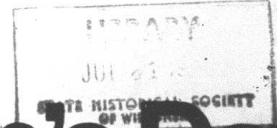


Workers' Power

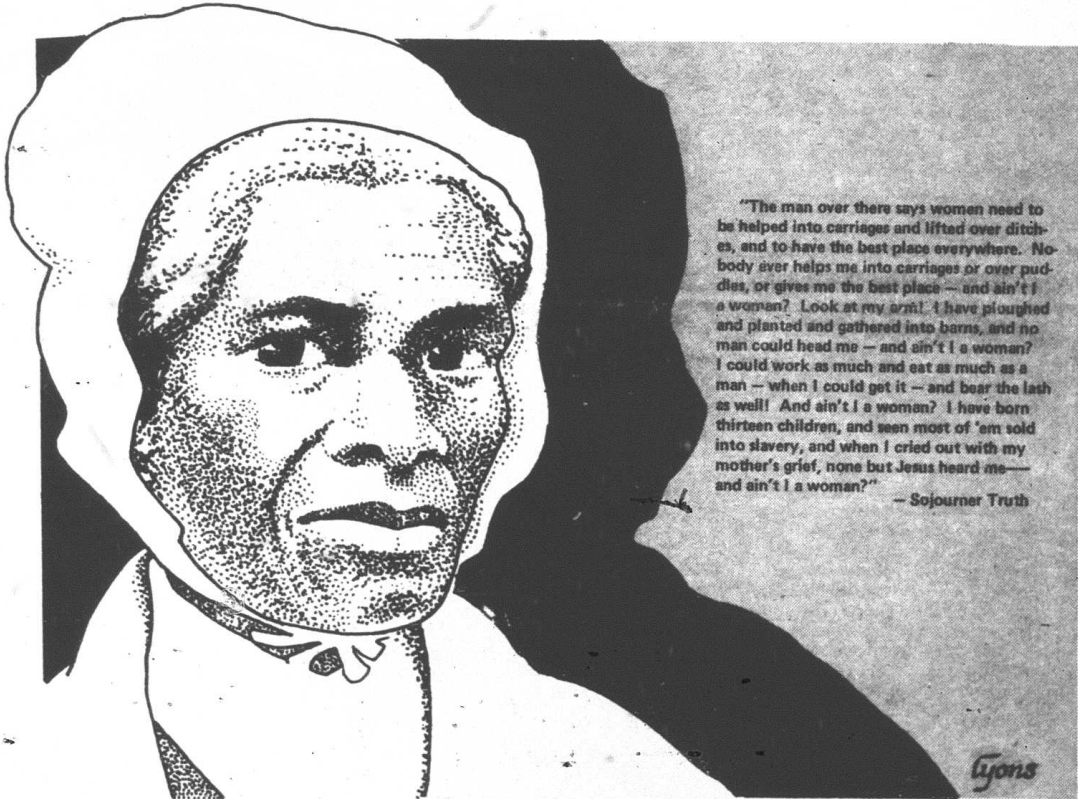
Aquisitions Section
State Historical Society
816 State St
Madison Wisc 53706

international
socialist
biweekly

No. 31 Feb. 21 - March 11, 1971 20¢



International Women's Day



"The man over there says women need to be helped into carriages and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages or over puddles, or gives me the best place — and ain't I a woman? Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns, and no man could head me — and ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man — when I could get it — and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have born thirteen children, and seen most of 'em sold into slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me — and ain't I a woman?"

— Sojourner Truth

Lyons

**Bernadette Devlin on Women
Rosa Luxemburg Centenary
Nixon and Construction · Laos
Inside North Korea · Gay Liberation**



INTERESTED?

International Socialists
Third Floor
14131 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, Michigan
48203

I would like more information about
International Socialism and the U.S.

Name
Address
Occupation

The anti-war movement is slowly coming to life again. During the last two months, demonstrations have been called in several different localities protesting the recent escalations of the war. These were a positive, if weak, step forward for a movement which has been virtually dormant since the Cambodia uprising.

If the movement is to be successfully rebuilt, it cannot merely return to where it was last summer. Unless an attempt is made to overcome the shortcomings that existed then, the movement will continue to flounder.

The crucial question facing the anti-war movement is one of political orientation. For a long time now, the majority of people in this country have been opposed to the war. However, that sentiment is rather diffuse, and is not based on any clear understanding of the causes of the war or what to do about it.

Furthermore, active opposition to the war has been based mainly on students. While students have been able to mount large and significant protests, by themselves they do not have the social power capable of forcing an end to the war. What is necessary now is an orientation aimed at broadening the movement, at linking up with other movements of social protest in this country, the black liberation and women's liberation movements, and especially with the growing militancy among workers.

This outward orientation must be more than just a desire among anti-war activists. It must be based on a political program which can link up those struggles, relating the war to the needs and problems of the mass of the people. The single slogan for immediate withdrawal, while it must remain the major demand of the movement, is not a sufficient basis for such an orientation.

Rather, the program of the movement should also include at least the following demands: END ALL U.S. IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA; FIGHT INFLATION - END THE WAR; RECONVERT THE ARMS ECONOMY TO PRODUCTION OF NECESSARY SOCIAL GOODS WITH FULL EMPLOYMENT; END ALL DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION OF BLACKS AND WOMEN; OPPOSITION TO BOTH WAR PARTIES - FOR INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION.

Already several different demonstrations have been called for this spring. We believe that they are all politically insufficient, merely repeating the strategies of the past, which led to the current impasse. However, this should not lead radicals to reject support for these demonstrations. Support for them does not necessitate support for the politics upon which they are based.

Rather, people should organize independently for these demonstrations on the basis of the orientation outlined above. Groups could put out their own leaflets building the demonstrations, independent contingents could be organized for the marches, etc. Various opportunities exist to try to improve the politics of the demonstrations.

It is also important that local demonstrations be called. Unlike the national actions, local demonstrations offer more possibilities for involving workers in the actions themselves. Furthermore, if the movement is to be rebuilt, it will have to be organized at the local level, where people have more control over the politics of the anti-war activities.

On the local level, the specific dates of demonstrations are not so important, although the movements should not be limited by the semi-annual peace march strategy which orients towards the end of April or beginning of May. Indeed, waiting until late spring means ignoring the crucial battle now going on in Laos - which opens up the possibility of throwing the whole war, and domestic politics, into a new crisis - and which necessitates some immediate action.

If the movement is to become a successful force in the future, it will need the development of grass-roots organizations. For too long we have been limited to national "coalitions," which consist of the organizers of national marches and little else. We need organizations of the rank and file which involve people in the planning and carrying out of activities on a permanent on-going basis.

When such organizations are developed, they should explore the possibilities for independent political action in their area. Such activity, if successful, could provide the vehicle for linking up the various different movements around a common social program, as well as splitting people away from the death-trap of the Democratic Party reform politics, and thus clearing the way for the development of an independent workers' party. ■



Workers' Power

A revolutionary socialist bi-weekly, published by the International Socialists.

Subscriptions: \$3.50 a year; Supporting Subscriptions: \$5 a year; Foreign Subscriptions: \$5 a year; Bundles: 10¢ a copy for ten copies or more; Introductory Subscriptions: \$1 for three months.

I enclose _____ Please send me a _____ subscription to *Workers' Power*.

Name _____

Address _____

14131 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park, Michigan 48203



No. 31

Copyright © 1971 by the International Socialist Publishing Company.

Editor: Kit Lyons. Editorial Board: James Coleman, Joel Geier, Kit Lyons, Jack Trautman, Michael Stewart. Art Editor: Lisa Lyons. Production Manager: Stephen Farrow.

14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203. Subscriptions: \$3.50 per year. Supporting subscriptions: \$5. Foreign subscriptions: \$5. Bundles of 10 copies or more: 10¢ per copy. Introductory subscriptions: \$1* for 3 months. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *Workers' Power*, which are expressed in editorials.

Published bi-weekly except semi-monthly in December and monthly in July and August by the International Socialist Publishing Co. at 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich. 48203. Second class postage paid at Detroit, Michigan. Send notice of undelivered copies or change of address to *Workers' Power*, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Workers' Power is a member of the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) and a subscriber to Liberation News Service and G.I. Press Service.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8

Celia Emerson

On March 8, 1908, socialist women garment workers staged a huge demonstration in New York City, protesting sweatshop conditions and child labor, and demanding the right to vote. Two years later, Clara Zetkin, a revolutionary feminist and socialist, introduced a resolution to the Congress of the Socialist International, making March 8 International Woman's Day to honor the New York garment workers.

International Woman's Day was enthusiastically endorsed, but not simply because one woman called for it. Nor was Zetkin inspired by one isolated demonstration of women workers. Rather, International Woman's Day was proclaimed in the context of a worldwide movement involving millions of women, who were organizing and fighting for their liberation.

With the re-emergence of an international woman's movement, it should not be surprising that we would look back to March 8th to honor the courage and determination of our sisters. As part of this commemoration we pay tribute to the international solidarity of the woman's movement. But as part of this commemoration we must also look back to the past and learn from our mistakes.

Suffrage and Class

One part of the international woman's movement during the period 1890-1920 was the suffrage movement. These women were concerned with only one aspect of women's oppression — their votelessness. Most woman suffrage organizations, whether in Europe or America, were concerned with the single issue of winning the vote. Most of the women in suffrage organizations were upper or middle class, and did not see that it was in their interests as women to become involved in the struggles of the great majority of women — working women.

In America, for example, members of the National American Woman's Suffrage Association (NAWSA) refused to take up issues that working women were raising. In one incident, in 1911, a fire in New York broke out in the Triangle shirtwaist factory, killing 143 women. When women garment workers went to NAWSA asking them to join in a protest demonstration, NAWSA refused. They did not want to confuse woman suffrage with the problems working women faced.

After the vote was "won," suffrage organizations still were reluctant to make alliances with working women's organizations. The National Woman's Party, for example, introduced an Equal Rights Amendment which would have been used to eliminate all protective legislation that working women had fought for and won. When the Woman's Party was confronted with this fact, they replied that they didn't think protective legislation was important. (This same ERA is now being debated in Congress and in the women's liberation movement. (See *Workers' Power*, nos. 23 and 25.)

In Europe as well, the suffrage movements showed little interest in being part of a working woman's movement. In England, aristocratic and middle class women fought for a bill that would enfranchise upper and middle class women only. Christobel Pankhurst, organizing genius of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), the militant suffrage organization, expelled a large working woman's contingent from the WSPU because "... it was a working class movement, too democratic, too independent. ..."

In Holland and Germany, middle class suffragists also introduced legislation enfranchising only upper and middle class women. "This point of view," Clara Zetkin said to a woman's confer-

ence in 1908, "shows that they [the suffragists] are not in favour of women's rights, but of the rights of ladies; they do not fight for the political emancipation of the female sex, but for the advancement of the interests of the middle class."

In Russia, too, the suffrage movement adopted a similar approach. Alexandra Kollontai, revolutionary feminist and socialist (late a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee), claimed that the existing suffrage organizations "refused to take into account that woman bears a twofold responsibility towards society. ... The suffragists would not include any references to day care, nurseries or protection for women workers."

Working Women

But just as there was an international movement of middle class women trying to improve their status, sometimes at the expense of their working class sisters, there also was a strong militant movement of working class women.

In America, they struck by the thousands in Lawrence, Massachusetts, and Patterson, New Jersey. Women workers organized and led the uprising of the 30,000, a general-strike in the garment industry. Working women formed their own suffrage organizations and demonstrated for their right to vote. Black working women, viciously discriminated against by suffragists,



Sylvia Pankhurst, dangerously ill from hunger strikes and forced feedings, being carried on a stretcher by members of the East London Federation of Suffragettes.

formed their own suffrage organizations. (And, in Chicago and New York, joined their white sisters in the Wage Earners Suffrage League.)

In England, it was in fact through the organization and militancy of working women that the vote was granted. The East London Federation of the Suffragettes, organized by Sylvia Pankhurst, was responsible for winning woman suffrage. During the first world war the Federation fought for day care centers, communal kitchens, free milk for children and equal pay for women workers.

In Germany and Russia as well, women were involved in militant strike actions. They also formed working women's suffrage associations. In 1906, Kollontai helped form working women's associations which later became the foundation for the Xhenodetl, the independent women's organization in Russia which played a crucial role during the Russian Revolution.

After 1910, International Woman's Day was celebrated in all European countries as well as the United States — but only by the working class.

Women and Russia

On March 8, 1917, in Petrograd, housewives and women textile workers went out in the streets to celebrate International Woman's Day. Weary of three years of war which had only brought hunger and death, these women began to demand bread. Soon there was widespread rioting and looting. The Russian Revolution had begun.

