouble." But they just held out and held out. The International is not that great, but it knows what's going on. The local wanted to be on its own and autonomous in this situation. There were some Black men who had been working in the union for a long time. I think they were hoping things could stay that way. They didn't necessarily feel one way of another about the men who were already in; but they didn't want to be "inundated."

The year I started, they stopped a training program which they had. The training program had been basically their way of tracking minorities away from the apprenticeship so that they wouldn't have to make them journeymen at a specific time. It kept them out of the mainstream. There were older white men in this program, and veterans, and people who didn't sort of fit the traditional apprenticeship person – a young white guy whose father or uncle was an ironworker.

The courts told the local it had to stop the training program. Either that or in a certain amount of time they had to turn the trainees over to apprentices. There had to be one standard way of getting into the union and one standard of training.

SC: It sounds like there are different ways that inequities are perpetuated. That even though some women are in jobs they were never in before, within that there is still discrimination.

Jenny: Yeah, I would say so. In our shop there is an upgrade procedure that's supposed to be weighted towards seniority plus qualifications. Where they can sleeze around it, they will. But if you catch it, you have an issue for the grievance procedure. It's very common to put in applications for a higher-rated job and find that you've been bypassed.

Susan: In welding they have training programs now. But most of the women in there are training to do TIG welding which is definitely a tracking kind of thing. It's lower-rated and it's just one particular kind of welding. (I've heard TIG welding described as making jewelry.) The company has trained quite a few women in that and that seems to be their plan.

SC: Pat, do you foresee any problems taking your "rightful place" when your apprenticeship is over?

Pat: Well, it's mostly a question of getting work. I might be naive because I haven't missed any time working. Either I've worked with the right people or been at the right place at the right time. Or I've been on jobs where they've had to have some women. Somebody might say, "We've got to have a woman on the job. Do you know any?" Then they come talk to you. So I feel like in the three

years apprenticeship I've been lucky. And I've done a lot better than a lot of the guys for that reason.

But it looks like there won't be a lot of jobs that will require women after the next year or so because affirmative action is not as strong. On the other hand, they really have trouble meeting their quotas because there are so few women in the union. So I hope that I've done well enough that I can work pretty regularly.

NM: Are women still coming in now?

Pat: This year there's only one. And she had worked as a welder on permit which is another classification of person working as an ironworker. If you know somebody and you have a little experience you might be able to get on a job when they have no other local men left. So you can work on permit. And you can work years and years on permit and never get in. But you can try after you work so many hours to take their exam and they can let you in or not let you in depending on what they feel like. But this woman got in: she had enough experience. I don't know how many women applied, but she's the only new woman.

SC: What are some of the similarities and differences facing women and minority workers – and minority women – on the job?

Jenny: Well there are very, very few minority women working in my place. There was a survey one time: it was something like 1% of the plant. Very miniscule. The company can fill quotas by men and not women.

The Women's Committee, which we can talk about later on, has made an effort to recruit minority women who are active, especially from salary I think, but hasn't been spectacularly successful.

Susan: When we were working on recruitment to the training program we sent out a special letter. And while the year before there had hardly been any applications from minority women, this time there is.

Since I've been on this job I haven't worked with any Black women. But with Black men I've found they go through the same thing as I do, I think. We have to prove ourselves as workers three times as hard as the average person. And they also suffer the social isolation. But if Blacks congregate as a group, they get looked down on for that.

I have also found that the people who were the most helpful to me in learning my job have been minority men. They really have gone out of their way. They appreciate the situation you're in of being new and wanting to learn the job. That you have just as much right as anyone else to learn it. And they're willing to impart what they know to you.

When I was in my first job as a TIG welder, a better job opened up in MIG welding, paying about $3 an hour more. And they hired a guy off the street. And a Black guy came over and told me, "Hey, they just hired somebody for your job." So I went running over to the boss and said, "Hey, what's going on." And they ended up giving me the job.

The story of how I got started in TIG welding was similar. They had been tak-

ing men from MIG welding and putting them over in TIG welding once a week because they were shorthanded. And there was always a fight because you made $3 an hour less on it. So first the second shift wouldn't go; then the first shift wouldn't go. So they had them all in the office on the first shift and someone said, "Train Susan how to do it." And a couple of the guys aaid, "She doesn't know how to do that." And it was a couple of Black guys who said, "Well, train her. There's not that much to it." And that's what they did. And that's how I got started!

Women's Solidarity

SC: Are there any political or social activities that women where you work have been involved in?

Pat: Well in the first couple of years the women got together; we went out to eat and stuff like that. But it's strange. There are only eight of us who are ap-

prentices now and there are fights between different women so that hardly anyone is speaking to each other. Some of it is racist stuff. Some of it is just personalities. Now when we try to organize things it's really difficult because so-and-so doesn't want to go if so-and-so is going to be there. It's really difficult.

I think everybody is coming from all different places. Some women have the desire to get together and do things but there really hasn't been a situation where politically everybody felt that they needed the support of the other women. I think it's hard to get everyone together if there is no crisis.

SC: Do you think the pressure of having to do as good or better than anyone else creates this tension between the women?

Pat: Sure. You're competing with each other and you have to try not to think that way.

Here's an example. Two women are working together on the job. One had a problem feeling competent. She felt that the other woman was always trying to show her up. But the other woman obviously was going to do her job the best she could because she really wanted to stay in the business. And the first one was saying, "You shouldn't do everything so good because you're making me look so bad."

It's strange. A lot of women try so hard to get along with the men they're working with, but they expect perfection from the other women. I think almost all the women probably get along better with most of the men that they work with than they do with each other. It's really terrible.

Jenny: Our place is different. I remember one of the really nice things when I got into the training program was that because women were new to it women did tend to socialize together both during and ofter work.

SC: The training program is a situation where there are a lot of women?

Jenny: Right, right. It wasn't really a lot but it seemed like a lot! Women did socialize together. Then just a couple of years later the Women's Committee in the union was started, partly by women from that training program and partly by other women. That gave you an opportunity to be involved in the union and to figure out what were the problems of women all around the plant and what could be done to try to overcome some of them. I think it's really changed things both in the company and the union to have that committee.

SC: Would you say the Committee has a presence? Do women know it's there?

Jenny: Yes, definitely.

SC: How did you manage to achieve that? Most union committees have trouble doing that.

Susan: By being uppity. It is a struggle. You see active women started it, but then it became an official union committee, and for awhile its members were appointed by the union leadership. At which point it ceased to exist because the women they appointed had no intention of doing anything. Then elections came along and active women made a point of getting themselves elected. And they

started working, and over two elections they got rid of most of the deadwood and got on women who were really committed. Proportionately, women are very active in the union, and we have a lot of sympathy politically from men who are involved in building the union.

Building a Women's Committee

NM: What kind of issues does the Women's Committee deal with?

Susan: Well, we won a settlement which was basically on a comparable worth issue, as well as some maternity benefits. And then training: There have been some training programs for non-traditional jobs.

Jenny: Although that started even before the Women's Committee.

Susan: Yes, but this was a specific committment over a three year period. We helped the company in recruiting women to the program and getting it organized right. And then we encouraged women, once they were in the program, to stick it out and talk over their problems and things like that. The company just messed up the first training program terribly. Didn't even notify people when things were going to start. So from then on, we made sure that we sat down with them and went over every person and every detail. And made sure that they went by seniority. And then we called everyone to make sure that the company had actually contacted them.

We have a child care committee that's doing a lot of stuff... coming up with statistics and surveys of people's needs. And we're supposed to sit down with the company and start talking about child care.

We're looking at stuff around VDTs. There's been a big increase of them in the company, so some of the women who are on salary – who work in the office – are interested in that.

SC: The women who work in the office have been in the union from the beginning?

Susan: Yes. But it's an open shop and there's a low percentage of women office workers in the union. Mostly because they have lousy union representation in that particular part of the union. But, yeah, they are. And there are a couple of active women who work on the Women's Committee.

Jenny: Sexual harassment is another issue that the Women's Committee really has gotten involved in through a number of incidents that happened to women. The Committee has made that an important issue in the plant for both women and men. It has really raised people's awareness of the issue. And that's had a really good efect on the company and their attitude towards it and what women are able to do to fight it.

SC: It sounds like the Committee does a lot of outreach work. That's something that intrigues me. It seems like you're actually able to make contact with women on the job as opposed to their having to come to you. I guess my traditional perception of a union committee is that if you can find it you come to it and they tell you, "We meet every three months." What kind of approaches do you

use? As a member of the Women's Committee, can you go up on the floor of the training program and talk to women?

Susan: Yes. When we first started recruiting to the training program we organized an open house at the union hall. We advertised it very well. We got union time and a flyer and we walked around the whole place and put the flyers up in the ladies rooms. Quite a few women came, and they had a chance to talk about the different jobs with women who had already done them. For some of the jobs we had to have men talk about them because there weren't any women. In this way, we got names and phone numbers.

SC: Because you're an official committee you had the access.

Susan: Right. And the union was supposed to pay us union time. Instead of being told to volunteer all the time, which is what they would have preferred.

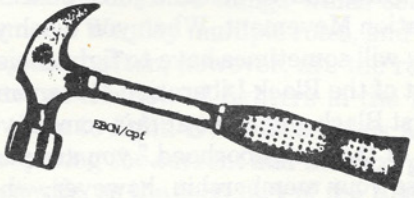
NM: Women are supposed to be such willing volunteers.

Susan: Really. It's been a struggle. For example, we had been meeting maybe once every three months. And we weren't getting done what we wanted to get done. So we tried to have a meeting a month later and we were denied a meeting because the BA was trying to cut back on committee time. (Part of committee time is paid: half paid and half goes after work.) So we finally did have a meeting and someone explained how they were told we could only have a meeting every two months. At which point someone made a resolution that we meet every month!

Well, our minutes go to the Executive Board and they have to accept them. So they rejected our minutes and sent them back for consultation. At which point the Business Agent came to our meeting of twelve angry women. I mean they were going to try to tell us when we could meet. And we ended up with more meeting time. But every time that they've tried to say, "You're not that important," we just had to fight it.

Some of that feistiness was inspired by a couple of members' participation in a CLUW summer school session. We got to send a couple of people. Some were women who had never been active before. They went through a whole process of becoming aware of themselves as women and as union women and of how women are treated by their unions. So when something like the fight over committee time happened, they were quick to recognize what was going on.

We've stuck together, and we've made some progress. The Women's Committee has made a big difference in the union. And in how women are viewed in the shop. And even though we're small in number, we are politically important. ■



"Ain't I A Woman?": Black History Forum

Black women play, and have traditionally played, a multiplicity of roles in American society. As employers, as paid workers, we are scientists, and engineers; we are business executives, executive secretaries, accountants; we are doctors, nurses, medical technicians; we are artists, dancers, musicians, poets, printers, publishers. We are mayors and congressional representatives. And we are, most of us, production workers, dietary workers, and clerks. There is probably at least *one* of us in every imaginable occupation in existence, and there are a *lot* of us, about 70% of us, in five or six occupations, namely production workers, domestics, cooks, dietary workers and clerks.

In addition to, or sometimes instead of, the jobs we have, we are mothers, wives, girlfriends, community workers and church activists. Many of us play multiple roles in society in various combinations: mother and clerical worker; wife and church activist; or mother, production worker and union activist; or sometimes, wife, mother, community activist, service worker, church activist, and *superwoman.*

So, given our roles in society at large, what roles do we play in the Black Liberation Movement? How one answers that question depends on how one defines the Black Liberation Movement. Some would say that there *is* no Black Liberation Movement because there are no large groups of Black people in the street demanding Black power. I don't agree with this assessment. I believe that the Black Liberation Movement, defined as conscious activity of Black people to develop unity, to fight against racism, racial stereotypes and national oppression, and to fight *for* justice and equality, is alive and well. All of the activity of Black individuals and collectives who have reached the point of saying, "I am *not* going to take this anymore," constitutes the Black Liberation Movement. When you file a just grievance against your boss for discrimination, you are part of the Black Liberation Movement. When you march on Washington, D.C. to honor the late Dr. Martin Luther King and to demand jobs, peace and freedom, you are part of the Black Liberation Movement. When you teach your children that they are Black, and that they will sometimes have to fight society to get with is *rightfully* theirs, you are part of the Black Liberation Movement. Even when you say, "I am going to be the first Black employee at *this* company," or, "I am going to be the first Black resident of *that* neighborhood," you are part of the Black Liberation Movement. You lose your membership, however, when you begin to say "I

am going to be the *only* Black employee of this company, and the *only* Black resident of that neighborhood." That kind of thinking and behavior is not pathbreaking, is not unifying, but is selfish and divisive.