According to Kollontai, who was out on the streets, "the women go up to the cordons more boldly than men, take hold of rifles, beseech, almost command: "Put down your bayonets — join us." In October, the same women were on the barricades.

The Russian revolution brought about tremendous changes for women. Legislation helped shatter the old patriarchal family system: women were no longer subject to men before the law; homosexuality was no longer a crime; abortions were legalized; divorce was made easier. Other legislation made women financially as well as legally independent of men.

The Russian revolution inspired women all over the world to continue the fight. In England, Sylvia Pankhurst organized the "Hands Off Russia" campaign that prevented arms from being shipped to the forces of counterrevolution. Rosa-Luxemburg, the great German revolutionary, led the German people in their fight for socialism. In Hungary, Ireland, America, and elsewhere, women were fighting to continue the revolution that their Russian sisters had started.

Tragically, the revolutionary upsurge in Europe was defeated, and depression and repression crushed both the women's and working class movements. In Russia itself, the failure of the German and other working class movement to win power and establish socialism paved the way for the triumph of the Stalinist counterrevolution.

Stalinism

The emergence of Stalinism meant not only an end to the revolution, but the end of all the gains women had made. In 1926, the Xhenodetl was dissolved. In 1935, in spite of popular support, abortions were made illegal. Legislation making homosexuality a crime was introduced as well as other legislation strengthening the patriarchal family.

[continued on page 4]



March 8

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

In the mid 1960's, the women's movement was reborn in the U.S. Once again we face the same problems as did our sisters in the past. The women's liberation movement must not separate itself from the majority of women who work in this country. We must realize that our emancipation *cannot* come at the expense of working women.

Now, with the working class, including working women, beginning to go into motion again, the Women's Liberation movement can become a part of that struggle. The celebration this year of International Woman's Day perhaps can symbolize the awakening of women into all forms of militant action.

This year, also, we have seen very clear demonstrations of the international character of our woman's day. In Gdansk, housewives joined with dockers to fight the Polish ruling class; in Northern Ireland women and children are fighting British troops; in Indo-China, women are fighting for their self-determination; (just as in May 1968, in Paris, women were on the barricades). The women's liberation movement in America is part of this international struggle for the emancipation of women and men. ■



Devlin speaking to Bay-Area I.S.



Bernadette Devlin

Joyce Baum

Irish revolutionary leader Bernadette Devlin is presently on a speaking tour of the U.S. in order to raise funds to open a Socialist Research Institute in Northern Ireland. Among the many topics that have aroused the interest of American audiences is her perspective on the women's movement both here and abroad. While expressing a distaste for the elitist tendencies of the middle class women's movement, she gave ample evidence of what working women can do when they actively struggle to better their own conditions.

Devlin did not attribute the riots in Northern Ireland to religious antagonisms as widely reported by the press; rather she cited unemployment as the most significant single factor contributing to the tensions in Northern Ireland. Rising as high as 50 per cent in some areas, the unemployment situation overshadows the religious antagonisms that the establishment press plays up.

The most prominent industries are the textile industries, light manufacturing, and the shipyards in Belfast. Be-

cause women can be hired for much less than men, the garment factories employ almost exclusively women. There they work for the equivalent of 50 cents an hour fifty to sixty hours a week, and after these long hours they bring the work home with them, as piece rates are part of that wage.

The classic family pattern in towns centered around the garment industry is for the women in the household to work while the men can't find jobs. As a result, it is the women who are the union members and union leaders and the women who develop the political skills to fight for their rights on the job.

Because they are the leaders of their own labor movement, the natural demands of working women have become the demands of their unions. Child care, abortions, and other needs specific to women flow from their dual roles as workers and family members.

It is important to note that while Northern Ireland is legally a part of England when it comes to taxes and representation in parliament, many social reforms

that have been implemented in England — the legalization of abortions and homosexuality for example — are still outlawed in Northern Ireland.

Some of the women who come out of the labor movement join socialist organizations and are predominant in the leadership of such groups. Cathy Har-kin, Bernadette Devlin's companion on this tour, is a full-time organizer for the Derry Labor Party.

When she was told about women in California paper mills whose lunch break was taken from them despite the fact that such an action violated the protective laws governing the employment of women in the state, she advocated that they take the lunch break despite the new regulation, and had difficulty understanding why they hadn't done this already. Women in North Ireland have the class consciousness and the determination to carry on such job actions.

Voters in local elections of Northern Ireland are limited to those who hold rent books, that is, those who pay the rent. Women as tenants have led the fight to keep the rent down. Because of these efforts and because they pay the rent as the family breadwinners, women are the voters in these elections.

The Independent Socialist Organization to which Bernadette Devlin belongs and the Derry Labor Party both advocate that all voters be franchised for local elections. This is another fight that women will have to win.

Bernadette Devlin tells the story about how Northern Ireland business used to advertise in international business journals about the two attractions it offered to foreign business: first, cheap labor, and second, social peace. Now the ads omit any mention of social peace — but still advertise the attractions of cheap labor. The Irish working class, with the active participation of working women, will make the first part of the ad as obsolete as the second. ■

[The text of a speech by Bernadette Devlin, presented to a Bay-Area International Socialists' forum on February 20, will be reprinted in a forthcoming issue of Workers' Power.]

Devlin On Women

[From the question-and-answer period following a speech by Bernadette Devlin at an International Socialists public forum in Berkeley, California, on Saturday, Feb. 20.]

Q: How do you feel about the oppression of women?

A: I feel very strongly about the oppression of women, as a woman and as an Irish woman who has had both her class struggle and her sex struggle misrepresented by many people.

We feel very strongly in Ireland about the middle class hangers-on in the women's revolutionary movement. Now, we've got nothing against people being born into the middle class; we're not prejudiced. However, you've got a lot of

middle class women, both in America and in Britain (there are fewer of them in Ireland, given that we've been oppressed more than anyone else) who say, "Okay, we want women's liberation," but for whom women's liberation has nothing to do with people's liberation.

They can't see that the oppression of women is one of the most affective means employed by the system for the oppression of the working class. They simply want professional women's equality with professional men, middle class women's equality with middle class men, and working class women's equality with working class men.

Those same polite ladies with their fur coats and their nice accents and their great militant stance of refusing to be treated like women and getting upset if you shout or swear at them — those kind of people don't want equality with working class men. I've met them. They don't want equality with working class black males in Harlem. They don't want to know about it. In fact, they see a working class black male in Harlem as the enemy.

Some women are led into that branch of the movement where all men are the enemy. I'm afraid that's where I get out.

As far as I'm concerned, some women are the enemy and some men are the enemy because it's a class struggle and the oppression of women must be seen in the class context.

We certainly need, in most cases, an autonomous women's movement, because even within some of our revolutionary movements it's a point that escapes many of our male comrades that women are oppressed. But we run into the same danger as a lot of minority groups. (We are the biggest minority in the world, because we are, in fact, a majority. If you go through the world's population you'll find that there are slightly more women than men.) Women are no better than men, blacks are no better than whites, Catholics are no better than Protestants.

Any woman who says, "women are natural leaders," I disagree with. I don't believe women are natural leaders or men are natural leaders, that woman power is any better than man power, and I certainly don't want to be part of any female-dominated world. I think we're all equals, and if we don't accept that, we become counter-revolutionary. And I have no time for women counter-revolutionaries any more than I have time for men counter-revolutionaries. ■



Nixon is picketed at the Iowa State Capitol grounds by a coalition of construction workers, anti-war demonstrators and farmers.

Last fall, construction workers made national news with demonstrations in support of Nixon's war policies. Today,

as the effects of the war are brought home to them, they are being forced to begin struggling against Nixon. Their struggle forces them to look for allies among other groups, such as the anti-war movement, who are also in struggle against the war and related aspects of the crisis in American society.

Nixon Lowers The Boom

Jack Trautman

President Nixon's latest attack on "inflation" is one of the most blatant anti-labor moves seen in this country in a long time. His target was the construction industry. He first threatened to impose "wage-price controls" (meaning wage controls) — after swearing that he was thoroughly opposed to such controls. Then he suspended the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931 which requires contractors on Federal or federally-financed projects to pay prevailing wage rates — that is, top union scale. Since these projects account for about one-third of all construction in the country its effect will be enormous on public and private projects.

Nixon thus began a full-scale assault on the construction workers. The "hard hats," many of whom had so eagerly supported the President against the anti-war movement, now find themselves facing a vicious attack.

"Excessive" Wages

Construction workers have been winning what the government claims to be "excessive" wage increases. (Last year manufacturing workers' wages averaged \$3.36 an hour while construction workers' wages averaged \$5.22 an hour.) What this argument ignores is the fact that construction workers are not paid for vacations, sick leave or time spent between jobs.

It also ignores the highly seasonal nature of construction work, which cannot continue when it rains, snows, or is too windy. According to the Labor Department, the average construction worker took home only \$8,481 last year — \$2,500 less than what the govern-

ment says is necessary for a family of four to live decently.

While concentrating on the "high" wage increases won by the construction workers, the government has not said one word about the real factors which have tended to send construction costs soaring: the ever-rising price of land which drops fortunes into the hands of the people who own it; the high interest rates that must be paid on money borrowed to pay for construction; the high profits made by contractors.

It would be an easy matter for the government to put a limit on all these profits — and since the labor costs are only a small part of construction costs (in Detroit they make up only 18 per cent of the cost of home construction and slightly more for industrial construction) such limits would have a far greater effect. Instead, he chose wage-busting.

The suspension of the Davis-Bacon Act will mean that when non-union contractors bid against union contractors for federally-financed projects, they will be able to make lower bids. When they win they will not have to pay union rates, which means they will be able to increase their profits at the expense of the workers. Moreover, non-union contractors, paying lower wages, will still be able to attract workers because of the high unemployment in the construction industry. This will tend to drive wages down generally.

Nixon claimed, as his justification for suspending the Davis-Bacon Act, that there was an emergency in the construction industry — and indeed there is. But part of the emergency is the high

unemployment rate in construction:

11.1 per cent, or close to twice the national average. That unemployment rate was largely created by the government cutback in construction.

Nixon's action will not decrease that unemployment — it will simply force unemployed workers to work at lower than union-scale wages, while at the same time throwing union workers out of work. A nice deal for business. (A genuine effort to end unemployment in construction would include instead a massive program to rebuild the rotting cities.)

In the long run, Nixon's program will tend to break the unions by giving the work advantage to non-union labor. Carl Halvorson, an immediate past-president of the Associated General Contractors of America and a member of the President's Construction Industry Collective Bargaining Commission, gave his assessment of Nixon's move: It "could be significant . . . because it might accelerate a movement toward an open-shop situation." That is clearly what he is hoping and what the President intends.

When Nixon was elected he told us he wanted to be President of "all the people." He is now showing us what that means: union-busting (in the interests of all the people?) and throwing people out of work (we'll all get richer that way?) — not to mention lying to us about the war that he claimed he had a secret plan to end, pretending to disengage while at the same time escalating.

If his latest moves do not succeed in driving down wages he is preparing more drastic measures, including possible wage-price freezes. He originally opposed the Democratic Party-sponsored law which gives him that power; now he is asking Congress for its extension.

The problem of inflation cannot be solved in the construction industry alone. Nixon is aware of that. But he has in mind the fact that other workers are eyeing the gains of construction workers and hoping to win some for themselves.

The suspension of the Davis-Bacon Act is only the most recent of Nixon's increasingly desperate efforts to curb inflation without putting a squeeze on profits. The most serious effect of the inflation from the point of view of the business-oriented government is not that it robs us of our hard-earned wages, nor that it ruins poor people on fixed incomes. Rather, the government is concerned that the inflation has reached such a level that it is impeding American capitalism's ability to compete on the world market.

Many industries — especially steel — are feeling the pinch of foreign competition. A steel strike is coming up this summer and steelworkers want to get back what they have lost to inflation. They are asking for what auto workers got last year — an unlimited cost-of-living escalator clause and a wage increase.

But that would force the steel companies to raise their prices if they are to maintain the same profit level. Doing so would strengthen the hand for foreign, especially Japanese, steel producers. Nixon's attack on construction workers is a sharpening of his claws to take on steelworkers and other workers; it is a major step toward a general attack on all workers.

No relief can be expected from the Democratic Party. Muskie, Kennedy and other Democratic Party spokesmen are on record in favor of wage-price controls. Of course, if Nixon adopts their program, they might well turn around and present themselves as "pro-labor" candidates in opposition to the program they themselves brought up. But, the fact is that Democrats work for the same people the Republicans do. The same banks and corporations foot their campaign bills and newspaper ads, and reward "pro-business" politicians by bringing money into their districts and cities.

It is becoming increasingly necessary that workers organize to fight for their class interests against the businessmen. What must be done is to form an independent political party of working people, one opposed to both the Democratic and the Republican Party, which can fight for workers' interests. There is no other way, and that fact will become clearer as the crackdown progresses.

Many and various higher-ups in the construction workers' unions have responded angrily to the President's action. Many counterposed an alternative to it: "What America needs is full employment at fair wages and decent conditions, not punitive action against workers."

He is right, of course. But what will he do about it? The AFL-CIO is tied hand-in-glove to the war in Vietnam and the permanent arms economy, which are largely responsible for the inflation. Moreover, it is deeply embedded in the Democratic Party. Meany's criticisms of it often come from the right.

Will he and the other bureaucrats who think like him be able to organize a struggle against the President's assault? Will they be willing to break with the two ruling class parties and lead a movement for a workers' party? Probably not. If not, we'll have to roll over them and build it ourselves. ■



ROSA LUXEMBURG



Louise Mitchell

Rosa Luxemburg's hundredth birthday falls on March 5th. Though she was one of the greatest revolutionary socialist fighters and thinkers of all time, her centennial will not be surrounded by the international attention that accompanied Lenin's hundredth birthday just last year.

Outside of the circle of already involved revolutionary socialists she stands deep in the shadows of history, almost unknown. She is more of an impressionistic image than a firm reality. The major reason she stands in the background, while Lenin does not, is that she has not been used as Lenin is — mummified and deified, exploited by a bureaucratic ruling class to justify a social system which has nothing in common with socialism.

Perhaps this lack of pomp and cir-

cumstance is fortunate — we can begin at the beginning. We need to know far more about her passionate combination of revolutionary socialism and democracy than one short centennial article can contain. We are as in need of Rosa Luxemburg's keen intellect and fighting spirit today as in her own time, and we must see that this centennial marks the re-awakening of awareness about her.

We will concentrate here on her ideas, rather than her personal biography, because it is her ideas that have been so buried. Even where, as in East Germany and Poland, her birthday is ritually observed by the bureaucracy and commemorated by stamps, her works are generally unavailable. Only a criminal's small fraction have been translated into English.

It has now been pretty much established that she was born on March 5, 1871. Her birthplace was a Polish town, her family "assimilated Jews."

By the age of 16, she was a member of what remained of Proletariat, an outstanding early revolutionary socialist party which was repressed almost out of existence during her childhood. Within two years she was in trouble with the police, and it was decided that she could do more useful work in exile than in prison.

Smuggled out of Poland in a haystack, she went naturally to Zurich, then the most important gathering point for the rather large number of political exiles of Eastern Europe. It was there that she took part in the feverish intellectual life of the political exile

community, as well as completing her Ph. D. in Economics at the University.

At the age of 22 she represented the small Polish party in exile at the Congress of the Socialist International — daring to stand up and argue fiercely with all the veterans of the world socialist movement, even though she was unknown.

In 1898, at the age of 27, she went to Germany, the undisputed center of the world Socialist movement, where she spent most of the rest of her life. The German Social Democratic Party was master of the Socialist International movement, and this was the arena in which the decisive battles were being fought.

Reform or Revolution

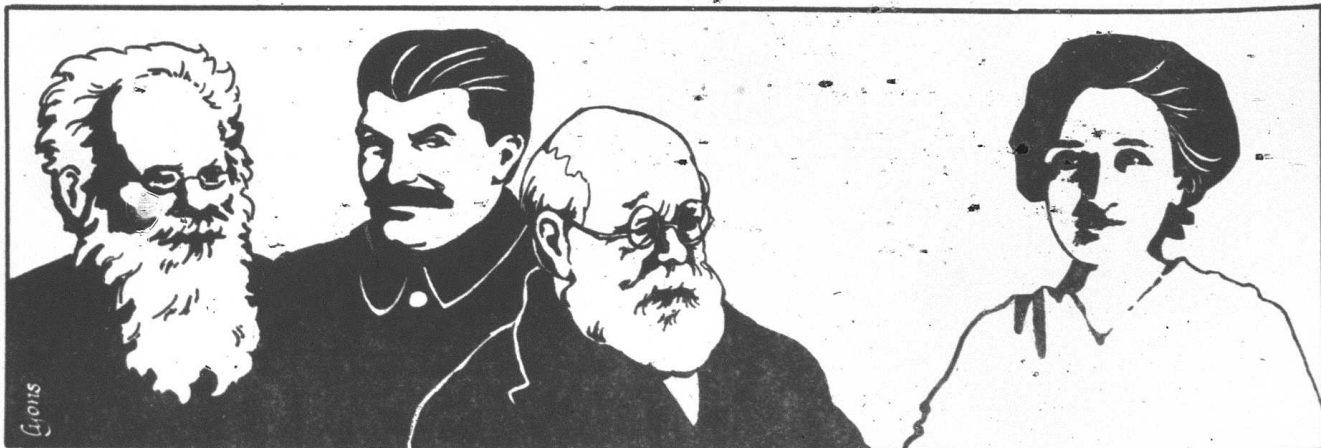
The first critical battle into which she threw herself was the fight against the growing anti-revolutionary current developing in the socialist movement under the leadership of Eduard Bernstein.

Bernstein was the forerunner of the sort of welfare-state "socialist" who abandons the vision of a world in which men and women make their own history, substituting increasing social services as the goal instead. Bernstein concentrated on the ability of an expanding imperialist capitalism to provide a rising standard of living, and mistook a period of prosperity for proof that capitalism had solved its problems.

Rosa Luxemburg took on Bernstein in her first great work, *Reform or Revolution*. In this pamphlet she tore apart the reformist fantasies about the future of capitalism (1929 certainly bore her out), and argued that it is only reformists who need to counterpose reform to revolution and say you must choose between them.

To revolutionaries she writes: "the daily struggle for reforms offers the only means for engaging in the class war and working in the direction of the final goal — the conquest of political power and the end of wage labor. . . . The struggle for reforms is its means, the social revolution its aim."

The Russian Revolution of 1905 confirmed her revolutionary perspective, and she further developed her concept of the process of the mass strike. She saw the mass political strike as the critical weapon in the hands of the working class. In periods of upsurge economic struggles would turn into political ones, and the political struggles would reinforce the economic struggle, as wider and wider layers of workers would be drawn into battle. In these strikes and in the organization of them, work-



Bernstein

Stalin

Kautsky

Luxemburg



Russian women in revolutionary demonstration, 1917

ers would learn to govern themselves.

She emphasized that all mass strikes, all partial uprisings, would, when they ebbed, appear to be defeats (there are no victories but the final one, she said). But in each of these seeming defeats class consciousness is heightened, human beings transcend themselves, and the ground is prepared for future struggles. It is because of her emphasis on the mass strike, plus her criticisms of Lenin's views of the revolutionary party, that she has been mislabeled a "spontaneist" by both opponents and disciples.

In the context of the highly bureaucratized German Social Democracy, she emphasized the role of the mass movement above that of the leadership in a dramatic and exciting way. "Let us speak plainly," she asserted, "the errors of a truly revolutionary mass movement are historically infinitely more fruitful than the infallible decisions of the cleverest Central Committee."

In addition to doing battle with the explicit sell-outs like Bernstein, Luxemburg also led the opposition to the so-called centre of the German S.P.D. She saw with terrifying clarity that this group, led by Karl Kautsky, would end up defending Germany in the coming World War.

She recognized that as the German Social Democratic Party grew in numbers, in parliamentary votes, in organization and efficiency, it had become a marsh, a bureaucratic machine, less and less socialist. Kautsky had become revolutionary in rhetoric only; he was as reformist as Bernstein in practice.

The outbreak of World War One led many socialists, in Luxemburg's words, to substitute, for "Workers of the World Unite," "Workers of the World, slit each other's throats..." She remained a staunch oppositionist to the war, and was jailed. Perhaps her greatest comfort through the war years were the periodic strikes of the German working class against the imperialist war.

When news of the victorious Russian Revolution reached her she was elated. Nevertheless, she was aware, like Lenin and Trotsky, that the Russian revolution was doomed if it remained isolated, that it required the assistance of a revolution in Germany and other industrialized countries.

Stuck in prison, she was denied detailed knowledge of the situation in Russia. But she warned of the long-term dangers of the curtailment of civil liberties under the conditions of civil war, in terms that seem only too prophetic today to readers familiar with the rise of Stalinism:

"Socialism in life demands a complete spiritual transformation in the masses. The only way to a rebirth is the school of public life itself, the most

unlimited, the broadest democracy and public opinion. It is rule by terror which demoralizes.

"But with the repression of political life in the land as a whole, life in the workers' councils must become more and more crippled. Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element.

"Public life gradually falls asleep, a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule. Among them, in reality, only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and an elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders and to approve proposed resolutions -- at bottom, then, a clique affair."

Rosa Luxemburg did her utmost to see that the Russian Revolution was not isolated -- she gave her life to the German uprising of 1918-19, though she regarded it as ill-timed. The final irony was that it was a so-called socialist government of the Social Democrats which murdered her.

Until recently it was thought that Rosa Luxemburg was not interested in the question of the emancipation of women, and took only a passing interest in the "woman question" which was a serious concern of the socialists of her time. Recent research has shown this attitude to be mistaken. Unfortunately none of this work has been made available in English.

In 1910, she addressed the Women's Congress of the Second International, which met separately before the general Congress. She wrote an article in Polish called "Lady into Woman" not yet

translated, and she wrote an article on the relationship of the Class Struggle to the fight for Woman's Suffrage. She wrote in defense of prostitutes against persecution and hypocrisy, pointing out the links between our class society and the situation which produces prostitution. Clara Zetkin, the leader of the woman's movement of the day, as well as a leading member of the Socialist movement as a whole, was one of Rosa Luxemburg's closest friends and associates.

Luxemburg took a clear class line on the oppression of women, stressing the inseparability of the struggle for the emancipation of women and the struggle of the working class. She chose to fight in the party as a whole rather than primarily in the woman's movement because she saw that as then the main arena. But she would not have thought this lessened her fight for the emancipation of women.

In common with other revolutionaries of that time, she may have underestimated the importance of autonomous women's organizations to the final liberation of women in socialist society. But she never assumed that the wives of male comrades automatically assumed their husbands' politics, and fought for their allegiance, while encouraging their independence. As a revolutionary socialist, she was not just a woman leader, but a fighter for the emancipation of women.

Luxemburg's political brilliance led her to recognize the non-revolutionary character of both the German Social Democracy, and of its Kautskyan "left wing," long before Lenin and other socialists did. At the same time, although she maintained that a revolutionary party was necessary to provide political leadership for the mass struggles of the workers, she tended to assume that the spontaneous revolutionary activity of

the masses would solve all organizational difficulties -- either moving the Social Democracy to the left or throwing up a new leadership in the struggle.

While such tendencies exist in every revolutionary period, she failed to recognize in time that the counter-revolutionary nature of the social democratic and trade union bureaucracy would make the first alternative impossible, and she underestimated the difficulty of forging a revolutionary cadre in the midst of the revolution itself.

"Luxemburg realized her mistake, but too late. She organized a left-wing faction, the Spartacus League, only after the S.P.D. had capitulated to German imperialism at the beginning of the war. She waited to found the German Communist Party until the end of 1918, in the midst of the German revolution.

This lack of a clear organizational perspective, her tendency to believe organizational problems would automatically be solved by revolutionary activity, prevented Luxemburg from developing a revolutionary cadre until it was too late. The magnificent, spontaneous, revolutionary upsurge of the German and European working class in the year after World War I was crushed due to the lack of strong revolutionary parties -- which could not be immaculately conceived in the revolution itself, but required the long, hard, patient work of years of prior development of revolutionary cadres and organizational struggle.

The failure of the German and European revolutions isolated the workers' revolution in backward Russia, and set the stage for the triumph of the Stalinist counter-revolution and the later rise of fascism. The consequences of the mistakes of Luxemburg and other European revolutionaries are still with us.

We have lived in a period largely without the mass struggle of the working class which forged the Rosa Luxemburgs. Slowly that sleeping working class is waking now -- and with its struggles must come the leadership to carry forward the socialist revolution, toward the sort of socialism Rosa Luxemburg described:

"The essence of a socialist society consists in this: the great working mass ceases to be a regimented mass, but lives and directs the whole political and economic life in conscious and free self-determination.

Propelling us to fight for that idea is her warning, often repeated -- our society can go forward, to socialism, or backward, to barbarism. As she stressed, the die will be cast by the class-conscious working class. ■



Bread and Roses

[James Oppenheim's poem, "Bread and Roses," memorialized one of the 1912 Lawrence strike parades in which the young mill girls carried a banner, "We want bread and roses too."]

As we come marching, marching in the beauty of the day,
A million darkened kitchens, a thousand mill lofts gray,
Are touched with all the radiance that a sudden sun discloses,
For the people hear us singing: "Bread and roses! Bread and roses!"

As we come marching, marching, we battle too for men,
For they are women's children, and we mother them again.
Our lives shall not be sweated from birth until life closes,
Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread, but give us roses!