Rachel Burger/cpf

As Black women we do all of those things which serve to include us in the Black Liberation Movement. We play multiple roles, and we play a multiplicity of roles. The roles we play most often, however, are the roles of mother, and nurturer. We bear the next generation of fighters in the Black Liberation Movement, and we prepare them to fight. Even those of us who are not parents find ourselves nurturing, preparing the current and the next generation of fighters in our roles as girlfriend or wife, as the secretary of the Black community organiza-

tion to which we belong, as teachers and counselors of Black children, as nurses serving Black patients or as the chairperson of the church fundraising committee which sponsors barbecues and bake sales to raise money.

The role of mother and the role of nurturer are very important roles, *critical* roles, in the Black Liberation Movement. Warriors must be born and must be provided sustenance. But the Black Liberation Movement suffers when it consciously or unconsciously enforces a strict division of labor between men and women. It suffers because it does not draw on all of the resources of its people. Yes, there are women who love the role of mother and nurturer, and who are *good* at it. There are women who don't know if they *like* the role of mother and nurturer, but who play that role anyway, because it is familiar and expected of them. And there are women who do not like the role of mother and nurturer, who are lousy at it, and who are or could be wonderful engineers, for example, overseeing the construction of a Black community center.

Conscious mothering is critical to our survival. But there are many other things we can do, some in addition to mothering, some *instead* of mothering. The alarming growth in the number of Black teenage mothers indicates to me that we need to consciously broaden our self-definition, accept ourselves and become accepted in realms other than, or in addition to, nurturing and mothering. Between the media, adult role models, peers, the limits of public education, and the limited options in the job market, Black teenagers are getting the message that the only route to acceptance and womanhood is pregnancy and motherhood.

We should choose our roles carefully, exercising all of our options. We should be leaders, pathbreakers in whatever role we choose to play in the Black Liberation Movement. If we have chosen to be mothers, we must expand our repertoire of Black consciousness-giving behavior, be creative, adventuresome and bold in preparing the next generation for battle. Motherhood should be a *choice,* an option selected from all of those available. We must be bold in discovering and understanding the options available to us, and we must be courageous in trying out those options. We have to demonstrate to our teenagers and other young people that mothering has to be conscious and well-thought out; that there are other options in addition to motherhood, options which can be exercised *before* motherhood, *during* motherhood or even *instead* of motherhood; that struggle and creativity are key to our survival; and that there is always room for one more Black woman to play a special role in the Black Liberation Movement. Sure, Harriet Tubman led slaves to freedom, but we ain't free yet, and we could use some more Harriet Tubmans to show us the way.

– given by a representative of PUL

Sue Doro: Three Poems:

from Of Birds and Factories, *by Sue Doro*

Our last issue introduced FM *readers to the poetry of Sue Doro. We include in this issue three more poems which make a wonderful contribution to our celebration of International Women's Day this year. Sue expresses experiences, thought and feelings that complement the discussion in our interview with women in non-traditional jobs.*

In her 1983 Forward to Sue Doro's book, Meridel le Sueur wrote:

> Carry this book around with you. Take it to union meetings, to your place of worship, give it to your neighbor or co-worker, read it aloud to the children. Go from door to door.
>
> For here is a woman, a worker, and a writer, who, out of the silencing, is speaking of what is really happening to us all, at home, at work, in the struggle.

For copies of the book, write to Sue Doro, c/o People's Books and Crafts, 1818 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202. We are most embarrassed to report that we got the title of Sue's book wrong in the heading for our selection last time (though not in our introduction). It is Of Birds and Factories.

Trying to Turn a Bad Thing into Good (Allis Chalmers 1976)

3:20 p.m.

a worse kind of sad
is the second shift mom
leaving for work
in the afternoon
through no choice
of her own

just in time
to wave to her kids
getting off the school bus
coming home

3:25 p.m.

the man in the life
of the second shift woman
washes cast iron
from his face and hands
changes clothes
and starts on his way
home from work
knowing she's already gone

back and forth they travel
using every minute
of the earth's rotation
her eyes are open
his are shut
she's running a machine
he's figuring out
another kid emergency
before he goes to bed
making decisions
in his one head
that could easily use two

they write each other notes
tape record messages
and try not to argue
on the telephone
because it's hell to cry alone

8:00 p.m.

monday through friday
she phones every night
on her 8 o'clock break
from the telephone
in the warehouse
that's the most quiet

then for ten minutes
she listens to her children
grow

says good bye
hangs up

cries more
'til she cries less
and loves
like a life time
full of week-ends

3:00 a.m.

second shift lady
upside down life
comes home to quiet

let the dog out
let the dog in

eat a little something
take a little bath
climb into a warmed up bed
to snuggle with
her sleepy first shift man

First Poem from My New Job on the Railroad 1978

is Sylvester
not yet ready
for retirement
walking up to me
third week on the job

Sylvester
smiling and nodding
watching me
nervously operate
the wheel bore machine

Sylvester
waiting for me
to finish the wheel

then taking his huge hand
from its hiding place
behind his back

opening his fist
to show
a railroad spike
brand new
shiney
with "sue machinist
wheel bore..1978"
hand painted
in yellow railroad
marker

thank you Sylvester
for this
first
poem

Sisters
Milwaukee Road 1979

now don't get me wrong!
the guys i work with
are a good old bunch

it's just that sometimes
when i look around
and see no one like me
i think of two
who used to be here
in this factory full of men

two other women
one two three we were
sisters in hard hats
with bobbie pins and wrenches
in our pockets
sharing those working womens'
special blues

like sisters we were
trading stories of different jobs
laughing crying together
in the foremans' tiny bathroom
where our lockers stood

like sisters we were
and there was nothing like it!

now one's gone
one's laid off
and there's only me again

but don't get me wrong!
the guys i work with
are a good old bunch

it's just that sometimes
when i look around...

Burger/CPF

"I thought we were allies": A letter

Dear Forward Motion,

Here is a letter I wrote to a friend at work, one of the same friends I cried about leaving when I left the night shift before. [See FM, *February 1983.] I came back to the night shift very shortly after going on days.*

This is letter is to a friend I care very much about (even though he has his male chauvinist tendencies). We were going through some bad times. Several of the men on the line were spending ten hours a night harassing me about women. I wrote this letter to my friend and we called a truce and have been getting along fine. Shortly after that I threatened to kill a couple other guys on the line, who were not friends, and get very little harassment now, although a lot of teasing.

Folks here thought I should send it in to Forward Motion.

–Marion

Sept. 11, 1983

Dear Friend,

I'm so tired of fighting and hearing the bullshit about women all day long. Why can't you treat me like a person? Why do you act like I'm the enemy? I know you enjoy teasing and aggravating and that's ok, up to a point. But, it's gone beyond that. It hurts me to hear women put down at every turn.

You seem to think women don't care about each other. For centuries, women have accepted putting each other down and being "catty" and jealous. Well, it's a new day and the women's movement has taught me that we don't have to accept that view of ourselves any more. We've learned a new word that encompasses a whole new *dimension: Sisterhood!*

You probably don't believe it exists, because you don't understand it. It is for real, it often sustains me when I feel I can't stand anymore.

I heard you tell Leonard Friday that, "She knows I don't mean it, she knows I love her." What makes you think I can believe you love me when you bad mouth women all day? Aren't I a woman? If you don't love and respect women, how can you love me? Maybe you mean you love me like you love your dog. That's what you and Dave were comparing women to when you were talking about training your wives. Dave said, "If I had my dog that well trained, I'd be happy."

If that's how you love me, as a dog or pet, forget it. Love me as an equal or don't love me at all! And if you don't love your wife as an equal, don't love me either.

I am a woman. Before I was a mother or an auto worker or a trade unionist, I was a woman. You know it brings pain to hear of other women being mistreated or put down in any way. I believe you're just teasing or perhaps wishful thinking, when you say you have your wife trained or suggest that she grovels before you. I hate to hear it, even if it's just teasing. Somewhere, some woman is being subjected to any manner of mistreatment and abuse simply because she's woman.

Why must we engage in the "battle of the sexes"? It's not our war. Like other wars of our times it was created and is maintained to serve the interest of the ruling class. We don't benefit from it, we both lose. Let's be conscientious objectors and refuse to engage in this battle.

Let's be friends. Let's talk about how we can make our union stronger, how we can unite our line to fight the company. Let's talk about why people don't stick together and what makes people cynical and why we must have hope that things can be changed.

You always say women don't have any business working here. Well, I've recently begun to believe maybe you are right. I don't want to be here where I'm not wanted. I would rather work where women are not such a minority and where I'm welcome. But the jobs that are traditionally women's jobs don't pay as well as the auto plants. My time is just as valuable to me as yours is to you. So, if you don't want to work with me, *you* go wait tables.

I thought we were allies. We stuck together and fought the job and won a partial victory. How can we be prepared to fight the next battle if we're disunited and demoralized from fighting each other?

In the long time that we've known each other and worked together, you know I've come to love you. It's because you mean so much to me that what you say about women hurts me so deeply. I sometimes wonder if it's because I love you that you try so hard to hurt me, to use the fact that I care about you to have power over me. What you don't seem to understand is how deeply ingrained is my love for women and my love for myself as a woman. I'll quit loving you before I lose my love for women and self. Rather than be forced to do that, I'd prefer we get back to our old friendship. Can we try?

You often say that us "women's libbers" want to be men. You don't believe me when I say you're wrong. Sometimes I wish all men could be women for just a little while so they could understand sisterhood. I wish I could cause you to understand, feel, the words that Helen Reddy sings: "I am woman, watch me grow, see me standing toe to toe, as I spread my loving arms across the land." That is Sisterhood! But she goes on to say, "But I'm still an embryo, with a long, long way to go until I make my brothers understand."

When men begin to understand the true value of women, see us as we really

are, not to fit in some mold of men's making, respect our intelligence, comprehend our worth as more than half of the human race, that will be a great day. Then humanity can go about the business of growing up, correcting our mistakes, clean up the world and move on out to the stars.... or whatever it is we need to be doing.

I don't totally regret all the discussions we've had about women. Some have been beneficial and thought provoking, when they have been serious discussions. I don't want to stop being friends. I don't want to stop caring about you. I don't even want to stop discussing women or women's issues. I just want you to stop trying to hurt me and please stop downgrading women. OK, friend?

Love,
Marion

Christmas Day at the Medical Center

Dear Forward Motion,

I am a staff nurse at the only public hospital in my community. Jersey City is an aging industrial city whose industry has been trickling out for a decade, leaving behind rows of unused, broken down piers and blocks of brick townhouses and brownstones. The piers are waiting for a 400 million dollar waterfront plan to transform them into condominiums and office buildings and fancy restaurants and shops. The brownstones are waiting for real estate developers to buy and re-sell them at triple the price. And the people are waiting on unemployment lines and food stamp lines, waiting for "Reagancheese," waiting in shelters and welfare hotels for decent housing.

The Medical Center is the only public health care facility in the country. In its heyday in the 40's and 50's it was a thriving teaching hospital with a national reputation. Now in financial difficulty and moving from crisis to crisis for over a decade its very survival is in question. A year ago, the Medical Center declared bankruptcy and is now seeking to join the trend towards privatization of public hospitals by reorganizing as a voluntary institution. Yet for the workers, many of whom have worked there for over 20 years, and for the patients, life in the hospital goes on, a day at a time, a week at a time. For me, as a community activist and a nurse, it has opened the door to a whole new perspective on my work. It is one thing to write paragraphs about the links between decent health care and the struggle for decent housing, adequate income, recreational facilities and safety in the community. It is another thing altogether to see and feel the concrete reality of that connection every day – in your job and in your life. For me, bringing these issues together, presents an enormous challenge.