As we come marching, marching, unnumbered women dead
Crying through our singing their ancient cry for bread.
Small art and love and beauty their drudging spirits knew.
Yes, it is bread we fight for -- but we fight for roses, too!

As we come marching, marching, we bring the greater days.
The rising of the women means the rising of the race.
No more the drudge and idler -- ten that toil where one reposes,
But a sharing of life's glories: Bread and roses! Bread and roses!

Detroit Teachers Up Against The Budget

Chris Winslow

On Sunday, Feb. 28, more than 4,000 Detroit teachers rejected the leadership of their union president, Mary Ellen Riordan of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, in voting down a proposal for a one-day strike in protest against budget cuts and the proposed firing of nearly 200 teachers. The School Board, however, can take little comfort from the defeat of the strike proposal. The proposal lost because teachers were opposed to merely symbolic protests. The teachers' mood remains angry, although their militancy lacks a clear direction.

Funding Crisis

The basic cause of the Detroit school crisis is the crisis in the funding of all social services. Not just in the last few years — when the Vietnam war has sent inflation on a flight to the moon — but for the last 20 years, the basic social services in most American cities have stagnated.

There has been too little medical care, too few hospital beds. Federal housing funds have gone to profitable luxury housing, and the housing situation for working-class and low-income people has grown ever worse. Public transportation is ever more inadequate. And school budgets have fallen steadily behind what is needed.

Over the last decade, the school crisis has been intensified by the war. As war costs have risen, so have war taxes. The voters have struck back against the only taxes on which they are allowed a direct vote — school bonds. Before the war, school bonds passed automatically — now they are being voted down in city after city.

All these problems are particularly acute in Detroit, a city dominated by the giant auto companies whose social interest is limited to making sure there's a steady supply of labor for the plants, which dot Detroit's map like sores on a sick body. The result has been a steady process of "trimming the edges" from the school budget — trimming special programs, trimming supplies, and now, trimming the work week of maintenance employees, and threatening to trim both the number of teachers and the number of days pupils attend school.

"Survival Plan"

In mid-February, the School Board announced a "survival plan" involving \$12 million in budget cuts. These would not have eliminated the budget deficit — they would only have reduced the deficit from \$37 to \$25 million for this year.

Part of the plan was to fire non-contract teachers. As in most cities, Detroit has a section of teachers, numbering about 400, who for technical rea-

sons have not received certification and hence are not covered by the job security provisions of the union contract. The Board could not have legally fired tenured teachers, but it could take advantage of this "second-class" group. At the same time, it could intensify the work load of the remaining teachers.

At a mass meeting at the School Board on Feb. 23, 1,000 teachers protested the "survival plan," which a dissenting School Board member called a "slow death plan." The union, however, has no alternative program except to beg for a delay. In this vacuum, most of the demonstrating teachers supported a plan put forward by the superintendents' and administrators' organization.

This plan was supposed to solve the crisis through deferring the June paychecks of administrators' and supervisors' — a gesture they hoped the teachers would imitate — and delaying certain educational programs. Although the programs were unpopular with the teachers, some of them — such as a program of free distribution of books and supplies — were perfectly justified as an aid to poor families.

The principals' plan would have solved the crisis out of the pockets of employees and poor families. Moreover, it would have represented only a temporary solution, putting off the crisis until after the school year ended but leaving all the problems to be faced next year.

The School Board, meeting a few days later, rejected this plan. In a clearly token gesture, it reduced the number of teachers scheduled for layoff from 258 to 192. In turn, the Riordan leadership of the Detroit Federation of Teachers, meeting at week's end, could only

propose the one-day strike as a protest gesture.

Rejecting this powerless gesture, the membership was itself divided on whether to call a full-scale strike immediately, or organize the one-day strike as a "sick call." Those who opposed the strike were thinking of the near-certainty of a full-scale strike over a new contract in September; moreover, as contrasted to the "sick call," which would require the School Board to pay the teachers sick pay, Mrs. Riordan's token strike would have put one day's salary for the teachers into the Board's pocket — a most unusual way of solving the Board's problems.

A later poll at Northwestern High School, whose teachers are heavily pro-union, showed that most teachers did not favor striking in the spring and again in the fall.

If fought broadly around improvements in teaching and services, a strike would have major support from students and parents. The present crisis has touched off a student sit-in at Mumford High School, a largely-black school on Detroit's Northwest side, around demands for no transfer of teachers, limiting class size to 25 students, and providing a parent-student-faculty hearing for all students before they are disciplined. As this issue went to press, the sit-in had continued around the clock for three school days.

The lack of a program and the weakness of the union will be the major problems in a strike. Simply demanding higher wages, cancellation of budget cuts, etc., will not answer the School Board when it argues that there is no money. To win, it will be necessary to reject the logic of the Board's case — the logic which says, "The money just isn't there,

so we have to cut back somewhere." This can only lead to an endless round of chopping Peter's program to pay for Paul's, in which education in Detroit will deteriorate further.

Instead, the union members must ask, "Who can pay for the education our pupils need?" In Detroit, as in other major American cities, the answer is — the corporations which have their headquarters here (including General Motors, largest corporation in the world) and which gain the benefits from education in terms of a supply of the semi-trained and skilled workers and technicians they require.

The huge profits of these corporations would provide the funds not merely to avoid cutbacks, but to expand education to a quality level. The union should be demanding A SCHOOL TAX ON CORPORATE PROFITS — NO CUTBACKS, QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL, FUNDED BY TAXING CORPORATIONS NOT WORKING PEOPLE. The union should begin now to mobilize its members to demand such a tax from the Detroit City government and the Michigan Legislature.

Quality Education

To win such a program or even to successfully strike for higher wages, the teachers' union will need allies. By fighting for QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL — rather than a shift of cutbacks onto non-teaching staff — the union can enlist the help of non-teaching staff such as janitors. Moreover, such a program can be taken to all labor organizations in Detroit.

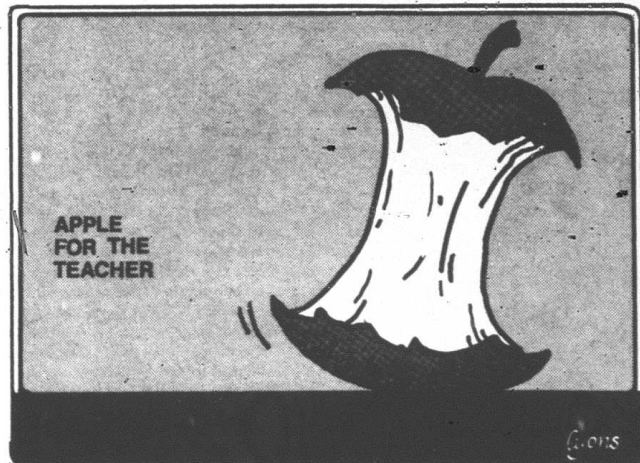
It is the children of auto workers, steel workers, etc., who are being denied a decent education. The union should call upon the United Auto Workers, United Steel Workers, and all other unions to build JOINT UNION DEMONSTRATIONS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION FUNDED BY TAXING CORPORATIONS. Parents and students can join these demonstrations.

The hesitant "Riordan team" which now runs the union will shrink from adopting this program — which is a radical one. It will be the job of the members to press for it.

The only opposition group in the union at present is the "New Directions" or "New Caucus" group, which opposed the Riordan leadership in the last union elections on a program calling essentially for greater attention to the needs of inner-city schools. It attracts younger, militant teachers, many of them black. Without at all compromising its program for the inner city, this group can expand its platform to demand the funds and programs which will bring better education for all. In so doing, it can become the voice of the membership as a whole.

It should also take up the demand for immediate U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. This demand, which has received strong support in the American Federation of Teachers nationally, is intimately related to ending the inflation which has intensified the funding crisis. Teachers will not be able to defend their immediate interests unless they begin to make political demands opposing the government policies which injure these interests.

But regardless of what steps this group takes, teachers should demand the program of corporate taxation and alliance with the whole labor movement. This will lead to a head-on conflict with the power of the corporations, but such a battle offers the only alternative to the present decay of education in Detroit. ■



Newark Teachers Strike

David Miller

A Newark Teachers strike provoked by the union-busting attempts of the Board of Education is now in its fifth week, with no end in sight.

The issues are not so much salary (the union being very modest in its demands) as the Board's demand for the elimination of the Binding Arbitration Clause from the contract. Under this clause, last year, the union's defense of its contract was upheld repeatedly on questions such as class size, teacher duties, and pay. But the Board as consistently ignored Arbitration rulings. (Some of the rulings were simply implemented "on the job" by the union teachers.)

While in general we are opposed to binding arbitration, under the present conditions, the Binding Arbitration Clause is in effect synonymous with the contract itself. Clearly, the Board has simply not accepted the necessity of a real contract with its teachers in Newark.

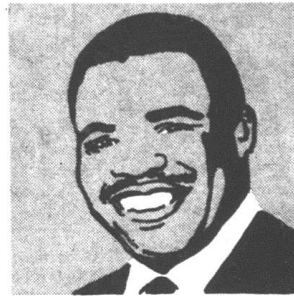
The issue has been complicated by the injection of the charge that the union is engaged in a racist strike and is anti-community control. This charge is made despite the fact that the President of the local, Carol Graves, is a black militant, and despite the public support given the strike by the Black Muslims and Black Panther Party, as well as all black trade unionists in the area.



NTU President Graves

Support for the charge is offered by the black President of the Board of Education, Jesse Jacobs (who worked to break last year's strike), and by Leroy Jones, black nationalist leader who is influential with Newark's black mayor Gibson (elected with the united and open support of the city's big corporations). It is Jones' associates who secured the court injunction against Carol Graves, leading to her likely imprisonment.

As a matter of fact, the charge is completely false. The union, both in practice and program, has given abundant evidence that it does support genuine community control — that is, dir-



Newark Mayor Gibson

ect, grass-roots community involvement in policy determination for the schools. Thus, the Newark Teachers' Union, in its negotiations, submitted proposals for educational improvement whose implementation and determination was to be effected by direct involvement of the community.

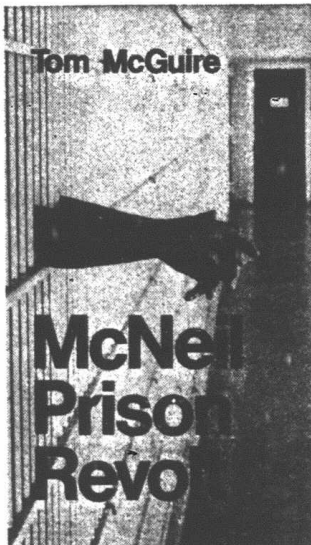
Similarly, the Newark Teachers' Union advocates joint selection of principals by teachers and community. In fact, it is Newark's Board of Education that has rejected all these proposals, maintaining that it alone has the right to set educational policy. When the Board talks about "community control," it means control by the Board of Education.

The union and Board are also opposed in their attitudes to student rights and demands. The union supports them (including the right to "observe" at negotiations), and the right to draft counselors). The Board rejects them.

The sole basis for the charge that the NTU is opposed to community control is the fact that the NTU has insisted on its right to negotiate on educational matters. What this argument ignores, however, is the reality that no change in education can be effective unless those who are to implement it are consulted and have a real voice. Nothing else is practical, realistic, or democratic.

Teachers must make it clear that community control and increased teacher power, i.e., more democratic schools, are not only consistent goals but even intimately interdependent, since both movements are directed, justly, against the educational establishment.

During the strike so far, the teachers have faced all kinds of intimidation, both legal, through court injunctions, and extra-legal, with teachers being beaten on the picket lines. So far these actions have not been enough to break the strike. The teachers are still united in the struggle against the Board of Education. Such unity, combined with support from both the community and labor movement, will hopefully bring them victory. ■



As we go to press, the strike of prisoners at McNeil Island Federal Penitentiary enters its second week. 1,200 prisoners are locked in their cells; their leaders are in the "hole." Of course, the situation could change in a moment, but thus far the strikers have responded to each of the warden's threats with the chant, in unison from inside the cells: "Kill the 1,200." They mean that the strike will only be broken over their dead bodies.

McNeil Island might seem an unlikely setting for a prison strike. The island sits in the middle of Puget Sound, just south and west of Tacoma. Behind it

are the Olympic mountains. But the scenery counts for little. Prison life at McNeil is the same as prison life elsewhere — brutality, frustration, racism, hopelessness, and violence.

There were short as well as long-term causes of the strike. Only recently, the new warden cancelled programs on black culture and Mexican-American self-help. Then there was a stabbing, a suicide, and a forced and brutal haircut. Monday morning, Feb. 22, only 67 of the 1,200 prisoners reported for work.

Among the 67 were the warden's favorites, including the men who murdered three Mississippi civil rights workers in 1964. Even they, called "Hitler's helpers" by the others, were sent back to their cells. There, with the others, they must subsist each day on two sandwiches and some Kool-ade. The strike is 100 per cent effective.

The warden, Jacob J. Parker, recently transferred to McNeil from the prison in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, announced at a press conference that the strike was "50 to 60 per cent" effective. He would begin negotiations, he said, and there would be no reprisals.

Before he had spoken, the six elected strike leaders were already in the hole. His intention was to "negotiate" with the hand-picked Men's Advisory Committee (MAC). The MAC, however, responded by beginning a hunger strike and refusing to negotiate with anyone until the others were released from the hole.

Divide and Rule

As is the case in all prisons, the officials at McNeil make it general policy to segregate the prisoners and to use racial hatred to keep them divided and

under control. The "liberalization" of official racial policies in the '60's did not affect McNeil. The prisoners are housed, assigned, and worked separately — blacks, whites, Chicanos, and homosexuals. As a result, there is a long history of racial hatred, violence, and fear at McNeil.

The strike, however, has changed all that. So far, the administration's attempt to end the strike by playing whites against blacks, or straights against gays (attempts which the prisoners document), have failed. The recurring answer to the warden, since the beginning of the strike, has been the chant: "Black, brown, red, and white, we're all together in the fight." The strike at McNeil may be unique in the extent that racial barriers have consciously been broken by prisoners.

Reprisals

For the inmates, the risks are great. To begin with, there is the possibility of direct physical assault by the administration. Already tear gas has been used. But, more importantly, there is the warden's best weapon — individual reprisals. Jimmy Martinez, for example, has been in prison since 1944 when he shot his commanding officer during the battle of the Coral Sea. Parker has told him that if the strike is not finished by the end of the week, Martinez will lose his 3,300 "good days."

Tommy Thomas is the spokesman of the strike committee. He is also president of the prison chapter of Jaycees (Junior Chamber of Commerce). Thomas should be released this year. For him, a broken strike could mean two more years on the inside.

The demands of the strikers include:

visiting speakers, entertainers, an uncensored newspaper, and an information center. Their major concern now is access to the press. In spite of a court ruling to the contrary, Parker refuses to allow the press to speak to the prisoners. In their own statement, the strikers asked, "Is it not significant that when the jailers force violence and rioting upon the prisoners, that the prisoners turn to the great majority of ordinary people for understanding and relief?"

Open the Jails

The McNeil Island strike may fail in the short run. In the long run, however, the strike at McNeil, along with the whole wave of political revolts within the nation's prisons, will rewrite the definition of crime. And in the process, a new generation of revolutionaries will be created.

On Monday, March 1, several hundred persons gathered at the landing opposite the island to show their solidarity with the strikers. It was a beginning. To achieve any long-term success, however, to bring any real relief to the number of captives in America's swelling prisons, a powerful movement must be created on the outside.

Prisons are, after all, only one part of the system used to control and repress the working people of the nation — men and women, black and white. Into the prisons go the rebellious, the alienated, the impoverished, and the proud. Only a movement of working class people can open the prisons. In every working class revolution, the jails have been opened. In America, the movement on the inside will make the breaking of the gates that much simpler. ■

Gay Liberation

James Coleman



In June 1969, the New York police made what they thought was a routine raid on a bar for homosexuals, the Stonewall. Usually the way this works is that the police take pay-offs from gay bars to leave them alone. Occasionally a bar is raided. The customers are hauled into court and quietly pay their fines — because if they fought the case and it became public, they would risk losing their jobs. This system spreads a good deal of cash around among the cops, the court clerks, and the city treasury.

But that June night, instead of going quietly into the patrol wagons, the people in the Stonewall started to push the cops back out into the street. The cops warned the gathering crowd to disperse or face arrest. The people ignored the warning, and bottles and bricks started flying at the police.

Since this part of New York is heavily populated by gay people, the crowd grew quickly. The cops sent for reinforcements, more people joined the crowd, billy clubs swung, rocks and bottles flew. A dozen cops and a larger number of gay people went to the hospital.

The crowd outside the Stonewall was defending the simple right to assemble in peace, but this was the beginning of a movement for the liberation of homosexuals. The next day a new group was formed — the Gay Liberation Front. A protest demonstration was held against police harassment.

Why Gay Liberation?

In the next months, Gay Liberation groups sprang up in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, then in dozens of smaller cities. These groups have picketed the police, held public dances, protested job discrimination, fought the banning of dancing in homosexual bars. They have marched under their own banners at anti-war marches

and demanded recognition and equal treatment in the radical movement. Last June 28, the anniversary of the Stonewall riot, was marked by gay marches in several cities, including one of over 10,000 people in New York.

Why Gay Liberation? The fact is that homosexuals are subject to most of the same kinds of oppression as other oppressed groups, including:

Job discrimination. Most people think of homosexuals as playwrights, hairdressers, department store clerks, etc. That's not because all gay people are writers, hairdressers, or clerks, but because those are among the few jobs where you can be known to be gay without being fired.

In fact, gay men and women are found in all economic classes, in all races, and in all occupations — office workers, factory workers, longshoremen, teachers, housewives. But very few jobs anywhere are open to someone who is known to be gay. As a result, we can only find and keep employment by living in secrecy.

Discrimination in law and the courts. Homosexual acts are a crime in all but two states, carrying penalties up to life imprisonment. These laws are sometimes enforced, but not frequently. Much more often, laws against "public indecency," etc., are used to harass homosexuals. Homosexual dancing, for example, comes under "public indecency," though it harms no one.

Most gay people wind up in court in the same way: in a bar or a public place, a plain-clothes cop invites them to make a proposition, and if they respond, the cop then busts them for soliciting. These laws are used simply to get pay-offs for the cops from the bars, and pay-offs for the city, in the form of fines, from gay people who are afraid to fight in court. After a conviction, the victim

is usually listed as a "known sex offender."

Physical attack. Hate and fear of homosexuals is so strong among many people that gay people are beaten and even killed, and their attackers never punished. Gay kids in high school are jumped, beaten, even shot at by students, flunked or given harder work by teachers who thereby encourage the students' attacks, and refused protection by the administration, who bear the responsibility for all this harassment. The police of course have a free hand; incidents like the unprovoked wounding of a customer by a cop outside a gay bar in San Francisco last December are common.

Psychological oppression. Just as black people and women have been taught myths of their inferiority, gay people are taught that they are "perverted" or "sick." Psychiatric theorists continue to put forward the view that homosexuality is a mental illness — though recent studies have found no scientific evidence for this view.

These teachings have consequences in life. When a boy or girl reveals homosexual feelings, they will either be punished by parents and schools — or sent to a psychiatrist, who will encourage them to believe they are "sick." In some state hospitals, barbaric "treatments" using electric and drug-induced shocks are practiced on homosexuals.

Secrecy and Fear

All these aspects of oppression add up to a life of secrecy and fear — fear of arrest, fear that the person you pick up may rob or kill you; fear of losing your job or being evicted from your home; for young gays, fear of their parents, teachers and fellow students; for all, secrecy for fear of the prejudice and hate of anyone who might find out.

Gay people's own shame — their acceptance of the idea that they are "sick,"

in the absence of anyone saying the opposite — also contributes to this secrecy. Unlike blacks or women, who cannot hide what they are and thus suffer mass discrimination, gay people can escape open discrimination or brutality — but only by concealment. Thus, secrecy is usually the most oppressive aspect of a gay person's life.

For this reason, the most important thing Gay Liberation has done is to break with secrecy — to "come out," that is, appear openly as a militant movement of homosexuals. The desire to be done with secrecy accounts for the rapid growth of Gay Liberation everywhere a group is started.

Often, people coming to a Gay Liberation meeting have never before met other homosexuals openly. A week or two later they may be in a demonstration or handing out leaflets — taking their first political action and for the first time appearing publicly as homosexuals. In doing so, they declare their right to be gay and their pride in being gay, both of which society denies.

At the same time, the beginning of a Gay Liberation movement involves the realization that the problems of homosexuals are not personal, but are caused by society, and can be attacked by collective action.

Confrontations

After they are first formed, Gay Liberation groups have grown through confrontations with oppressive institutions. In less than two years, the movement has picketed newspapers which carried insulting references to homosexuals, airlines which refused service to people with "Gay Power" buttons, a church whose bishop barred Gay Liberation from using church facilities. The movement has demonstrated against Macy's in San Francisco for allowing police harassment on its premises, against employers who have fired gays, against the police themselves. In Chicago a 90% successful boycott of the largest gay bar forced the owners to lift a ban on dancing.

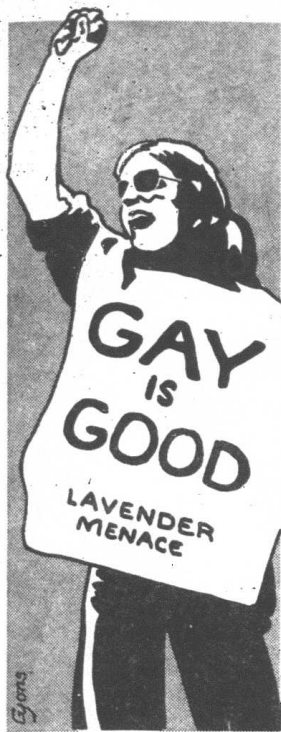
Gay Liberation groups have been banned at several universities; forbidden to hold a State conference at the University of Michigan; forbidden to hold dances at the University of Chicago — where GLF responded by holding an unauthorized dance attended by a thousand gay people and supporters.

Thus, gay people have started to learn about power in society. The movement is very new. It could hardly have begun if the Vietnamese and black liberation movements, and later the women's liberation movement, had not set an example.

Young, educated gay people, many with experience in the student radical movement, began to draw connections between the conditions these movements fought against and the conditions of their own lives. (For this reason the founders of the Gay Liberation Front chose a name which expressed a feeling of identification with the struggle for self-determination in Vietnam.) It was natural that people with experience in



LNS



protest movements took the lead in forming Gay Liberation groups.

At the same time, Gay Liberation grew quickly — mainly on college campuses and in the gay neighborhoods in large cities. In most places it is a middle class movement, composed of students, ex-students, and younger salaried workers. (Detroit, an exception, has a sizeable number of industrial workers.)

Many had never gone to a meeting before.

Gay Women

This inexperience led to problems in the new movement. Unlike some earlier homosexual organizations, Gay Liberation groups believed in male and female homosexuals struggling side by side. But in practice, almost everywhere, men tended to speak most. Programs like Chicago GLF's protest against bars really reflected the needs of the male members (the bars are mainly for men).

Development of programs around the women's specific needs, as well as a careful effort to make sure women were treated as equals in the movement, were needed to make Gay Liberation really a movement for women as well as men. The result was the same as in other protest movements — in many cities, gay women have either formed separate organizations, or autonomous caucuses inside GLF. (Some argue that cooperation of any kind with men is wrong — a view with which we disagree.)

Similarly, black, Chicano, and other non-white gays have tended to form their own organizations more in tune with the specific problems of their communities. Groups such as transvestites (those who dress in the clothes of the opposite sex) have felt a prejudice against them in GLF, and have likewise formed separate groups.

During the last year, the movement has also experienced political splits between "moderates" and "revolutionaries." This was really inevitable, since all gay people who wanted a direct-action approach originally flooded into the same organization. Sooner or later, differences of strategy had to appear.

Generally, the "moderate" groups

have concentrated only on issues of homosexual rights, and have often canvassed political candidates for promises of support. The "revolutionaries" have insisted — correctly — on the need to support struggles by other oppressed groups, but have often been intolerant toward gays less radical than themselves. They have not come to grips with the need to find programs of action which can draw these less radical gays into activity, and so make them more radical while affecting the general outlook of the gay community.

A majority of homosexuals — as of everyone else — are working people, both men and women, black and white. Yet so far, Gay Liberation has made little effort to go beyond its middle-class beginnings. It must do so if the movement is to reach the majority of homosexuals. More importantly, no movement can really challenge the powers in society if it is limited to the middle class.

Program and Politics

Despite these weaknesses, the movement is growing and coming together. A national conference of Gay Liberation groups, to be held sometime this spring, will mark the conclusion of the first stage of the movement's growth. If Gay Liberation is to continue to grow, this conference must recognize that "coming out," which has in effect been Gay Liberation's program until now, is really only the precondition to building a powerful movement. The conference will have to come to grips with the many different political perspectives exist in the movement, and struggle to find a common program.

In little more than a year, Gay Liberation has changed both the radical movement and the gay community. Gay people, who had been secret in radical organizations as everywhere else, are now forcing these organizations to reconsider their prejudices against homosexuality. In the gay community, the new pride proclaimed by Gay Liberation can be felt even though the majority of gays remain uninvolved in actual struggles.