I am enclosing a poem I wrote on Christmas Day – exactly a year after the "bankruptcy" began. I wrote it to get the pain "off my chest," but some friends I shared it with suggested sending it to you. I am a reader and supporter of Forward Motion. *Please feel free to publish this letter and the poem if you want to.*

Sincerely,
Elena G.

Christmas Day at the Medical Center
December 25, 1983

Leslie is 15 and she wants to die
Her neck and wrists are ringed with the desperate scratchings of a rusty nail
But she doesn't remember why or when
She wanders through the ward clutching a teddy bear someone gave her
Looking for the babies who make her smile
She looks old and tired – thrown away
Its Christmas Day at the Medical Center – this is her third attempt
She has nowhere to go

Wanda is crying
Between each sob we count the hissing wheeze of her asthmatic breath
Her mother has slept in the chair by her bed all night
"No llores, mi hijita – que nos vamos, no llores"
Wanda is mad at Santa Claus because he forgot to bring "La Muñeca con Patinas" (Baby Skates) and the Dreamhouse of Barbie
Her mother half smiles and shrugs one weary shoulder.
"Hago lo que puedo. I do what I can. The house is cold – only the oven for heat – mi hija gets sick – $30 por la Muñeca
Hago lo que puedo. . ."

Its Christmas Day at the Medical Center
Yesterday the Mayor's office sent over 10 Cabbage Patch Dolls and a photographer
(All black dolls – oh look! we joked – he sent us the ones no one else would adopt – but it wasn't funny)
Today no one comes.
There's no hot water
And the roaches enjoy the remains of the Christmas dinner
That the kids didn't touch.

Another exhausted public hospital
Wrung dry, bankrupt and waiting
Waiting for Santa Claus to build us a new one
With a parking lot and paintings on the walls.
Will Leslie find her way there?
Will there be a warm room for Wanda?

Its 3 o'clock.
Joking and laughing on the line at the time clock.

"Hey man – you working Christmas *again?*"
"Have a happy"
"Gotta get home and hook up the Atari"
"Turkey's waiting – gotta go – see you tomorrow"

We are released
Spilling out the ER door into the cold, fresh air
We are all free till tomorrow
And tomorrow will be....
The Day After Christmas.

Peg Averill/LNS/CPF

New Technology

Our local recently held a conference on new technology which was very broadly attended. The conference and agitation around it brought about some concrete results, raised important political issues, and aroused profound concerns for the future of jobs in our industry and the whole labor movement and working class.

Among some of the specific accomplishments:

1) Succeeded in raising concern about new tech throughout the shop to the point where most workers would say it's the key issue for workers today;

2) Helped build a core of activists which could be called upon for other goals – e.g. helping form a socialist strategy group in the plant, helping in an election campaign where a progressive ran on a new tech ticket;

3) Forced the Local, District and International to sit up and take notice. We are currently using the "tough talk" of local officials to try to get some action around new tech locally;

4) Raised broader trade union issues like the shorter work week, legislation for new tech, pressure for new tech language in the contract.

5) The conference further united several different unions in our plant for the first time;

6) Helped put the shorter work week on our union's agenda;

7) Raised some profound political questions like workers control vs. management rights, neutrality of science and inventions and the future of industrial labor.

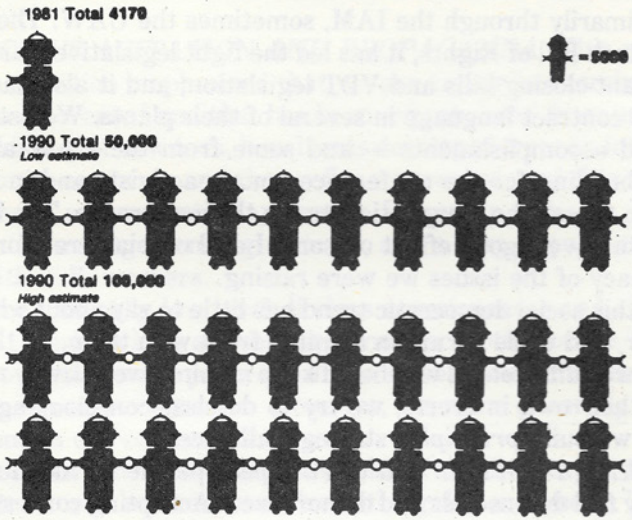
What is New Technology?

New tech generally refers to many applications of the microchip computer technology which lies behind the new round of automation, robotics, and computerized control.

New tech is widely applicable both to office and factory, to skilled and unskilled jobs. Several reasons make its impact severe. It has developed very quickly over the last 20 years and it's still leaping; it's coming on line at a time when the economy as a whole is in a serious recession; it's coming on line when the old industrial base is being transformed; it's coming in when export of capital is taking a leap. In 1980, *Business Week* estimated that the new tech will eliminate 25 million jobs.

The question of the political and economic consequences of the introduction of the new technology continues to grow and sharpen in society. It is certain to become one of the areas where the labor movement challenges the political direction of society and an area where the new-found AFL-CIO penchant for coalition building will be attempted.

Comparisons of 1990 and 1981 US robot populations
The figures show that the robot population will increase from less than 4200 in 1981 to the 50,000 to 100,000 range by 1990; between 25% and 30% of these robots will be installed in the major auto manufacturing companies' plants.



Application	Auto Estimates Low	Auto Estimates High	Other manufacturing Estimates Low	Other manufacturing Estimates High	Total 1990 Estimates Low	Total 1990 Estimates High	Total 1981
Welding	3200	4100	5500	10,000	8700	14,100	1500
Assembly	4200	8800	5000	15,000	9200	23,800	40
Painting	1800	2500	3200	5500	5000	8000	540
Machine loading & unloading	5000	8000	17,500	34,000	22,500	42,000	1690
Other	800	1600	3800	10,500	4600	12,100	400
Total	15,000	25,000	35,000	75,000	50,000	100,000	4170

Source: UAW Research Bulletin, April 1983

The AFL-CIO's concern stems from: 1) the extraordinary leap in productivity that this technology makes possible in areas of both production and services, and thus its job-destroying potential; 2) this comes at a time when the basic industries are in decline due to antiquated facilities, foreign competition, management practices, etc., and when the public sector is in financial chaos and cannot take up the slack; 3) the economy overall is in decline which will make the smooth introduction of job-killing technology impossible; 4) new technology threatens the base of the unions so that even the most narrow bureaucrats see they have an interest in doing something, if only for the sake of keeping dues; 5) the growing and acceptable social democratic trend in labor, which has set on its political agenda the struggle to control the investments and use of private capital through social pressure, coalitions, laws, etc.

Unity and Differences with Social-Democrats

This last is important. Social democratic unionists have generally led the way in building new labor alliances – on new tech as well as other issues. This has been done primarily through the IAM, sometimes the UAW. The IAM has proposed a new tech Bill of Rights; it has led the fight legislatively around new tech issues like plant-closing bills and VDT legislation; and it also has won some of the strongest contract language in several of their plants. We used a lot of IAM literature and accomplishments – and some from the UAW and Norwegian unions – in building for the conference among activists and in the packet we handed out to those who bought tickets for the conference. The IAM literature also seemed to have a good effect on some Local officials, reinforcing the trade union legitimacy of the issues we were raising.

Of course, this social democratic trend has little to say about what happens on the shop floor, and while we are in a united front with them, on this issue, there are at least three differences we should keep in mind: we actively mobilize people to fight for their own interests; we try to do class-conscious agitation and propaganda; we build *principled* strategic alliances.

(1) MOBILIZING PEOPLE. You can't expect people to mobilize for political reform if they feel defenseless and demoralized. Accepting concession in the contract and on the floor creates defeatism and a weak view of the unions among workers. In other words, using the rank and file as a pressure group to lobby for something like control over investment policy will not work when you have weakened them ideologically and strengthened management rights in other arenas.

The class conscious alternative is to fight for *popular* power over planning in new tech at all levels based on the knowledge that Big Business has proven itself incapable of doing this. We have tried to do this through the grievance procedure and shop agitation. One grievance used new tech language in the contract which states that anyone losing their job due to new tech will be paid for six months at their old rate. Our case involved a pieceworker whose job was eliminated by a Numerical Control machine tool on daywork. We did not win the case, but we used it to get people to come to the conference. Fighting to enforce notification language is another example.

We worked on the conference with officials in our Local and in the International, but they only passively supported it. Many of them hoped or were absolutely convinced it wouldn't work. We mobilized people based on actual conditions in the shop. In one department from which many workers attended, the steward had generated technology grievances, held lunchtime meetings, brought up the issue in management attempts to form Quality Circles. Once we reached this active core, they began to help the organizing. Almost all the tickets were sold in this mannner, while among local officers, only the few progressives sold any tickets at all.

The fact that new tech questions will have a strong legislative component does not mean that mobilizing people is any less important or possible. The fight for the 8 hour day and unemployment insurance both turned on legislative efforts but were some of the most successful mass movements in the history of the US labor movement.

CLASS CONSCIOUS AGITATION AND PROPAGANDA. This means that at each point our agitation emphasized that we are trying to exercise power over the wealth that *we* created and that has been expropriated from us. We need to talk about the history of new tech, how it was developed from an intelligence and experience of ours, our taxes and the profits we created, and therefore it is only right that we have a democratic say over it. It's really *ours,* it's just that they own it. This is the management rights issue, and a very important issue to agitate around with U.S. workers.

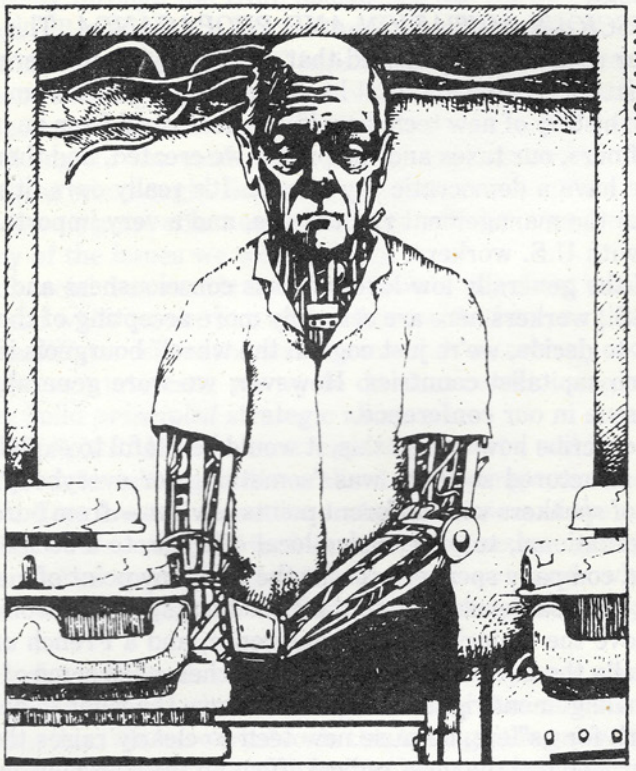
Because of the generally low level of class consciousness and class organization in the U.S., workers here are certainly more accepting of the "management has the right to decide, we're just cogs in the wheel" bourgeois ideology than in other Western capitalist countries. However, we were generally successful in raising this issue in our conference.

Before we describe how we did this, it would be useful to explain that our conference was structured so there was "something for everybody." There was a wide variety of speakers with different points of view – from bureaucratic types from the international, to progressive local officials, to a socialist perspective. We also had a company speaker present the company point of view. We wanted the different political levels, i.e. t. u. officialdom, speakers from our local (us), who could move the majority at the conference, and a French unionist who inspired especially the Left workers. In the speeches, even some of the hack types touched on management rights issues – "we have the right to demand that this new tech work for us" etc. because new tech so clearly raises this issue.

The speaker who had the most radical effect on the consciousness of the workers was the French socialist shop steward. He gave a very popular speech with strong worker control-type content and talked socialism some. He spoke of their successful fight against "iron collar workers" – i.e. robots. He, more than anyone else, explained graphically how new tech, or any technology created by capitalism is not neutral, but is designed specifically in such a way as to minimize worker contol over production and to have the effect of depowering, dehumanizing, deskilling the work force. A good example is Numerical Control technology. As commonly used throughout the U.S., production tapes are based on engineering design and controlled to eliminate the machinist from using his or her skill. An alternative technical approach – tapes develped based on "following" the skill of the machininst on a record and transforming that skill by computer using feedback from the machinist – was developed but not used by management.

Over and over again, U.S. business has opted for the type of automated machining that removes control from the workers, often explicitly stating this as

the reason. The Numerical Control type machining described above will have much less problems in the future once it *is* running smoothly – because workers have less control over it. The point is that U.S. business has made a *political* decision as to how to develop technology.



Another example: GE, a pioneer in this type of numerical controls, locks up control panels on its machines distributed here in the U.S., giving keys only to supervisors. In Europe, where many unions have won the right for operators to learn programming, these machines are sent over and they don't even have locks built into the panels. Specific examples such as these really hit home to workers who had previously had the attitude, "we can't stop new technology, it's progress." Fighting against deskilling thus has a lot more content than just fighting for workers to learn to program the new machines, or fighting to "make the new tech work for us." It involves having a say in the new tech *itself* – in designing and implementing it.

We argue that if management has the absolute right to introduce *what* they want, *when* they want, the effects of new tech can be disastrous to our job security, union security, wage rates and health and safety. Then what good is the rest of the contract? We have to challenge *managements rights itself.* We need to be

involved in design and planning or we'll be reduced to band-aid catch-up measures with no chance of success.

Not a Special Interest Group

3) BUILDING PRINCIPLED ALLIANCES. The strategy of labor liberals and social democrats is still by and large to see labor as a special interest group. This position betrays itself especially where women and minorities are concerned, but also when we discuss the effects of new tech on less privileged sections of the class than organized labor. The trend in bargaining where unions have won some gains is to get job protection, retraining, etc. for *existing, employed union members.* This naturally will have the effect of keeping jobs largely white and male, and will create further antagonisms between organized and unorganized labor, the women's and national movements. It is also a self-defeating strategy that leaves even the white males defenseless in the end. In part, it is this type of special interest strategy that is responsible for labor being in the sorry state it is today.

Strategically, only a fight for *jobs,* centered on the shorter work week or year, can unite the whole working class, ally it with oppressed nationality and women's movements, gain community support for plant struggles, etc. We have to go beyond "Job security for life but we won't replace you" schemes which even pit skilled unionized workers of today against their own next generation who will be among the unemployed.

In opposing the recent march on Washington, Bayard Rustin said the real issues for Black people today should be, among other things, automation and cybernation, not Jobs, Peace and Freedom. While he was wrong about the March and tries to liquidate the national character of the Black freedom movement, he did hit on a point. Even an *expanding* economy may not provide new jobs for the structurally unemployed. But the mass industries which are being made more capital intensive even if they *do* recover, are the only industries where Black workers got into the $10/hour unionized strata. The struggle to control new tech is a Black struggle as well as a labor struggle.

New tech has been an issue for a while among working women in the women's movement. Most women work in service or clerical. Automation is already taking its toll in clerical work, with VDTs and computers eliminating some clerical jobs while creating health hazards for others. Working women's organizations and unions like UAW District 65 and SEIU Local 925 have done good research, lobbying and negotiating in these areas. Home computers also pose a threat to office jobs, since there is an untapped labor market of housewives who can be superexploited on home computers. So the new tech struggle also a women's struggle as well as a labor struggle.

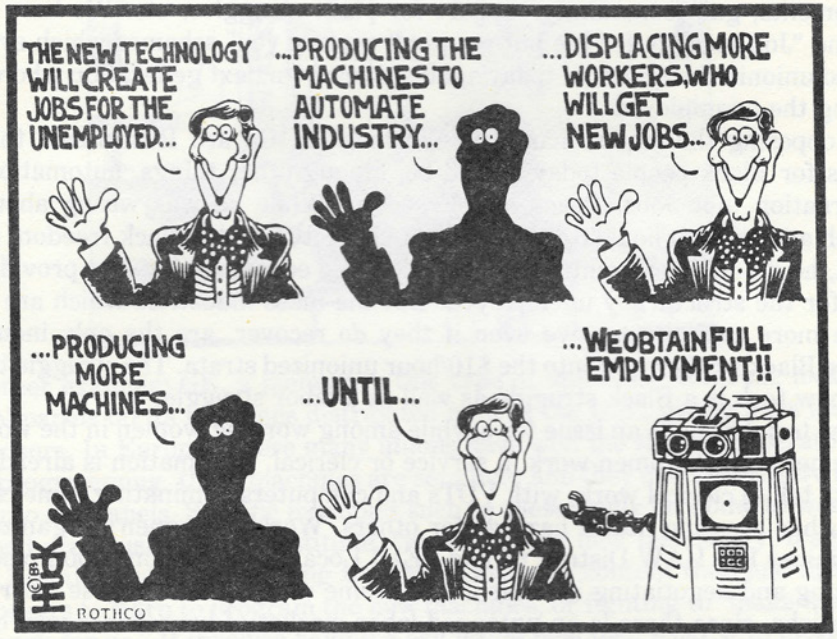
Our conference only peripherally addressed these dimensions of the struggle, although our Local's womens committee is now addressing these issues.

Shorter Work Week

A shorter work week with no pay cut is simply the only way to provide employment for the working class. Each recession since WWII left us with higher unemployment than before.

Strategies other than the shorter work week – such as job enrichment, rate increases, participating in job planning, etc. – can defend the skills in those jobs which remain, but only a Shorter Work Week (or year) can *create* jobs. As we mentioned before, only a program on new tech with the defense of jobs can unite and defend the interest of all sectors of the working class.

The SWW is moving into the center of the national debate over the future of industry and labor, along with such questions as controlling the flow of capital investments, and the quest for an "industrial policy." In the weeks before our conference, three different local major newspaper columnists broached this subject of SWW favorably. In labor, the fight for the shorter work week has a long tradition. Quotes from George Meany and Walter Reuther can easily be found to support this struggle. This year more than one International President devoted his Labor Day address to this topic.



We also have the examples of European labor advances – In Belgium, for example, the work week averages a little over 36 hours, and government policies in Sweden and France favor longer vacations to stimulate employment. The German unions have announced the bargaining goal of a 35 hour week.

Of course, this growing respectability of the *idea* of a shorter work week should not mask the reality that the corporations don't even want to talk about it and American unions will talk about it but not fight for it.

Initial efforts to shorten the work week will probably focus on such things as more vacations, sick days, flex time and more part-time jobs. These tend to be really ways to shorten the work year but have the same effect on employment as a shorter work week. Before our last contract, *more sick and vacation* time came in 3rd only to *wages* and *COLA* among benefits workers wanted.

These goals, especially more vacation time and sick days, are more in line with the type of gains organized labor law has sought and won in the last 3 decades. The fact that labor is giving some of these gains away in concessions doesn't change the recognized legitimacy of the demands.

Labor has to make the shorter work week an issue and national controversy in every available arena of collective bargaining, the press, electoral politics, academic life, etc. But *winning* will depend on making it an issue on the shop floor.

We argue that if business wants any cooperation in introducing new tech, we need guarantees that we will garner some of its benefits, particularly the shorter work week. Otherwise, why should workers cooperate in an industrial revolution which will put our skills and jobs to the guillotine?

In agitating for this viewpoint on the floor, we've been somewhat successful in changing consciousness. At first people think you're crazy, especially when they realize you mean a shorter work with the *same pay!* We say the shorter work week is the only way for us to get a share of the productivity gains which our labor has made possible in the first place. This can lead to discussion about profits, who controls them, where they come from; science and who controls it. There are of course many other arguments, but this, we think, is an important *political* argument to be made. During the last Industrial Revolution, workers in the capitalist world won the 8 hour day through legislation, but that legislation was primarily based on direct action. We are now in the midst of another industrial revolution and we are long overdue for a shorter work week with no paycuts.

* * * *

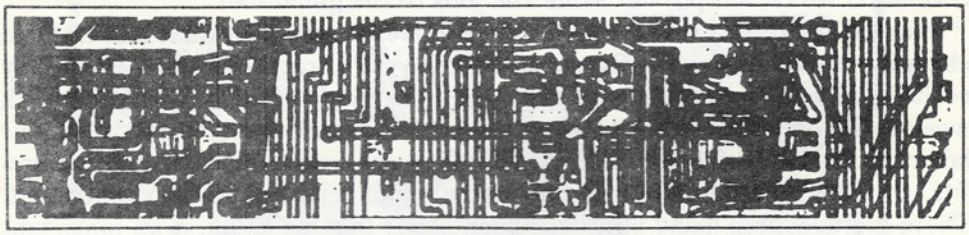
Food for Thought

This industrial Revolution poses some serious questions that go beyond what we have normally considered to be thebounds of trade union activism. For one, they challenge the trade union to be more of a social and cultural force in people's lives, rather than a narrow bread and butter organization. In the fight for a shorter work week, trade unions must play a role in regard to increased leisure time – that role doesn't have to wait – it can begin right now as part of the challenge of transforming the unions.

Even more profound and disturbing, this new technological revolution poses serious questions beyond the scope of any trade union activism, and beyond any

concept of the working class that Marx could possibly have visualized when he wrote *Capital.* This industrial revolution may portend the end of the working class as we know it at least in this country. The industrial base has already been eroded by factors other than new tech automation, and is being more and more automated. The same with clerical work as we have always known it. "What's the good of going on strike when they can scab the work out through a satellite beam?" said a *New York Times* typesetter in a speech to last year's Labor Notes conference. Although the effects in every industry are not this dramatic, he made a good, disturbing point about the future power of labor. It raises questions being debated in the Left about the U.S.'s relation to the third world, and the effect new tech would have on the (right now) growing export of capital. It certainly raises the question of whether we might have a world where perhaps a *majority* might not earn their livelihood by wage labor, and where structural unemployment will be unlike anything we've seen.

– Susan Fischer and Jamie Curran



Appearance and Essence in American Politics

We in the I.S. are grateful to Jonathan Hoffman for his well-reasoned reply in the October issue of *Changes* to Dan La Botz's article *(Changes,* May 1983) on the Harold Washington campaign and victory.

In the spirit of the encouraging trend toward comradely dialogue on the revolutionary left, I would like to comment on some of the propositions that seem to underlie the PUL's approach toward electoral politics, as presented in recent issues of *Forward Motion.*

To begin with, in a couple of places Jonathan Hoffman in particular has suggested a changing balance between the relative power of state and local government and the national government – that local government is becoming more important, that Reagan's "New Federalism" will accelerate this process, and that this shift has implications for the left's electoral orientation.

If I understand correctly, Hoffman is arguing that this is a change in objective power relations (not just a certain political/tactical shift in the terrain where social issues are argued). If so I believe the analysis is wrong and even dangerous.

The central/national state in the U.S. has grown as a source of concentrated power at the expense of local and state goverment in an almost unbroken line since the Civil War. Reagan's administration is no exception.

While the state is not susceptible to simple quantitative measure, the growth of the budget is certainly one indication. Under Reagan the *direction* has changed slightly from social to military priorities, but he is in no way *weakening* the central state.

In fact, the so-called "New Federalism" is the opposite of what Reagan claims. By starving the states and cities of funds he is *reducing* their autonomous power. State and local politicians may talk more about what to do with their funds, but they will have less to act with. They will increasingly be the manipulated – whether witting or not – agents of austerity. So any political strategy based on the notion that we are entering an era of increasing local and/or state autonomy is almost certain to get derailed.

Given the recent wave of Black electoral victories at the local level it is, of course, comforting to believe that local politics can provide a secure base of power from which a new Black liberation movement can be launched. Certainly these campaigns might encourage greater movement within the Black community than has been the case for over a decade.

But strategically, it is important to understand that these new Black or Latin administrations will be *more* dependent on the framework of national politics and budgetary processes – in particular, favors from Congress, or, if the Democrats win in 1984, the White House.

Furthermore, as the new Harold Washington adminstration has demonstrated by hiring Felix Rohatyn's Lazard Freres outfit, they will be administrators of austerity – a role reinforced by their dependence on the Democratic Party. The only political/strategic alternative would be to build a combative independent mass movement, outside and opposed to the framework of Democratic austerity which, these days, is called Industrial Policy.

Short of that perspective – which is certainly *not* that of Harold Washington or Wilson Goode, although Mel King may prove to represent something more positive – these local administrations have neither any political independence nor even bargaining power, except what they can get through horse-trading in inner-party maneuvering.