In the gay movement itself, involvement in collective action has given many members a new understanding of their place in society and has made them see their interests as linked to those of other exploited and oppressed people. Whether Gay Liberation can go beyond these beginnings, to start building a movement of real social power, depends on whether it can find a clear political direction and a way to move beyond its present middle-class base. ■

[James Coleman is a member of the International Socialists and is active in Gay Liberation.]

D.C. 12 Win

A small but notable victory in the fight against repression took place in Washington, D.C., when charges were dropped against the "D.C. 12," a group of homosexuals arrested last November during the "Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention."

About two hundred gay activists attended the convention. Late one evening, a group of four tried to get service at the Zephyr Lounge near the convention site. They made no effort to hide their homosexuality — to look "straight" as gay people nearly always do when in "straight" society. The Zephyr's owner made no effort to hide what he thought of gay customers — he threw the four out.

The four returned with forty more (all males since gay women were meeting elsewhere). They went into the Zephyr, sat at tables, talked to patrons, and danced. The owner announced that the bar was closing and ordered everyone out. The bouncers began pushing the gay people toward the door and then, when they didn't move, started using fists.

The gays fought back. Customers joined the bouncers. Soon chairs were crashing and beer mugs smashing through the windows. The fighting spilled onto the street, stopping traffic. "We can't let them get away with this," yelled one infuriated "straight" man — "they're faggots!"

When the police came the crowd melted, but twelve gays were arrested after the crowd had broken up. In the station, they were charged with destruction of property, illegal entry (though the Zephyr was open when they entered), and assault (unpopular people aren't allowed to defend themselves). The police called the prisoners "fags" and "fairies," and particularly abused the several blacks and Puerto Ricans.

During their arraignment, the racial and class bases of American courts showed clearly. Two black prisoners were denied permission to return to their home cities while awaiting trial; two whites were granted this privilege. The judge was also more lenient to those with more "respectable" jobs, such as a university professor.

After several delays, the trial was scheduled for February. The twelve

planned a defense on the basis of arguing that they had been refused service at the Zephyr because of their homosexuality. In a legal innovation, their lawyers argued for and won the right to question jurors with a "voir dire" — a questionnaire designed to show whether the prospective juror was prejudiced against homosexuals. (Previously this had been used in cases involving black defendants, but never for homosexual defendants.)

The defense was never presented. First, eight of the defendants could not be identified as having been in the Zephyr, and had to be released. Then the defense charged that prosecution witnesses had been allowed illegally to view defendants in jail before the line-up where they were supposed to be "recognized." One prosecution witness admitted that this was true. On Feb. 18, the prosecutor, his case collapsing, moved to drop charges.

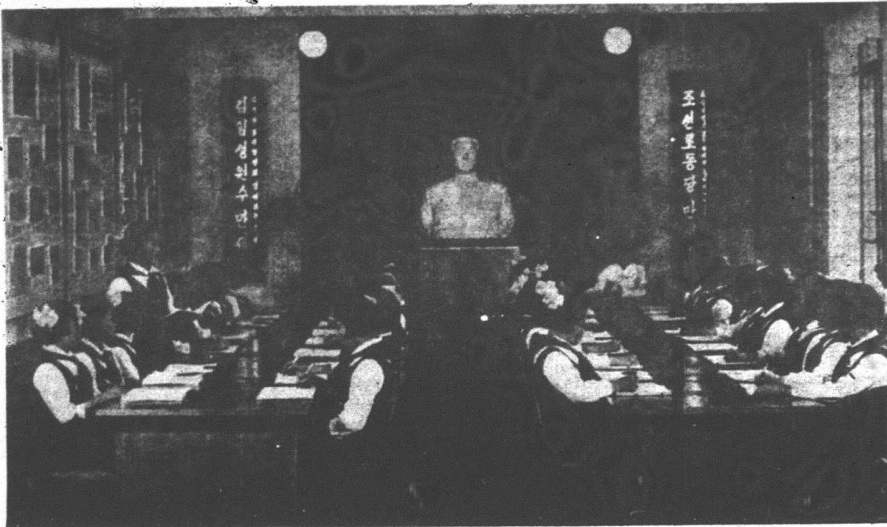
In the D.C. 12 case, as in many others, the state attempted to punish the victims of discrimination for resisting their mistreatment. The case reflects a new militancy among gay people, who no longer plead guilty in fear of losing jobs and reputation, but are beginning to fight their court charges. The case also represents a small blow against the government's campaign of repression.

As is traditional in political defenses, the D.C. 12 preferred to rely on convincing a jury rather than appealing to an "enlightened" judge. Though the case never reached the jury, the refusal of one prosecution witness to lie shows that this reliance was not misplaced (similarly, in Los Angeles last month, a gay defendant was able to convince a jury that his charges of "solicitation" were a frame-up by the arresting officer). It also shows that the honesty of the ordinary citizen remains an obstacle to the government's efforts to use the courts as rubber-stamp machines for repression. ■

[Though they have won their case, the D.C. 12 are in debt for lawyers' fees, etc. Donations should be sent to: D.C. 12 Defense, c/o D.C. Gay Liberation Front, 1620 S St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Checks payable to D.C. GLF.]



LNS



Young Pioneers taking a lesson in ideology

Like Well-Behaved Children North Korea Today

James Coleman

Throughout the length and breadth of North Korea, write two American visitors friendly to the regime, "we did not see one ill-behaved or screaming child." Apparently to show that this behavior is social and not biological, they add: "Needless to say, their infants cry, just like ours."

As seen by these two sincere friends of the regime whose account was published last autumn as a special issue of the radical newsweekly *The Guardian*, North Korea after 25 years of "socialism" and more than a decade of "juche" (economic and political self-reliance) is a land whose citizens all act much like well-behaved children.

A major part of this 30,000-word article is devoted to picturing North Korea's economic progress. Illustrations show a locomotive factory, Premier Kim Il Sung discussing plans for a new factory, and the like. From 1957 to 1960, the article reports, "the average annual growth in production was 36.6 per cent."

These are impressive achievements. An independent, unimpeachably anti-Communist source states that production of electric power rose from one billion kilowatt-hours in 1953 (the year the Korean war ended) to 5 billion in 1956 (when recovery from the war was completed), to 12 billion in 1963. Steel ingots rose from 200 million tons in 1956 to over one billion in 1963. And so on.

Social services have also improved. The school population grew by 50 per cent between 1954 and 1960, according to the same source. Free medical care is available to all, according to the *Guardian*. Rent is a tiny fraction of income.

How has all this been accomplished? According to the *Guardian*, the key has been "an extraordinary dictatorship of the proletariat."

Extraordinary indeed. Almost the whole history of North Korea since the early '50's, the *Guardian* implies, has been one campaign for higher production and higher workers' productivity, marked by such incidents as the "doub-

ling of production in a single year at one steel mill. The *Guardian* does not mention any strikes, or workers' protests of any kind, either in industry or on the farms which were collectivized between 1953 and 1958.

According to Kim Il Sung (whom the *Guardian* quotes unquestioningly) the huge strides in production and productivity, requiring inputs of untold millions of man-hours of labor, occurred not only voluntarily, but were "initiated by the masses themselves."

The way production is run on paper seems to bear this out. In every factory a "factory party committee" is the highest authority. Apparently the workers control production.

In fact, however, these factory committees are party committees — that is, they are composed exclusively of members of the Workers' Party (the North Korean Communist Party). Thus they resemble similar committees in Cuba (see "Workers' Participation in Cuba," *Workers' Power*, no. 29). The committee does not in fact represent all the workers in the factory, but only the Party members.

Controlled Workers

Despite its name, the Workers Party of Korea is not the political organization of the Korean working class. Indeed, it is just the opposite, that is, the political tool of the bureaucratic ruling class that exploits and oppresses the Korean people.

Thus, the factory party committees in Korea, like those in Cuba, are not institutions of workers' control, but rather a method of increasing efficiency and productivity under bureaucratic control, of disciplining the working class. What is involved is not workers' control but controlled workers.

The actual function of these committees was revealed in Kim Il Sung's doctrines on "correct management" of agriculture (which were later applied to industry). In Kim's own words, the state-appointed managers of the farms should "listen" to the opinions of the farm workers and "bring into play the wisdom

of the masses."

Kim stipulated that "the higher organ helps the lower, the superior assists his inferiors." In other words, "correct management" means that the managers gather opinions from the workers, lend a helping hand when necessary, and then — make the decisions themselves.

Like the other Communist parties, the Korean "Workers Party" is a totalitarian party, one in which as pointed out earlier (*Workers' Power*, no. 30), "no ideas other than those of the leader" are permitted. The Party membership equals about one fifth of the population, and through associated organizations such as the Socialist Working Youth and the Women's Democratic Union, "virtually every citizen is represented." This sounds very democratic. In fact, however, a small bureaucracy

makes all the decisions.

All politics are defined in terms of a "unitary ideology," that is, "the adoption, as the sole guiding principle, of the revolutionary ideas of comrade Kim Il Sung. . . . He is the supreme brain of the class and the heart of the party who puts forward the guiding ideas. . . . There is no center except him. It is an indispensable need [to] form a steel-like ring around him to strictly protect and carry out his revolutionary ideas."

In short, the Party is completely totalitarian from top to bottom. "No factionalism is known to exist in the Workers' party today," the *Guardian* declares, apparently blissfully unaware that as the Party and its "front" groups are the sole legal political organizations in North Korea, this means there is no democracy. Under these circumstances, of course, the democratic-sounding "factory party committees" can function only to carry out Kim Il Sung's "ideas," with a facade of participation to make things flow more smoothly.

Totalitarianism also marks North Korea's social life. One would think the *Guardian* writers (who themselves have a two-year-old daughter) would think twice about a country where children never misbehave: does this mean childhood is in fact happy, or is it likelier that childhood is drab, cheerless, and tightly disciplined? The latter impression emerges if the *Guardian's* lyrical account is read critically.

All children aged nine to 14, without exception, belong to the Young Pioneers (another organization guided exclusively by the ideas of Kim Il Sung). In school military training begins at age 12 or sooner, with small-arms training and target practice at images of American imperialism.

Adult social life is marked by an absence of men with long hair, women with short skirts, and non-medical drugs. In addition to Korean music, there is some "classical Western music but certainly no rock 'n' roll."

The position of women is similar to that in other "socialist" countries. The great majority of women are employed — over one third in heavy industry. This has not meant a release from housework, however. There are extensive child care centers, but most women still spend much time in housework (those



Premier Kim Il Sung inspecting iron works



Kim Il Sung during visit to Chongsan-ri cooperative farm

with more than three children are allowed a reduced work day).

Worse than the economic position of women, however, is their social position. Birth control devices are not made available and abortions are given only for health reasons. According to the Women's Democratic Union — whose first task is "to arm women with the unitary ideology of Kim Il Sung's ideas" — children are one of the "five happinesses." Thus married women are continually pregnant.

Sex outside marriage is not mentioned by the *Guardian* — presumably it doesn't happen. In North Korea sex is not supposed to occur for pleasure, but only for children. In life, of course, even Kim Il Sung cannot change the nature of sex. As a result, the suppression of birth control merely means that it is women who must run the risk of becoming pregnant, who must suffer because of this puritanism.

(The *Guardian* also fails to mention homosexuals in North Korea. Presumably they are in the same category as long hair and rock 'n' roll — officially non-existent. Stalinist thought finds homosexuality unthinkable. If sex for pleasure is frowned on, then homosexuals, whose sexuality has nothing to do with the family but only with pleasure and perhaps love, should not exist at all.)

To the *Guardian*, and the political outlook it represents — Stalinism, the

conception of socialism not as workers' power but as elite control "in the interests of the people" — all this is the apex of democracy. To prove it, the authors asked a North Korean official what would happen if there were a leader who did not serve the interests of the people. The answer was, "The people would remove him."

The answer is an obvious sham — as in other "Communist" countries, there is no means by which the people can remove a leader short of revolution, and revolution is no simple thing when all political organization outside the totalitarian party is forbidden. But more important, this conception — that if the people are discontented, they can overthrow the leader — is in the tradi-

tion of elitist, not socialist, thought. The idea of an elite government peacefully or forcibly changed from time to time is counterposed to the conception held by Mraz and Lenin of mass assemblies with full democratic rights and the power to dismiss any official at any time, of society run by workers' councils.

What explains the appeal of such societies as Cuba and North Korea to much of the American left? In part, their appeal seems based on their economic achievements — which, however, are rapidly revealing their limitations — and in part on the idea that there is no alternative. In other words, people identify with elite rule in these countries out of a lack of confidence in the possibility of rule by the mass of the people, the workers.