The illusion of a shift in power toward local politics, it seems to me, is only one example of a larger phenomenon – the great difference between appearance and essence in capitalist politics, and especially in American politics.

As Marxists, we all know that things are not always what they seem. Unlike prior social systems, capitalism hides its real social relations behind visible institutions such as the market, so that relations between people are made to appear as relations between things. Similarly, capital's political dictatorship and monopoly are hidden behind representative institutions; grotesque social inequality and injustice are masked by "equality before the law;" and so forth.

This is why, generation after generation, the left finds itself debating whether the state is an *instrument of class rule* (the classic revolutionary Marxism of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, etc.) or a *contested terrain of class conflict* (the reformist viewpoint of Bernstein and later Kautsky, of the Eurocommunist Santiago Carrillo, and in America of Michael Harrington and the Democratic Socialists of America).

In the U.S., where the revolutionary left has been small and for much of its recent "ultraleft" history hostile to electoral politics, a Marxist understanding of the working of the American state has been primitive. Thus we are forced to rely, although uncomfortably, on the research of bourgeois social scientists who are totally superficial and subjective. Unfortunately, the left sometimes uses this sort of material in an uncritical way.

Nowhere, it seems to me, is this truer than in the left's recent debates over the nature of the Democratic Party. The analysis of the workings, decision-making and political framework of the Democratic Party as put forward by most writers in *In These Times, Socialist Review,* and many other publications seems anchored in the core assumptions of U.S. mainstream social science.

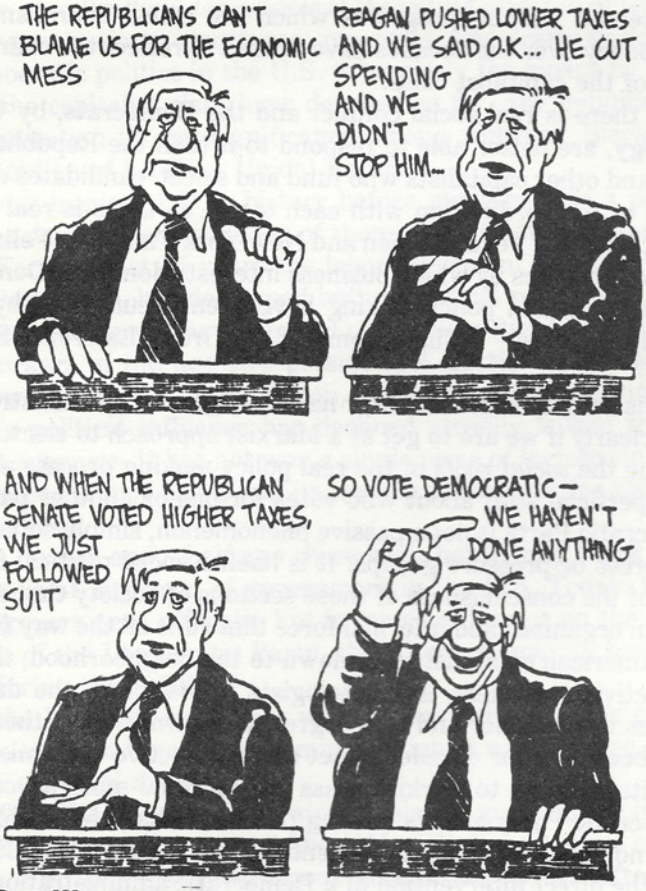
One of these assumptions appears to be implicitly accepted in recent analyses in *Forward Motion:* the notion that the Democratic Party is what it appears to

be, a coalition of social forces and classes with differing weight but in which all forces have influence in proportion to how much they struggle.

In this essentially pluralistic view the Party itself is an empty vessel to be filled with whatever political or social content the contending forces can achieve. The match is, of course, recognized to be uneven – as Jonathan Hoffman has noted, the effects of PAC money tend to fix the contest. It is still implicitly assumed that the Party itself, as an institution, is basically passive and pluralist in nature.

The Democratic Party's lack of ideological coherence (a big factor in its electoral success) gives this assumption a certain appearance of reality. But I want to argue that it is quite wrong. The Democratic Party is not the sum of its visible organizations and its cadres (the Party "regulars"), caucuses and conventions.

Quite the contrary: candidate selection and actual policy-making at all levels of



U.S politics occur outside the formal party structure and are almost always business dominated. This is one reason why the endless attempts to reform or radicalize the Democratic Party organizations have always failed in the end. Machines get replaced, occasionally the rebels capture one or another level of organization, but always the party remains at the service of big business.

How then can it be that there is so much struggle and contention within the framework of that party? After all, labor is there and does occasionally get some concessions. More recently, the Black community, or more accurately its petty bourgeoisie, has made inroads. And, of course, the Democrats really are different from the Republicans – overall.

Generally speaking, the Democrats represent among others capitalists from the consumer-oriented industries and the financial houses that deal with them. This is one reason why the Democratic Party has tended to favor "demand"-oriented welfare programs which are called liberalism. Changes in Democratic policy over the decades have tended to reflect the changing needs of that section of the capitalist class.

Of course, there is real social conflict and the Democrats, by virtue of their liberal ideology, are better able to respond to it than the Republicans. Furthermore, these and other capitalists who fund and select candidates do not do so as a conspiracy or in coordination with each other, so there is real disagreement among them: between Texas Oilmen and New York Financier Felix Rohatyn, for example. The processes by which business interests dominate Democratic Party candidate selection and policy-making have been documented by a number of radical social scientists – William Domhoff, Ed Greer, Lawrence Shoup, to mention a few.

Much of this activity is not visible or has been ignored by mainstream social scientists, but clearly if we are to get at a Marxist approach to electoral politics we must examine the *social roots* of the real policy-making process and not be content with superficial stuff about who votes for one or another party.

The Democratic Party is not a passive phenomenon, simply acted upon by various social forces or pressure groups. It is itself a social-political force, an actor and shaper of the consciousness of those sections of society that support it electorally. As an organized and informal force that runs all the way from the pinnacles of the American capitalist state down to the neighborhood, the Democratic Party, its activists, leaders, and ideologists intervene in the daily life of the working class in a manner and to a degree unknown in any other capitalist nation. It has been able for decades to act as the effective transmission belt of all sorts of capitalist ideas to working class and national minority communities.

The Democratic Party and its leading politicians have been able to shape the political agenda of most social movements of this century. The CIO is a graphic example of the direct intervention of a Democratic administration in the formation of labor's (conservative and anti-socialist) ideology in this country. (Nelson Lichtenstein's *Labor's War at Home* gives a very useful Marxist account of this;

David Milton's *The Politics of U.S. Labor* gives another account from a Maoist vantage point.)

Of course, social movements in America have at various times shattered the plans of one or another section of the ruling class. The Black civil rights movement of the late '50s and early '60s clearly altered the political agenda of the U.S. of that time. But at each and every point at which powerful social movements have been able to do that it has been through their massive, *independent* organization and intervention – not through electoral maneuvering within the framework of Democratic Party politics.

What I mean by independent is important, becuse I believe the notion of independence is widely misused on the left today. I do *not* simply mean separate organization, although that is obviously a necessary condition of political independence. I mean specifically *independence of the ruling class* (all of its sections) and its political organizations, structures, priorities, and frameworks. The framework of Democratic politics in the U.S. is precisely the means by which various elements of the capitalist class have derailed so far, any genuine independent political organization of any significance among workers, Blacks, women, or (with the exception of La Raza Unida) Latins.

Consider four ironies of U.S. history before plunging into a political framework that has demobilized countless of thousands of leftists before you.

Irony #1: For the past 15 years the labor movement has spent more money supporting Democrats, has developed both a political machinery and computer bank operation that served as the model of the New Right, and has put 150,000 campaign workers in the last two presidential elections. During the same 15 years of growing activity, organization, and professionalism, in the electoral arena, labor's political influence has declined steadily within the Democratic framework it supports. It has not won a single piece of legislation in the form in which it proposed it, nor has it had its leading candidates for Cabinet level appointments selectd.

Irony #2: a decade and a half ago there were hardly any Black elected or appointed officials at any level of government in the U.S. Today, there are over 5,000 Black government officials. Yet in terms of impact on the national legislative agenda of the Democratic Party, the Black community has less influence today than during the 1960's.

Irony #3: the Women's movement won its few legislative and court battles in the early '70s under a Republican administration at a time when the movement possessed no electoral machinery.

Irony #4: The CIO won all of its major legislative goals before it had any form of effective electoral organization (Labor's Non-Partisan League or CIO-PAC) or any significant influence with the Roosevelt administration. After it formalized the alliance with the Democratic Party, a process that took place from 1936 through 1943 when PAC was formed, it was unable to win any significant piece of social legislation.

The point of these ironies is not that electoral politics should be dismissed in all forms. Rather the point is that *working within the Democratic framework is not and never has been an effective electoral strategy for any social movement.* And if that is true, the revolutonary left has no business suggesting to labor, the Black liberation movement, the women's movement, or anyone else that it is. The fact that workers, Black, Latins, and a disproportionate number of women vote Democratic is neither new, nor good, nor the basis of a positive strategy.

An understanding of electoral strategy should begin with an understanding of the real balance of forces. The major domestic consequence of the past decade of global capitalist crisis has been a deterioration of the balance of power between the working class and the capitalist class. The underlying causes of this deterioration are found first of all in the changing structure of capital – its internationalization, mergers, conglomeration, hypermobility, etc.

These trends have undermined the traditional power of organized labor and major industrial urban centers of political and social power (including, of course, the Black community). The other side of the coin is the increased, open power of organized big business over politics (PAC's, Trilateralism, Business Roundtable, etc.) based on the stranglehold they have over labor and cities. Local urban administrations exist in this context and at its mercy. And as the last three years of contract concessions show, so does organized labor.

The central question of revolutionary Marxist strategy for this period must be the ways and means of redressing and reversing this disastrous balance of forces. The idea that we (meaning the left, labor, women, national minorities) can use a leading agent and framework of capitalist domination, the Democratic Party, is self-defeating. Note that while the left has its eyes glued on Harold Washington or Jesse Jackson, the leadership of the Democratic Party is consciously and openly trying to *increase* the big business input into party policy making. That is what the two year old Democratic Business Council, Rohatyn's Industrial Policy Study Group, and the peddling of legislative favors for corporate funds (reported regularly in the *Wall Street Journal*) is all about.

Who, in the upcoming scramble for actual party policy (as opposed to the meaningless granting of platform planks at the convention), do you think will come out on top, Felix Rohatynm, Lee Iaccoca and their friends or Jesse Jackson? And that being the case, wouldn't it make more sense for Jackson to *run as an independent* in order to start the long hard task of building an independent power base?

As it stands now, when the Jackson primary campaign is over and the Black community is committed to vote for Mondale, it will have no bargaining chips. The left, Black America, and labor will be politically invisible once again and no steps toward a new electoral (or any other) alternative will have been taken will remain the powerless echo of liberalism. And you don't need to be a Marxist to do that.

– Kim Moody, International Socialists (IS)
October, 1983

Hoffman Responds:

Jonathan Hoffman comments: Attitude toward the Democratic Party in the 1980s and 1990s is probably the most important disagreement on the left about electoral politics today. The momentum of the Right-wing, the disappointments of 1970s non-electoral left work, and the influence of international examples push virtually all movement forces toward electoral engagement now. Breakthrough campaigns by Black candidates have both spread the excitment and rcfocused attention on the Democratic Party issue.

At the first burst of new energy, some activists seem ready to hoist the "Out of the Democratic Party" banner. The Citizens Party has performed miserably on this basis, and other recent efforts, like the National Black Independent Political Party haven't gotten off the ground. I can't help but feel that some of this simply recasts 1970's-style wariness about electoral politics because, as Moody indicates, it still is a non-ideological, messy business dominated on "our side" by the pro-capitalist Democrats.

Moody's position is different: he is more concerned with pointing out the tremendous pressures bearing on us. He seems more willing to go even slower, look for opportunities for genuine breakthroughs and focus in on them only, and avoid the traps and pitfalls of playing ball on other people's terms. I can sympathize with this goal, but it doesn't provide enough of an answer to left-wingers in union office, leaders in Black community struggles or other activists ready and eager to advance things now as best they can within the constraints on them. We have to look to our strengths and begin where we can. I worry that in the end Moody's approach will also do little to ease the isolation left and movement forces today feel.

Particularly in this difficult Reagan era, some, like myself, see the pressures on the Democratic Party, including openings to Black candidates, as an opportunity. It is an opportunity for the left to begin to recast itself from outside oppositionist to critical voice within the mainstream. It took the Right twenty years, starting with the Goldwater insurgency, to do this, and they certainly started from a stronger position. The Left has its own advantages, including the power of the Black and women's emancipation struggles and the tremendous reserves still within the labor movement. We can work for independent political bases, including a new people's party, but I don't see how we are going to get started today, in 1984, if we cut ourselves off from the Democratic Party, simply oppose the momentum represented by NOW, the AFL-CIO, and Black leaders like Jackson or Washington running in that direction, or scorn Democratic Party debates like that over industrial policy. So I continue to look for the "nooks and crannies" of the electoral arena, including certain *temporary, tactical* institutional openings at the local level, that favor the left and favor the slow construction of electoral independence.

In the case of the Jackson campaign, whatever else becomes of it or Jesse Jackson himself, each primary he organizes in will leave in its wake a stronger group of local Black and white organizers more schooled in electoral mechanics ready to discuss and work through the next challenges. The left makes it case best as part of that process.

But there is certainly room for experimentation in different approaches. If we can agree that the important thing is to get started, particularly at the local levels where we have our best shots, we can make some real progress in the electoral arena in the second half of this decade. And a healthy debate should keep us all honest. ■

Occupied Grenada: A Visitor's Report

Last November en route to Grenada, I got off the plane in Barbados and got my first glimpse of the US occupation of Grenada. A row of five or six US fighter planes stood on the runway, colored camouflage green and black. I felt as if I were in a military airport. It was less than a month after the US invasion of Grenada.

The last time I had been in Grenada was March 1983 to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the revolution. On that visit I spoke to the Minister of Health and promised to return this year with a delegation of health care workers to help celebrate the fifth anniversary and the opening of the new international airport. But here I was in November, returning to Grenada as part of a US health delegation, months earlier than expected, and instead of coming to celebrate the Grenadian revolution, we were coming to assess the consequences of the US invasion and military occupation on the health and welfare of the Grenadian people.

Our delegation was made up of physicians, public health experts, a dietician, a health planner, a physician's assistant, and an attorney. Our trip, the first to be made by an independent US medical team since the invasion, had been endorsed by members of the Congressional Black Caucus and several medical and health associations. Nonetheless, when we arrived at our stop-over in Barbados, we still had no guarantees that we would be allowed into Grenada.

As we sat waiting in the airport, a friend and I began a conversation with two US military men. They told us that for both of them it was their first combat experience. One described how his buddy had been shot and killed by a fellow US soldier. He described picking up wounded and dead and putting them into the helicopters, only to have to take the bodies out again, triaging to make sure that the most seriously wounded got on. They both agreed that there had been more resistance from the Grenadians than they had expected. They said that the helicopters had landed everywhere including in people's backyards and cow pastures, something which, they acknowledged, they wouldn't much like if it happened in their country.

Finally we reached Pearls Airport, Grenada. As we landed, we spotted a small abandoned Cubana plane. Eastern Caribbean soldiers, dressed in camouflage, were stationed at the landing fields. And in back of them, making the decisions and calling the shots, were US military personnel. One thing surprised me: posters with slogans, symbols, and images from the revolution still hung on the walls. So, I thought, the US military cannot just rip the past off the walls, spray paint away the revolution quite that easily.

Our names were checked on a computerized list. One of our members was briefly detained for questioning. Our bags were checked; finally we were all allowed to go. Outside, a hawker greeted us, selling the *Grenadian Voice,* headlining support for the invasion. This man seemed to appear everywhere. The next day, at our meeting with US AID officials, we ran into him again. We met him back at our guesthouse where he too was staying. As it turned out, he came from Barbados and he was not only the hawker, but also the editor of the *Grenadian Voice.*

Leaving the airport, I saw the sign "Welcome to Free Grenada" still standing, but in a few minutes it became apparent that Grenada was now an occupied territory. White US soldiers, still wearing leaf-covered helmets and combat camouflage, walked the streets of Grenville. We watched a dozen of them barge into a Grenadian home with their guns drawn. Our Grenadian friend described how soldiers had been grabbing young boys who someone said were "acting against the government," hurling racial epithets at them, binding them up like cattle, their hands behind their backs, and forcing them to lie on the hot tarmac and drink salt water. They were detaining them, some for as long as fifteen days, without ever formally charging them, contrary to the 1973 constitution that was in effect and in clear violation of their civil rights.

First Impressions

The first few days in Grenada I spent a small part of each day crying. I was responding to how different everything was since my last visit, and how it felt as if there was a "cover up" going on. I would get up early in the morning and take photographs of St. George's. At that hour there was a superficial semblance of normalcy – the shops opening up, the children going to school dressed in their uniforms, the fishing boats and banana boats loading on the Carenage. But if you really looked carefully and listened carefully, there was something else going on. It occurred to me that maybe the US occupation forces had consciously decided *not* to do an entire whitewashing of all the New Jewel Movement posters in the streets and out in the countryside. It was as if by keeping the surface somewhat the same, what was going on underneath could remain hidden. But I could feel the spirit and the struggle that built an independent Grenada was, for the moment, gone. What brought it home to me most was meeting a young man whom I knew from the beach in March, '83. This time he exchanged polite conversation with me, but said nothing more.

One of the things that had most impressed me in my earlier visit was that no matter whom I spoke with – the waitress in the hotel who was active in her local National Women's Organization, or the bartender who wasn't especially pro-union, members of the US-Grenadian Friendship Society or the New Jewel Movement, the saleswomen in the shops – there was an openness and honesty

about what was going on in the country. People described what they liked and didn't like. Everyone talked about what life had been like before 1979 under Gairy and what it was like, in comparison, then. They talked about how the Bishop government provided free health care, free education, and immunization campaigns, had reduced illiteracy to 5%, unemployment from 49% under Gairy to 14% under Bishop. They talked about the paid maternity leave law, housing and road repair programs, the end of sexual exploitation of women.

It was a country in which, no matter how young you were, you knew your history, why the revolution took place in 1979, and what the government was trying to do. And, most importantly, everyone who wanted to had a way to contribute to building the Revolution. It seemed like an island where everyone was related, or almost – 110,000 people, half the size of Jersey City. When there were parties, a bus or car with a sound system would drive up and down the streets of St. George with loudspeakers inviting everyone. Now the spirit of openness, community, and mass participation was under siege.

I got this feeling very strongly when we met with the Ministry of Health durint our visit. Everyone, with the exception of one person, profusely thanked the US for the rescue mission. It sounded flat and rehearsed. Later, one of the ministry members referred (apparently by mistake) to the events of the 25th (the date of the US invasion) as a "war." A senior public health nurse mentioned the "invasion," then (quickly recovering) said "I mean rescue mission." At the General Hospital, we had a similar experience. We asked how many prisoners had been treated at the hospital and were told by the staff that there had been none. Then, as we were leaving, we met a Red Cross representative, who told us an entirely different story, saying that a number of prisoners had been treated there.

What accounted for the covering up? Part of it might have been that people were still in shock – using whatever mechanisms they had to protect themselves and maintain sanity in the face of the severe and unexpected disaster of the day of the 19th when Maurice Bishop and four leaders were murdered. But it seemed to me that what I saw wasn't just shock or grief. The US military occupation was forcing a whole people to speak and act in a manner in contrary to that in which they were accustomed.

It seemed to me that the attitude of many Grenadians toward the US had not been a "welcome" but more a sense of relief. And, very quickly, as the US military conducted searches of people's houses and automobiles, picked people up off the street and detained and interrogated them, as prostitution increased and unemployment rose, this sense of relief began to wear thin.

On October 19th, the Grenadian people witnessed events unprecedented in their history. Contrary to promises, the guns of the Revolution had been turned against the people, their popular leaders had been murdered and a whole people were effectively put under house arrest with the twenty-four hour shoot-on-sight curfew imposed by the Revolutionary Military Council. As one person commented: "If the Devil himself had come, he would have been welcomed." Some

Grenadians, even on October 25th, believed the Devil had come.

Assessing the Damage

One of our major concerns was to find out how many casualties there had been during the October 25th invasion. To date, the US continues to withhold information on the extent of Grenadian casualties. According to statistics provided at St. George's General Hospital, 206 patients were seen, sixty-four admitted, and the cause of admission in over 90% of the cases was gunshot wounds. These figures are significantly higher than had been reported in the US press, although even these figures are probably low. Many Grenadians are still unaccounted for. Many of the wounded were afraid to go to the hospital, some were treated locally in people's homes, and still others were shipped out to Puerto Rico, Barbados, the USS Guam and to hospitals in the United States.

We were also concerned about the damage done to the Richmond Hill Mental Hospital which the US bombed during the invasion. When we visited it on November 22, it was still in rubble. We learned that the US had offered no aid until six days after the bombing and had then only provided blankets and a generator. The US has not offered to provide any form of reparations for the bombing although the bombing destroyed the infirmary section which lodged eighty patients. Medical records are still strewn among broken bottles and rubble in the bombed-out area. The director and staff told us that there had been seventeen deaths and thirty wounded as a result of the bombing (although other eyewitnesses said there were as many as fifty to sixty people killed). They said that the Kennedy Home for Handicapped Children, located nearby, had also been damaged.

Some of the most critical health problems result from the US military's forced evacuation of health personnel. Between twenty-one to twenty-five foreign physicians and dentists (Cubans, East Germans, Swedes, and other Caribbeans) had been taken off the island leaving Grenada with only twenty doctors. There was no pediatrician among a population of 60% under twenty-five years old and no psychiatrists for the 180 mental patients at the bombed hospital. The international health workers had offered free, accessible care in the public sector to the poor. Their departure has meant that private medicine is really the only care available now.

We were told by the US military that they had dismantled the detention camp at Point Saline, but were planning to set up other detention centers through the countryside. We met many people who had been picked up, tortured, and interrogated at Point Saline, some of them as many as four or five times. There was a great deal of misinformation disseminated by the US about Point Saline. For instance, at the same time that US authorities announced that 1090 people had been processed there, Kenrick Raddix, former government minister under Bishop, pointed out that his prison number had been 1120, evidence that there

had most likely been 1119 others processed before him! On release, people were given identification cards in a system reminiscent of the South African pass system. The card stated that the bearer "has been detained and processed and is not to be apprehended unless he engages in anti-government activity." Many of the detainees were not allowed out of Grenada, and many had been fired from their jobs.

At the time of our visit, the US military had established their base in the Grand Anse Beach area, the heart of the Grenadian tourist hotels and a stretch of the most beautiful beaches, perhaps, in the world. They occupied the hotels for US operations and posted armed soldiers and barbed wire along the beachfront. The ratio of US military to civilian Grenadian was one soldier for every twenty civilians. There was the constant whirr of helicopters; US military men walked the streets, and filled the bars and restaurants, their rifles loaded. Army jeeps patrolled the streets. Soldiers were sitting on the steps of Unison Whiteman's house, the slain Minister of Foreign Affairs under Bishop. People's homes and offices, including those of Bishop and Coard, were occupied by the US military or were left open and looted. Mrs. Bishop's (Maurice's mother's) home had been bombed.

It was as if all the propaganda that the US had promoted about Grenada, about Cubans shooting people down in the streets, putting barbed wire along the beaches, and turning Point Saline into a military base had actually come true. Only, the irony was that it was the US not the Cubans carrying out the military occupation!

Psychological Bombing

Perhaps an even more significant aspect of the US military presence was the pervasive and sophisticated activity of the US government in their continuous psychological bombing of the island. During our stay, we had the opportunity to interview representatives of three branches of the US government: US Agency for International Development (AID), US Civilian Military Operations Command (CMOC), and US Psychological Operations (PSYOPS).

We had lunch with the representative from AID, a nineteen year career employee who was an ex-Jesuit. He had spent the last ten years in Western Sahara and the last eight days in Grenada. It was bizarre, given the US invasion and forced evacuation of international health workers, to hear this man bubbling over with praise for the Cuban health care system in language reminiscent of discussions I had had last March with Grenadians, when the revolution was still in power. He described the health care provided by the Cubans as "affordable, available, and accessible" in the same breath as describing the three year New Jewel Movement health plan as a "socialist, even Marxist" document. Yet, he wanted us to be well aware: AID was *not,* in any way, a political agency.