A lack of confidence in revolutionary possibilities in this country is one reason people turn to hero-countries like Cuba or North Korea — as if to say, "Things may be discouraging here, but there . . ." At the same time, people also lack confidence in the possibility of mass rule there; the idea is that to grant political freedom would result in imperialist forces (the CIA) taking advantage of political divisions to promote a restoration of imperialist rule or of capitalism. Castro has used this argument explicitly in Cuba.

On the contrary, it is in those countries where dictatorships have been dis-

placed without mass participation (such as Ghana in Africa) that capitalism and imperialism have been asked back by the new rulers. Where the workers have acted in their own name — as in Hungary in 1956 — they have proclaimed that "the factories and the land are the property of the revolutionary working class," and promised to stand with arms in hand against a restoration of the old society.

The question of "progressive" dictatorship vs. workers' rule in backward countries is important not just on its own merits, but because those who excuse dictatorships in Cuba or North Korea really have the same disbelief in the possibility of workers' rule everywhere.

If workers are not now ready to make their class needs the law of society in Cuba or Korea, who can deny that they are also not now ready to do so in America? So those who approve Kim Il Sung or Castro are inclined to support an elite which "serves the people" in any country.

They have never stated, frankly, "We are for a bureaucratic dictatorship because we don't believe the working class is capable of ruling society." Rather, they hail a graveyard, where children never cry, as a socialist society.

We on the contrary believe that ordinary people everywhere will become capable of ruling society, as they struggle to do so. In periods of social quiet, our belief often seems unreal — and the claims of bureaucratic monstrosities to represent "progress" may seem more real. But if we must have faith, we prefer to have faith not in the all-wise benevolence of a Kim Il Sung, but rather in the potential of ordinary men and women to learn in struggle, to broaden their understanding of their interests, to rise above narrow and petty aims.

In the history of the modern working class, this potential has been shown in action many times — almost as many times as benevolent elites have shown that they can create nothing except a perpetuation of class society. ■

LAOS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

and has revealed a truth hitherto kept hidden from the Senate by announcing that 90 per cent of the Vietnamese want the U.S. out.

But as pointed out last issue, it is not McGovern himself who pulls the strings — he is simply the most appealing figure in the incredibly uncharismatic crew of "dove" Democrats. Behind him stands a wing of the capitalist class which figures that the war is already lost.

Both "hawks" and "doves" in fact

favor U.S. domination of Vietnam — the latter simply think the game is up. But because they support the basic imperialist aims of the U.S., any successes Nixon can garner would silence their opposition, not strengthen it.

Because of this, the conduct of the "doves" will be governed by the formula: North Vietnamese-NLF successes + political unpopularity of the war at home = dove courage. On their own, they will do nothing to end the war.

Beyond the heroism of the Vietnamese, the forces which can end the war are here at home — but not in the Senate. Rather, the anti-war movement must look to the factories and offices where America's anti-war majority works. ■

— James Coleman

[The editorial on page two presents the International Socialist program for the anti-war movement.]

will still be capable of doing its traditional job. "Discipline ... can only be enhanced by changes that will increase morale."

What he fails to see is that drum-head justice and the caste system are results as well as causes; the results of a system which uses its troops to suppress workers at home and national liberation movements abroad. Only through brutality and indoctrination can conscripts be made the tools of the civilians in Washington.

You've got to change the root to change the fruit. An army can be no better than the state that uses it. A workers' state, democratically controlled by the working class, concerned only with self-defense, would have no use for either sabre-rattlers or cannon fodder. An imperialist state can not survive without them. ■

ARMY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Tradition, and Patriotism are the one true religion, with themselves as Pope. The third type of life is the out and out nut, like the Green Beret sergeant at Fort Jackson who spent his coffee breaks torturing field-mice. It's important for the recruit to learn how to distinguish between these types before he has any dealings with them.

Rivkin wisely warns that the GI who gets the reputation of trouble-maker is in for a rough time. There are plenty of "legal" ways for any officer or NCO to make life miserable for any EM: For example: you can be permanently assigned to cleaning out the mess-hall grease-pit, transferred to Antarctica, or sent out on patrol a lot if you are in a combat zone.

The best protection against this is to get a job that is really important to the functioning of the unit. A really good cook can get away with quite a bit; so can a good mechanic or clerk.

It is important to remember that lifers have a great need to save face. If in private you refuse to wax an

officer's car, he will probably try to find another sucker or do it himself. If you refuse the same illegal order in front of witnesses, he'll feel obliged to make an example of you.

Harassment is a game that can be played by two. Some classic EM gambits are: sprinkling CS powder in the orderly room stove, stealing the filters from the First Sergeant's gas mask before a CBW test, spitting in the soup of officers who make KP's carry their trays in the mess-hall; pouring sugar in the gas tank of the CO's jeep, holding

farting contests during morning formation, and tattooing FTA on the edge of the saluting hand.

Most lifers really believe that people take them seriously. To disillusion them is to half destroy them.

As good as it is, *GI Rights and Army Justice* must be taken with a grain of salt. Rivkin seems to feel that the abuses he describes in such detail can be reformed away through the combined efforts of the rank and file and civilian politicians. Furthermore, he implies that this new, improved army



The Money Squeeze

Kevin Bradley

The current recession is widely understood to be the artificial product of the Administration, but how it has been created remains unclear. The nationally syndicated columnist Sylvia Porter pointed to the real cause of the Recession in her column of Oct. 5, 1970, though she refused to face up to what she revealed:

"One of the most explosive weapons that we could hand America's destructive young radicals would be the argument that the U.S. cannot cut war spending and still maintain reasonably full employment. It is hard to believe that the Nixon administration would make this dangerous admission or argument."

She goes on to tell the following anecdote:

"A few days ago, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird invited a small cross-section of individuals for luncheon at the Pentagon. Shortly after we sat down (we were eight in addition to Laird and the Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard), Laird introduced the conversation by summarizing how much the defense budget has been cut. The figures, by the way, are much more impressive than you may realize.

Specifically: Defense spending in this fiscal year will be around \$71 billion, down a fat \$18 billion from the 1968 Vietnam war peak and only about \$4.2 billion above the pre-escalation level of 1964. The defense budget is now around 7 per cent of our Gross National Product, down 2.7 per cent from the '68 peak and well below the 1964 level too.

"But then Laird went on to report that since mid-'69, employment in the military, defense-products and defense-related industries has decreased 840,000 as against an overall rise in joblessness of 1.3 million. And he remarked with a rueful, gracious smile: 'This is what happens when you move so rapidly from a

war to a peacetime economy.' The implication was unmistakable; the defense cuts are a prime reason for the recession and unemployment."

The Liberal Democrats have recently been calling for cuts in military spending, the attack on the ABM being the outstanding episode of their campaign. But it was precisely the last time the Liberal Democrats were in power that the military machine was built up to its present heights.

President Kennedy's Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara put forward the strategy of "2½ wars." "½ war" is a "small" war like the one in Vietnam! (We can imagine what a full war would be like.) The military budget was to cover preparations for one big war in Europe, one in Asia and a half war elsewhere in the world.

Nixon's Defense Secretary Laird put forward a strategy of "1½ wars." This meant preparations for one big war in Asia or Europe and one small Vietnam style war. More recently the Nixon Administration is putting forward a strategy of "zero war," the idea of no preparation for conventional war.

Military budgets are planned for five-year periods, so that if the military does not get what it wants from Congress in one year it readjusts its requests the next year to meet its long-range goals. The five-year budget beginning in 1972 is supposed to be an austere one:

"Defense spending will drop from \$71.8 billion in the present fiscal year to no more than \$70 billion and possibly as little as \$65 billion in fiscal 1972. Military strength, presently 3 million men, will come down to 2.4 million. The army may lose six divisions, shrinking to 12.

"The navy may reduce its big aircraft carriers from 15 to 12, and it will lose scores of other warships as well as some

aircraft and manpower. The air force will lop off tactical planes, some bombers and some personnel. The marine corps will keep its three divisions and its air wings, but will trim manpower to pre-Vietnam war levels."

All these cutbacks concern only conventional warfare. The Nixon Administration plans to keep up the nuclear "deterrent" at full strength. If conventional wars are labelled 1½ and 2½, nuclear war might be called infinite war since it would mean the end of civilization on this planet.

The nuclear "deterrent" only makes sense if it actually deters, that is, prevents war from breaking out. But to be an effective deterrent it must be believed by the other side that it is instantly ready for use and can inflict total destruction. Nuclear war is the ultimate folly that all the imperialist powers are ultimately driven to: the U.S., Britain, France, Russia and China all have nuclear weapons and even small imperialist powers like Israel are developing them.

Until the day nuclear weapons are used their main impact is economic; when they are used their impact will mean the end of all economics. The "deterrent" system, with its intercontinental ballistic missiles, anti-ballistic missiles, missile-firing submarines, etc., makes up the biggest hardware section of the military budget.

It was precisely this deterrent system which was cut back during the Vietnam War. As the Johnson Administration escalated the war and military expenditures went up, more and more workers were employed. More money was in circulation but there was not a corresponding growth in the production of consumer goods. It was material for Vietnam which was produced instead.

The economic result was a rise in prices for those consumer goods which were available. As long as military expenditures exist there are inflationary pressures. It is particularly when military expenditures are stepped up that inflation goes rapidly upward.

War and Inflation

The Nixon Administration wisely sees that the way to curb inflation is to strike at its cause. When Laird said that 840,000 out of 1,300,000 men thrown out of work from 1969 to mid-1970 (65% were war-related workers, he shows that it has been the drop in military spending which is responsible for the layoffs. The increased unemployment cuts down on the consumers' demand for goods and services and slows down the increase in prices.

The rate of inflation has slowed down. It was 4.7% in 1968 and 6.2% in 1969. The highest rate of inflation was in the first quarter of 1969 when prices rose 6.7% on an annual basis. By the third quarter of 1970 they were rising at "only" 4.2%.

The Nixon Administration has defined 3% as an "acceptable" rate of inflation. They accept the reality of a continued rise in prices under the permanent arms economy. The rate of inflation may drop but inflation continues; prices do not go down, only up but not so rapidly.

The Nixon Administration may be cutting the military budget now, but it has already laid the basis for stepped up military expenditures when this is necessary to end the recession and get the economy moving. The Anti-ballistic Missile System and MIRV-Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicles (many warheads on one missile) are two major projects.

The Nixon Administration realizes

that the key factor in our economy is the ratio of military spending to the Gross National Product. As much as it may displease Sylvia Porter, the U.S. does depend on military spending for its prosperity.

"One of the most evil economic propaganda weapons that we could hand the communists would be a voluntary admission that the U.S. needs record and rising war spending to support our prosperity. This is propaganda the Russians have been trumpeting since Lenin's day."

So writes Sylvia Porter. In fact the Stalinist regime in Russia today is in an altogether different position from the workers state of Lenin's day — now it too has a permanent arms economy, like the U.S. In Russia today there is an entirely separate section of the economy set aside for arms production, using the most advanced technology. In a country without a developed consumer goods sector and with total bureaucratic state planning replacing the market, Russia's permanent arms economy does not give prosperity but is only another burden on the backs of the working class.

Symbiosis

Russia's permanent arms economy is the military complement of its imperialist foreign policy. The same is true for the capitalist imperialist countries. Convenient as the permanent arms economies may be for them, they originated and are justified to the American public because of their role in "protecting" the U.S. from the "Communist" menace. So too the Russian rulers can justify their tremendous expenditures on military goods at the expense of consumer goods as necessary due to the American threat.

Both the capitalist and the bureaucratic collectivist "Communist" systems feed off one another. The extension of the Russian navy into the Mediterranean, coupled with her increasing penetration into the Middle Eastern and North African states, stimulate the American Navy's demands for more weapons. Each system looks carefully at the other's anti-ballistic missile systems to justify its own expenditures on anti-ballistic missile systems. It's not just that one weapons system stimulates another but that one imperialist system challenges another.

Recently Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT Talks) have been taking place between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. But a disarmament which restricts one weapons system, for example ABM or MIRV, will leave these imperialist powers free to make a new weapons system whenever they feel their foreign policy requires them. To end both the economic and military madness of the permanent arms economy it is necessary to attack the social systems that produce them.

Revolutionary socialists are for immediate cuts in military spending, but not as a means of creating unemployment and reducing inflation. We are for spending the money on socially necessary projects like rebuilding the cities and building hospitals, schools and mass transit. We are also for massive tax cuts to working people to add to their purchasing power. Added taxes can be raised by taxing corporate profits.

Liberals who call for cutbacks on military expenditures today without speaking to the resultant unemployment are in no position to attack the Nixon Administration for causing the Recession. It is necessary to attack the military machine as a whole, and in so doing to attack the capitalist social system and its resultant economic dislocations. ■

support your local



NATIONAL OFFICE: 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich., 48203.

ANN ARBOR: 2503 Student Activities Building, Ann Arbor, Mich., 41101.