On the evening of November 22, we went to CMOC headquarters to try to set-

tle our plans to travel to the island of Carriacou, a Grenadian island twenty miles north, aboard a US military helicopter. We met with Lt. Col. Parker, who, often during the conversation, would interrupt his talk about health care and the Cubans to mumble something about how "Marxists, Marxist-Leninists" were different the world over and not entirely bad, only to finish his sentence with the catechism: "But we're not talking about politics. . ." He flipped through his steno pad, as he mentioned some visiting group from the US who was out to "get the army," never stopping at the right page to find an actual name, attempting to get our reaction.

He was a round, jovial Southern character, another career man with a Masters in Education, making $55,000 a year. He described CMOC's task as helping civilians ("we're not involved in the killing") and condemned the "pilfering, pillage, and plunder" of the ordinary infantrymen. He invited us to Thanksgiving dinner, to share some cases of Algerian wine. Lt. Col. Parker assured us that he would do his best to get us aboard the US helicopter. Then he asked us all for our names and social security numbers. Why, we wondered? "In case," he said, "anything should happen."

As we were leaving, Lt. Col. Parker casually introduced a little anecdote about an East German woman doctor. He asked us if we had seen any news clippings about her removal from the island. We hadn't. He told us how a group of US military men went to interrogate her, how she claimed they harassed her. Then he told us the US version of the event: that she had a "wild reputation," and that while the US military was there, she excused herself, said she had to change her clothes, and proceeded to strip naked in front of them. I left feeling quite unsettled, wondering why he had chosen to leave us with this story in our minds.

But the real focus of the US operations is neither AID nor CMOC; it is, accurately named, PSYOPS, the US Psychological Operations Battalion now operating inside Grenada. We had an extensive interview with the head of PSYOPS operations, Colonel Ashworth and one of his aides in Cinnamon Hill, a luxury hotel cottage, one of the choicest spots in Grenada. As we drove up, we passed the bombed remains of one of Radio Free Grenada's facilities; there was still a blackboard standing in the rubble with "Radio Free Grenada" written across it in white chalk.

The colonel seemed a little suprised to see so many of our delegation, but he quickly and professionally recovered. Behind the sofa where I sat were stacks of books in Spanish, workbooks from the New Jewel Movement's literacy campaign, thin paper editions of Lenin, and newspapers. I kept trying to sneak looks to see what all was there.

Colonel Ashworth told us that PSYOPS is a professional operation based at Fort Bragg. There are three batallions, each batallion made up of between 250-600 men. Originally, the operation was called the "JFK Center for Information." The units are staffed with men who have degrees in political science, sociology, and economics in order to deal "appropriately" with the cultures of people

where they are operating. Colonel Ashworth proudly described the role of PSYOPS in media and communications during the first few days of the emergency in Grenada when no press was allowed on the island. (He made no attempt to apologize or explain this curtailing of freedom of the press.) He said that within twenty-four hours, PSYOPS had taken over "Radio Free Grenada" and replaced it with "Spice Island Radio." He described how PSYOPS had developed a close network with Grenadians, especially with Grenadians in the military and exiles living in Miami. He recounted how a Mr. Hanky, a Grenadian, had come forward and volunteered to record a song "I Love America" for the radio station.

Colonel Ashworth described the rest of PSYOPS operations. He told us that their unit had Spanish translators and had been involved in leafletting the hill areas with literature aimed at the Cubans. He estimated that there were ten to twelve Cubans still left on the island. In addition, PSYOPS units accompanied the military and any other US government units when they went out to the countryside to do surveys. He said they were planning to show movies on sanitation and health in the countryside – a real traveling US military roadshow! Ashworth commented favorably on the New Jewel Movement literacy campaign, adding that the only problem was its indoctrination. He had never, he said, seen so much propaganda in one place.

We asked if PSYOPS had any similar operations elsewhere in Central America. He admitted that they had a unit operation now in Nicaragua, but he would not elaborate since it was a "sensitive" issue.

One of PSYOP'S major initiatives was a poster campaign displaying two well-known Grenadian leaders, Coard and Austin, in humiliating positions, nude to the waist, blind-folded, with white US marines holding guns behind them. We saw these posters, slapped on top of billboards from the Bishop regime. We also saw many that had been ripped back down as an act of resistance.

* * * *

It was on my way home, thinking back over what we had seen in Grenada, that I realized that it was not the physical devastation that was most disturbing; it was the sophisticated psychological operations. The emphasis of the US on psychological operations reflected the strength of what the US is up against in Grenada: a Black, English-speaking people with a history of hundreds of years of struggle against slavery and colonialism dating back to the Triangle Trade. They are a people who have recently struggled for and enjoyed four years of independence and sovereignty under their own leadership. A people with such a history does not forget freedom so easily in the face of superpower invasion. Yes, I thought, the U.S. PSYOPS will likely have its hands full for a long time to come.

– Beth L.
December 1983

The Kissinger Report and Nicaragua: A First Hand View

> *Powerful forces are on the march in nearly every country of the hemisphere, testing how nations shall be organized and by what processes authority shall be established and legitimized.* Who shall govern and under what forms are the central issues *in the process of change now under way in country after country throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.* (KCR, p. 10)

As president of a union local, I was recently on a Trade Union tour of Nicaragua. While I am not an expert on either the Kissinger Commission or Nicaragua, I hope to share with you some of what I learned while I was there. The purpose of our tour was to meet with union leaders, see some of the changes in the union movement since the days of Somoza, and to hear both pros and cons about the present government from a trade union point of view.

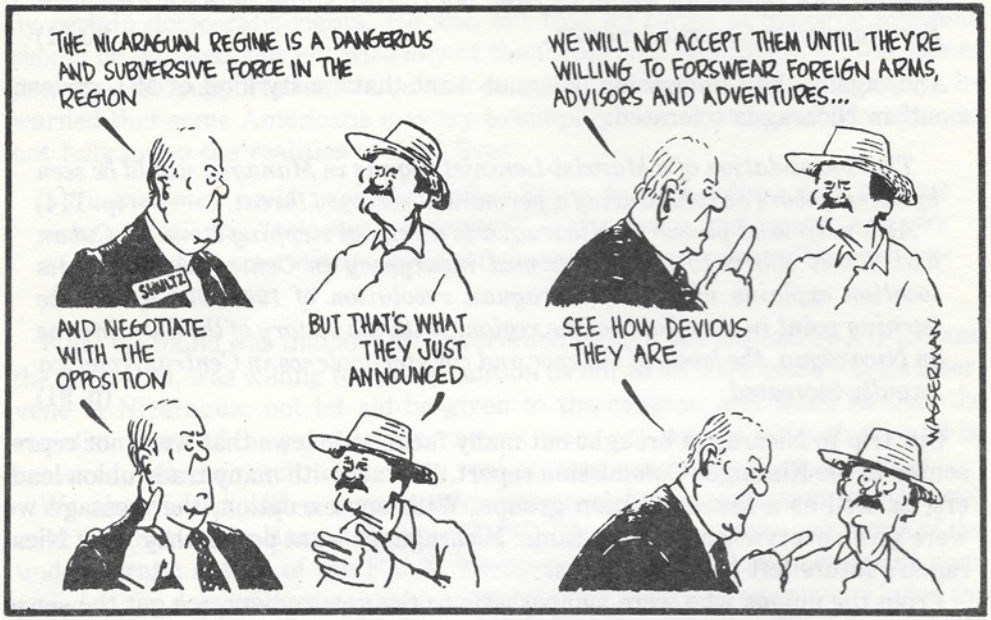
I came away with initial impressions. Nicaragua is a country preparing for invasion or for war. We saw the oil tankers of Porto Corinto, bombed in October by U.S. ships. Everywhere we went, bombshelters were under construction. Sandbags were piled in front of the windows at the accident floor entrance of a hospital we visited. The government was forced to evacuate civilians from the northern port the week we visited, because "contra" attacks from Honduras were so severe. And the last day of our visit saw the announcement of the downing of the U.S. helicopter flying over Nicaraguan airspace.

Nicaragua is a poor country, a country trying to rebuild itself. A country trying to rebuild itself as it takes every necessary provision to protect itself from outside invasion or intervention.

On our trip we met with U.S. Ambassador Anthony Quintin. In our discussion he tried to convince us that Nicaragua was a military threat to the United States. As we continued the discussion, Quintin began to shift the emphasis of the U.S.'s concern. He stated that the Nicaraguan government was more of a *political* threat than a military one. His office was concerned that if the present "nasty kind of Marxist-Leninist government" survives, it could mean the spread of revolutions throughout the rest of Central America. In short, he tried to convince us that if the Nicaraguan government survived as is, the dominos may begin to fall!

The Ambassador went on to explain to our group what the U.S. presently saw as a bottom line for the Sandinista government, based on Reagan administration

views of events there. Conditions for the end of aid to the contras were: 1) An end to any intervention or aid to the guerillas in El Salvador, 2) Reduction of the size of the Nicaraguan military (to produce a regional arms balance), 3) A change of relationship with the Soviet Union, and 4) A return to pluralism in politics, with open national elections.



These conditions cannot be separated from views and recommendations that have recently been made public through the Kissinger Commission report. From my reading of the Commission report, there are three basic assumptions or points repeated throughout the report. First, the Commission concludes that the struggle in Central America is a struggle between the superpowers. Second, it recommends an immediate and massive economic aid program to keep Central America on our side (under U.S. domination). Finally, it concludes that the U.S. should continue to support the overthrow of the FSLN leadership of Nicaragua.

While the Commission report recommends massive economic aid to help keep Central America under our influence, it is clear from the particular proposals that the U.S. plans to keep direct control over the money (and, in turn, the receiving countries):

> *The development of Central America should be a co-operative program. The policy issues should be addressed through the process of joint deliberations among the nations of Central America, the United States, and such other democracies as may be willing to participate...*

The ultimate contol of aid funds will always rest with the donors... the multilateral body should exercise some degree of control over development funds to give its assessment added wieght, even though donors would retain a veto.

Membership in CADO would be... Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama, and the United States... The organization's chairman would be from the United States with an Executive Secretary from Central America. (pp. 60-61)

And, again, the Commission does not want that "nasty kind of M-L government" in Nicaragua tolerated:

The consolidation of a Marxist-Leninist regime in Managua would be seen by its neighbors as constituting a permanent security threat. (p. 114)

As a mainland platform, Nicaragua is a crucial stepping-stone for Cuban and Soviet efforts to promote armed insurgency in Central America. Its location explains why the Nicaraguan revolution of 1979 was a decisive turning point in the affairs of the region. With the victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the levels of violence and counter-violence in Central America rapidly increased. (p. 91)

Our trip to Nicaragua brought out many facts and views that were not represented in the Kissinger Commission report. We met with many trade union leaders, as well as a few opposition groups. With one exception, the message we were given everywhere was the same: Nicaraguans want peace; they want Nicaragua's future left to Nicaraguans.

From the unions who were sympathetic to the government, we got the sense that the FSLN was a popular government, a genuine national liberation force and not an outsider-controlled party. The largest unions (who were also all pro-government) were the CST, the ATC, FETSALUD, ANDEN, and UNE. They told us that they wanted to see peace returned to their country. They wanted to put all their energies into rebuilding their society. They agreed with the government's assessment (as did all the opposition groups we met with) that the present situation was that of a military emergency. They told us to tell American workers that they wanted to see a return to peace.

One of the most interesting interviews we had was with the Council of United Syndicals (CUS). The CUS was initiated during the times of Somoza by trade unionists who were trained with the aid of the AFL-CIO in 1962. Many CUS leaders were trained by the AFL-CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development. Today the CUS cooperates with the FSLN, is on the Council of State, yet vocally opposes some of the policies of the government.

In particular, they are critical of the suspension of the right to strike (though they agree that their country is facing a real military emergency), call for less government involvement in collective bargaining, more wage increases, and

have refused to use their union apparatus to organize for local militias.

We met with Alvin Guthrie, the Secretary-General of the CUS. We specifically asked him about the war situation, aid to the contras, and what we should tell the American people.