BALTIMORE: c/o Bachellor, 3109 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Maryland, 21218.

BAY AREA: P.O. Box 910, Berkeley, Ca., 94701.

BERKELEY: 6395 Telegraph, Oakland, Ca., 94609.

BOSTON: c/o Stevenson, 5 Newton Place, Somerville, Mass., 02143.

CHAMPAIGN/URBANA: c/o Guttman, 207 East Oregon, Urbana, Illinois, 61801.

CHICAGO: P.O. Box 3451, Merchandise Mart, Chicago, Illinois, 60654.

CLEVELAND: P.O. Box 91253, Cleveland, Ohio, 44101.

DAVIS: c/o Butz, 12 J Solano Park, Davis, Ca., 95616.

DETROIT: 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich., 48203.

EUREKA: c/o John de Courey, 1870 F St., Arcata, Ca., 95521.

HAYWARD: 375 West A St., Hayward, Ca., 91241.

LOS ANGELES: P.O. Box 125, 308 Westwood Plaza, Los Angeles, Ca., 90024.

MADISON: c/o Barisonzi, 910 Magnolia, Madison, Wisconsin, 53713.

NEW JERSEY: c/o Finkel, 11 Dickenson St., Princeton, New Jersey, 08540.

NEW YORK: Room 1005, 874 Broadway, New York, New York, 10003.

PITTSBURGH: c/o White, 6709 Penn. Ave., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15208.

RIVERSIDE: c/o Sabine, 6096 Riverside Ave., Riverside, Ca., 92506.

SAN DIEGO: c/o La Botz, 3827 Miramar St., Apt. C, LaJolla, Ca., 92307.

SAN FRANCISCO: M. Rubin, 294 Carl St., iA, San Francisco, Ca., 94117.

SEATTLE: 6556 32nd Ave., N.E., Seattle, Wash., 98115.

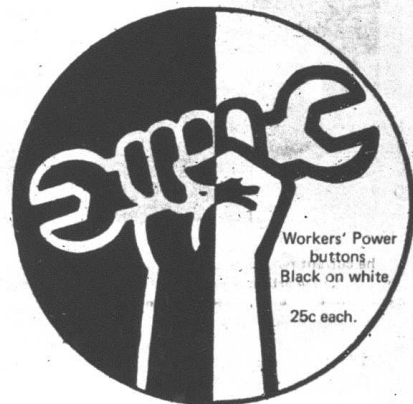
TOLEDO: c/o Thomas, 3852 Almeda, Toledo, Ohio, 43612.



Revolutionary Buttons

Karl Marx, Fred Engels, V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, William Morris, Eugene Debs, Big Bill Haywood, Joe Hill, Nat Turner, Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, John Brown, Emiliano Zapata, James Connolly, Jean-Paul Marat, Sam Adams, Tom Paine.

25c each in day-glo colors, white, or gold. Bulk orders: 10 for \$2, 100 for \$15. Order from: International Socialists, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich. 48203.



book list

IS Book Service, 14131 Woodward Ave., Highland Park, Mich. 48203. Phone: (313) 869-3137.

The American Working Class in Transition, - 40c

A New Era of Labor Revolt, Stan Weir - 25c

Women Workers: The Forgotten Third of the Working Class, Gene Winkler - 25c

Party and Class, Chris Harman - 25c

A Revolutionary Socialist Manifesto, written in a Polish Prison [An Open Letter to the Party], Jacek Kuron & Karol Modzelew-

ski - 75c

Two Souls of Socialism, Hal Draper - 25c

Women in the Chinese Revolution, Laurie Landy - 40c

Introduction to Independent Socialism [Independent Socialist Clippingbook, no. 1], ed. Hal Draper - \$2

How Mao Conquered China [Independent Socialist Clippingbook, no. 6], Jack Brad - 75c

Socialist Songbook - 50c

Workers' Power

WE STAND FOR SOCIALISM: the collective ownership and democratic control of the economy and the state by the working class. We stand in opposition to all forms of class society, both capitalist and bureaucratic "Communist," and in solidarity with the struggles of all exploited and oppressed people.

America is faced with a growing crisis: war, racial strife, pollution, urban decay, and the deterioration of our standard of living and working conditions. This crisis is built into capitalism, an outlived system of private profit, exploitation, and oppression. The capitalist ruling class, a tiny minority that controls the economy and politics alike, perpetuates its rule by dividing the working people against each other - white against black, male against female, skilled against unskilled, etc. The result is ever greater social chaos.

Workers' power is the only alternative to this crisis. Neither the liberal

nor the conservative wings of the ruling class have any answers but greater exploitation. The struggle for workers' power is already being waged on the economic level, and the International Socialists stand in solidarity with these struggles over wages and working conditions. To further this struggle, we call for independent rank and file workers' committees to fight when and where the unions refuse to fight. But the struggles of the workers will remain defensive and open to defeat so long as they are restricted to economic or industrial action.

The struggle must become political. Because of its economic power, the ruling class also has a monopoly on political power. It controls the government and the political parties that administer the state. More and more, the problems we face, such as inflation and unemployment, are the result of political decisions made by that class. The struggle of the working people will be deadlocked until the ranks of labor build a workers' party and carry the struggle into the political arena.

The struggle for workers' power cannot be won until the working class, as a whole, controls the government and the economy democratically. This requires a revolutionary socialist, working class party, at the head of a unified

working class. No elite can accomplish this for the workers.

Nor can any part of the working class free itself at the expense of another. We stand for the liberation of all oppressed peoples: mass organization, armed self-defense, and the right of self-determination for Blacks, Chicanos, and Native Americans; the liberation of women from subordination in society and the home; the organization of homosexuals to fight their oppression. These struggles are in the interest of the working class as a whole: the bars of racism and male chauvinism can only prevent the establishment of workers' power. Oppressed groups cannot subordinate their struggle today to the present level of consciousness of white male workers: their independent organization is necessary to their fight for liberation. But we strive to unite these struggles in a common fight to end human exploitation and oppression.

The struggle for workers' power is world-wide. Class oppression and exploitation is the common condition of humanity. US corporations plunder the world's riches and drive the world's people nearer to starvation, while military intervention by the US government, serving these corporations, awaits

those who dare to rebel. The "Communist" revolutions in China, Cuba and North Vietnam, while driving out US imperialism, have not brought workers' power, but a new form of class society, ruled by a bureaucratic elite.

Whether capitalist or bureaucratic-collectivist ("Communist") in nature, the ruling classes of the world fight desperately to maintain their power, often against each other, always against the working class and the people. Through both domestic repression and imperialist intervention (the US in Vietnam, the USSR in Czechoslovakia), they perpetuate misery and poverty in a world of potential peace and plenty. Socialism, the direct rule of the working class itself, exists nowhere in the world today.

We fight for the withdrawal of US troops from all foreign countries, and support all struggles for national self-determination. In Vietnam, we support the victory of the NLF over the US and its puppets; at the same time, we stand for revolutionary opposition by the working class to the incipient bureaucratic ruling class. Only socialism, established through world-wide revolution, can free humanity from exploitation and oppression; and the only force capable of building socialism is WORKERS' POWER.

LAOS



South Vietnamese artillery near Laos

As February ended, the three-week-old U.S.-South Vietnamese invasion of Laos was becoming one of the Vietnam war's major battles, and posing the possibility of the first major U.S.-South Vietnamese defeat since the Tet offensive in early 1968.

At least 24,000 North Vietnamese troops were reported taking part in the fighting in Laos near the North Vietnam-South Vietnam border. After the original South Vietnamese force of 16,000 encountered stiff resistance, an additional 16,000 reinforcements were moved up. For the first time in the war, North

Vietnamese tank forces were directly engaged.

Most important, for the first time the North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front troops have managed to neutralize American air power to some degree. Previously, no battle could be decisively won by the North Vietnamese or NLF, because American control of the sky meant that any enemy force could be chopped up no matter how well it was fighting on the ground.

Now, however, anti-aircraft fire has been knocking American attack and rescue helicopters out of the sky; in some

incidents, North Vietnamese troops in captured South Vietnamese uniforms have called down American rescue helicopters and then shot them down. As a result, helicopter commanders are reluctant to go near the fighting.

The new developments confirm the analysis of the Laos invasion offered in our last issue. On the U.S. side, the invasion represents an attempt to disrupt supply lines to the pro-Communist troops in Cambodia and elsewhere. The U.S. cannot hope to accomplish this permanently; given time, the supply lines will simply be re-established, avoiding whatever forces the U.S. has left in the area.

However, the U.S. is trying to buy time. It is trying to prevent pro-Communist victories in Cambodia in the immediate future. Lacking any popular support and unable to control any of Cambodia except the capital, Cambodia's pro-U.S. government is in danger of falling in the next few months.

On the pro-Communist side, the strategy of "melting away" before an American attack, and later returning, has been abandoned for the first time, in favor of an all-out defense against the invasion. There are two reasons for this change of strategy.

First, the need to defend the supply lines. The pro-Communist forces need to keep up military pressure on Cambodia as much as the U.S. needs to take it off; to have the flow of reinforcements and supplies reduced or interrupted until the rainy season begins might well allow the pro-U.S. government in Cambodia precious time.

Second, the "Vietnamization" of the ground fighting — which hasn't altered the overall U.S. role as commander of the South Vietnamese forces — has offered the possibility of inflicting big defeats on the South Vietnamese troops. No troops are less reliable than those fighting for a foreign occupying power.

The South Vietnamese have been refusing to go into battle; unharmed troops have robbed helicopters called down to evacuate the wounded. This lack of morale, coupled with the ability to shoot down American aircraft, opens up the possibility of actually defeating the invasion attempt.

A South Vietnamese debacle in Laos would create a major crisis for the Nixon Administration. Either Nixon could accept a big defeat — and give up the possibility of cutting off the supply lines to the South — or he could send in American troops, risking a reawakening of major anti-war protests at home.

Nixon is already making tentative moves in the direction of using American troops. It was announced Feb. 26 that U.S. troops would enter Laos to "rescue" downed U.S. fliers "or their rescuers." The lie is transparent; ground troops will hardly fight across 25 miles of Laos to pull out a helicopter crew which could be rescued more easily by a local air operation. Rather, this means that small forces are being used to reinforce the South Vietnamese.

Whether these small forces will grow depends on whether Nixon thinks he can get away with it. What is the opposition? The "dove" forces in the Senate have condemned the Laos operation as "barbaric." McGovern has called for setting a date for total U.S. withdrawal.

[continued on page 13]

Neil Chacker The Army:

A review of *GI Rights and Army Justice*, by Robert S. Rivkin, Evergreen B-258, 1970, \$1.75.

"You mean I can't have him taken out and shot?" — Joseph Heller, *Catch 22*.

Some parents beat their children every day for nothing, just to show them what will happen if they do something. This is essentially the way the army works. Even super-patriotic volunteers are treated to humiliations that would rouse the wrath of the ASPCA if they were inflicted on a cocker spaniel.

The army gives no rewards for good behavior. The soldier who expects to get any rights at all has to be prepared to fight for them, fang and claw, every inch of the way. In Nam the practice of fraging incorrigible lifers has become popular, and seems to produce excellent results. In areas where high explosives are less readily available, other weapons have to be used. One of these is the Rivkin book, a copy of which belongs in every foot-locker.

Rivkin was drafted in 1967 and chose to spend two years as an EM rather than four as an officer, a choice made by many drafted lawyers. Although he never came into a direct confrontation with the brass, as did Stolte, Amick, Harvey, Daniels, and others during those years, he followed their cases; and he also kept a record of the "normal" harassments suffered by all troops. On the basis of this experience he has

written a book for "the GI, the potential or prospective GI, the military commander, the concerned layman, the national policy maker, the radical, the conservative, and the cop-out."

The book is 383 pages long and packed with useful information, about everything from induction to the early out. Among the many useful topics discussed are: what constitutes contraband in the army, how to take qualification exams, grass drill, the dying cockroach position, the lost bayonet gimmick, the blanket party, the duffel-bag ploy, doctors, chaplains and lawyers, the MOS, KP, handling paperwork, deferments of all types, CYA, Mickey Mouse, Black lifers, freedom of speech, the right to privacy, filing complaints and charges, illegal orders, military law, the courts-martial, conscientious objection, and others.

Some of the topics, eg. haircuts, may seem trivial, but only to the civilian. Issues take on greater magnitude in the army because you can't get away from them. If you feel uptight when a cop glances at you on the street, you can imagine what it's like to have them around 24 hours a day.

The soldier who knows his rights and is prepared to fight for them will usually suffer the least abuse. Most lifers are not real militarists. They are just lazy incompetents who trade freedom for security. Often they will even overlook breaches of regulations if doing so takes less effort than enforcing them.

Scarcer, but more troublesome, are those who think that the AR's,

[continued on page 13]

Myth and Reality