He made several significant points. One was that the CUS felt that continued U.S. aid to the contras or to any Somositas only created a bad climate in Nicaragua, one where the goverment would appear justified in suspending temporarily certain democratic rights. He also felt that all forms of dialogue available should be pursued, but not with any of the forces who had fought on the side of Somoza. He supported the Contradora initiative. But most importantly, he warned that some Americans may try to simplify the situation in Nicaragua, to not fully grasp the realities of their lives:

> *Businessmen could push the United States to take actions here against communism. But they must understand that poverty and hunger here are real. You can't exterminate the idea (of communism) because of the real conditions of our lives.*

What we found was that an anti-government union, one trained by AIFLD and the AFL-CIO, was willing to openly caution us not to let the United States intervene in Nicaragua; not let aid be given to the contras; and warn us that the socialist views of the present government were not outside ideas that could be removed, but the result of the very real poverty conditions of his country!

We also visited with a conservative human rights organization, the Permanent Committee for Human Rights (CDPH). They gave us many criticisms of the undemocratic nature of the FSLN. However, when we asked how things compared to the days of Somoza, they admitted there was no comparison. Under the FSLN, they are guaranteed the right of life, and of no torture. They agreed with what we had previously heard, that Nicaragua was facing a military emergency. While they felt life had eased up over the last few months with less censorship, people released from jail, etc., they voiced fear that the continued threat of contra attacks or U.S. invasion kept any moves towards democracy limited. They asked that we take back a message to Americans, that the U.S. should not support aid to the contras: *"The Reagan administration has always been negative for Nicaragua – Let Nicaraguans make their own destiny!"*

The only union with whom we met that implied even tempered support for aid to the contras was the CTN. They were the oldest union that had been able to exist openly under Somoza. They presently oppose the present FSLN leadership, boycott any participation they might have in the running of the government, and refuse to take their seat in the Council of State. When asked if they supported U.S. aid to the contras, they would not answer either yes or no. They responded instead:

The CTN is against any outside intervention. We support the Contradora process. We aren't asking God to bring peace. Nicaraguans must construct peace – We must do it ourselves. Because peace cannot be a decree – It's the fruit of social justice. For peace to exist, social justice must exist.

This is the closest any group came to saying that the support of the contras was necessary beause of the social injustices they faced. After our meeting with the CTN, we learned that one of the reasons for a recent split in the CTN was over differences of how (and if) to work with the government. Some of the CTN leaders who had not favored working with the government have recently shown up in Honduras as leaders of the northern contras.

Reading the Kissinger Commission report, one would think that the world was divided up between two forces: between the United States and the Soviet Union. This view of the world was not repeated by anyone we spoke with in Nicaragua, with pro- or anti-government. The Commission wants the U.S. to follow a path in Central America that would force Central American nations under the economic and military domination of the U.S. The report looks at the world and concludes: *if you're not with us* (United States), *you must be with them* (Soviet Union).

But the world is much more complicated than that. There are countries struggling for independence, fighting against oppression. There are national liberation struggles taking place today in Central America; struggles the U.S. plans to tolerate only if they line up behind U.S. security interests. Yet even anti-communist organizations in Nicaragua realize the world isn't only made up of Ronald Reagan's good guys and bad guys.

As a trade union officer, I strongly disagree with the AFL-CIO's unconditional

support for the Kissinger Commission. I am not alone in this. Recently 19 Massachusetts leaders signed a letter to Kirkland voicing our disagreement with this support of the Commission report. But just talking with Kirkland will not be enough to change his mind. He has chosen to "take sides" as the Reagan Administration had hoped.

As a Union leader, I've supported the AFL-CIO's call to defeat Reagan in the next election. Reagan is bad for Americans. But we cannot hope to beat Reagan at home while we support his actions internationally (as Kirkland has chosen to do). Central Americans are Americans also. Money for domestic spending will be funnelled to arms in Central America. Reagan's policies at home cannot be broken apart from his policies abroad.

It is our responsibility as trade unionists, as Americans, to organize against any implementation of the Kissinger Commission policies.

When asked *"Which side are you on,"* I hope we won't get stuck in "doublethink." This may be 1984, but war still is not peace. As a people, we should stand on the side of national independence, and for the betterment of the conditions of life for all those living in Central America. As so many of the people we met told us:

Leave Nicaragua to Nicaraguans!

– Celia Wcislo
February, 1984

Study Series: Socialism and Democracy, Part III

Part I: The Democratic Capitalist State

Readings: Lenin, "The State," from paragraph starting "But there was a time when there was no state . . ." (about 5-6 pages in from the beginning) to the end of the article (about 18 pages total).
State and Revolution, Part I, sections 3 and 4; Part II, section 2; Part V, section 2 (about 17 pages).
The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky, in Collected Works Vol. 28, pp. 235-238 and 243-250. That's the section "How Kautsky Turned Marx Into a Common Liberal," from "In the first place, this is not a definition." to ". . .(they *do* exist in Britain and in America *now)"* about 5 pages later; then all of "Bourgeois and Proletarian Democracy."
"'Democracy and Dictatorship," CW28, pp. 370-1 only.

Bernstein, *Evolutionary Socialism,* pp. 142-7.

Poulantzas, *Fascism and Dictatorship,* pp. 301-2.

Claudin, *Eurocommunism and Socialism,* pp. 67-78.

Part I tries to get at a basic idea of what the democratic capitalist State is about: how democratic is it, and how capitalist, for that matter; how does it work for those who are exploited and how does it work for those who exploit; how does it operate here in the U.S., and in whose interests, and so on. Getting at these issues means questioning many of the fundamental beliefs about democracy and "good government" that all of us – no matter how revolutionary-minded we are today – have been taught ever since first grade. It also means questioning many of the fundamental beliefs of the Marxist tradition. So on all sides we have to be ready to overcome some prejudices.

Questions 1 and 2 try to establish some basic definitions of "democracy" and "dictatorship."
Questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 try to get at the foundations of the capitalist state, the relationship between democracy and exploitation, and the difference between a form of State and various forms of government.
Questions 8 and 9 look at legal equality, real equality, and coercion under capitalism.

Questions 10, 11 and 12 try to get at who dominates the capitalist State, and how that happens.
Questions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19 return to democracy and dictatorship to see how they work out under bourgeois rule, especially in the U.S.

1) What is democracy? Is it complete liberty? Is it a collection of rights?
2) What is dictatorship? Is it the absence of liberty? Is it the absence of rights?
3) You are a 46 year old semi-skilled autoworker with 16 years in. What free choice do you have about being exploited?
4) Is exploitation democratic? Consider these situations:

a) In 1893, an election is held in the U.S. to decide whether to institute a federally-run system of debt peonage. Under the law, if a person owed $100 (1893 dollars) for more than one year, they are liable to one year of work on a state work farm for every $100 owed, for every year that it has been owed.

A majority votes yes in an election in which there is very little disenfranchisement. Is this democracy in action? Is the law democratic? Opponents say it deprives debtors of their rights. Supporters say that no one has the right to take other people's money and not pay it back.

b) An ailing Northeast textile plant demands cuts in the wages of its workers. The union calls a strike. After 9 weeks, the company announces that it is going to move its operation to Haiti unless the workers come back to work, accept a small wage cut, and agree to decertify their union and not organize another one.

A group of workers call for a state assistance plan to allow them to buy the plant and run it themselves. A majority, however, votes to return on the company's terms.

Is that democratic? What is democratic about it? Is it democratic for the workers who did not want to work for that company's shareholders anymore?

5) As long as one class exploits another, do you have a class dictatorship?

6) In what sense then is any form of rule that preserves capitalism a dictatorship? What if anything do Nazi Germany and the U.S. political system have in common?

7) According to Lenin, "the state of the slaveowning epoch was a slaveowning state, irrespective of whether it was a monarchy or a republic, aristocratic or democratic." ("The State")

Any founding father or mother can tell you there's a big difference between living under a king and living in a democratic republic. How could all these different forms of government be the same kind of *state?*

8) Lenin said that "It is impossible to compel the greater part of society to work systematically for the other part of society without a permanent apparatus of coercion." ("The State") But clearly he is wrong, because in modern democracies this happens precisely *without* coercion. Here in the U.S., for example, we all go

to work every day (unless we're unemployed) without any coercion whatsoever.

Perhaps slavery and feudalism needed a "permanent apparatus of coercion," but capitalism does not. Do you agree?

9) Under capitalism, says Lenin, "all citizens supposedly became equal, the old division into slaveowners and slaves disappeared, all were regarded as equal before the law irrespective of what capital each owned; whether he owned land as private property, or was a starveling who owned nothing but his labour power – all were equal before the law. The law protects everybody equally. . . ." ("The State")

But as we all know, under capitalism the laws are not *enforced* equally: there is one law for the rich, and one for the poor. If the laws were truly enforced equally, say by a democratically-elected socialist government, wouldn't we then have a *socialist* state?

10) Kerr-McGee is being forced to pay Karen Silkwood's family a lot of money. AT&T is being forcd to pay Litton Industries 276 million dollars. U.S. steel-producing industries have so far been unable to get the import restrictions they want. Martin Luther King's birthday has been made a federal holiday. In a recent mayoral contest in Boston, Big Business was basically opposed to both of the final candidates. And 50 years ago, Big Business was largely opposed to President Roosevelt's New Deal. Today, cigarette packages have warnings – against the wishes of the tobacco industry.

In a democratic republic like the U.S., who controls the State: the factory-owners? Big Business? the rich? all of the people some of the time? all of the people all of the time?

11) Poulantzas says, "With regard to the dominant classes. . . the State's principal role is one of *organization.*" *(State, Power, Socialism,* 127) Explain this, using either one of the examples from question 10 or one of the following: Watergate, busing, the recent EPA scandals, the Kissinger Commission on Central America.

12) The U.S. has a two-party electoral system. These two parties are essentially the same; the capitalists maintain this charade in order to make everyone think they're being given a real choice. True or flase?

13) Bernstein said, "Democracy is in principle the suppression of class government, though it is not yet the actual suppression of classes." *(Evolutionary Socialism,* 143-4) Can you think of a country in which there are classes but no class government? How about Sweden, Zimbabwe, or China?

14) Bernstein defined democracy as "an absence of class government," and

Kautsky in turn defined dictatorship as the "abolition of democracy."

Lenin argued that "dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy . . .," and went on to define dictatorship as "rule based directly upon force and unrestricted by any laws." *(PR&RK,* 235-6)

Which is it, then, in the U.S.: a democracy or a dictatorship?

15) Claudin asserts that "the whole history of capitalist social formations confirms the contradiction between democracy and bourgeois rule." *(Eurocommunism and Socialism,* p. 70) Yet Lenin argues that "A democratic republic is the best possible political shell for capitalism" *(S&R,* 14). He later says that "a democratic republic [is] the best form of the state for the proletariat under capitalism." (18)

Is democracy good for the masses and bad for the capitalists, good for the capitalists and bad for the masses, bad for both, or good for both? (Remember, "the workers and the capitalists have nothing in common" – the IWW.)

16) Many Marxist-Leninists used to talk about the liberal bourgeoisie "ushering in fascism." But this hasn't happened yet. Why not, especially since democracy is antithetical to bourgeois rule?

17) Poulantzas says, "In opposition to those who celebrate a supposedly essential difference between the various democratic forms (the 'liberal State') and the totalitarian systems, we have to point out this time that certain features are common to both precisely because of their shared capitalist aspect. . . . Every democratic form of capitalist State itself carries totalitarian tendencies." *(S,P,S,* 209)

What (if any) totalitarian tendencies exist today in the U.S. State?

18) Claudin points out that "Bourgeois denial of democracy is nowhere so patent as in the basic structures of society, its relations of production. The reason is simple – no individual capitalist or capitalist institution could submit to democratic control by the workers that they exploit." (73)

But what about the capitalist production in Sweden – isn't that subject to democratic control by the workers? And what about countries where certain basic industries are nationalized – doesn't that subject these industries to democratic popular control? Shouldn't we demand the nationalization of certain industries here in the U.S., for precisely that reason?

19) In *State and Revolution,* Lenin describes the "restrictions" which "exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics and from an active share in democracy." Are there any such restrictions in the U.S.?

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