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INTRODUCTION

In this issue of *Radical America* Barbara and John Ehrenreich apply their theory of the Professional-Managerial Class (PMC) — presented in the last number — to the New Left of the 'Sixties. They do so in such a way as to raise critical questions for the left today. Attacking the once-popular theory that radical students were part of a proletarianized "new working class", the Ehrenreichs maintain that most white radicals of the 1960s were in fact professionals and managers in training. The authors also argue that left activity today — which is still dominated by PMC radicals — cannot be understood with the current forms of class analysis: the two class model (in which everyone is part of the working class except for a tiny ruling class), and the three-class model (in which a large and amorphous petty bourgeoisie — including professionals — lies between the working class and the capitalists).

Of the various political tendencies emerging from the New Left, the Ehrenreichs pick out for analysis two very different phenomenon — the “radicals in the professions” and the Marxist-Leninists in the “new communist movement”. They examine these tendencies for two reasons: both groups are readily identifiable on the left today, and both groups, despite their different politics, display PMC elitism.

By focusing only on the “radicals in the professions” and the new communist movement”, the Ehrenreichs radically dichotomize today’s left. It is undoubtedly true that radicals with PMC backgrounds continue to display their class characteristics in various ways, but there is certainly a much wider variety of experiences to analyze before we know just how those characteristics have affected leftists engaged in working-class politics. It is also important to point out that many people with PMC backgrounds have not proletarianized themselves voluntarily. How important is PMC training, for example, to college-educated women working as clerical workers? What is the role of independent radicals with professional training who are now working and organizing in non-union service industries like health? Finally, how deep are the tensions within the Professional-Managerial Class, tensions that run between public school teachers and administrators, or social service workers and managerial bureaucrats? Of what significance is the fact that teachers and social service workers are unionizing?

These are the key questions the Ehrenreichs’ analysis raises for us. We are sure our readers will pose many other questions. Indeed, the authors as well as the editors hope this analysis of the Professional-Managerial Class will provoke meaningful debate within the left and enhance our ability to answer critical questions facing the left today. Barbara and John Ehrenreich have made a valuable contribution by analyzing the personal dimension to the difficult problems PMC leftists face in their organizing as a result of their class characteristics. This analysis should not be read to say that radicals of PMC origin have no role to play in a working-class movement. Instead it points out what is becoming increasingly obvious: PMC elitism is not shed easily, even by leftists who consciously deny their class origins.

We agree with the Ehrenreichs when they suggest that the left must be far more self-conscious of its own class origins. The forging of an alliance between radicalized people of PMC origin and training and working-class militants depends on advancing beyond a strictly economic orientation; it means developing a political practice which self-consciously recognizes the personal and cultural issues that have always affected (often adversely) the relations between workers and leftists of other class backgrounds.

If the Ehrenreichs’ theory about PMC radicalism is correct, then the U.S. Communist Party is another interesting case study, quite different

from the New Left of course, but equally important. The CPUSA is no longer an organization whose members are mostly working class, as it was through the 1940s. It is questionable to assume, however, that the Party's politics would have been significantly different if they organization had retained a working-class majority.

As Jon Weiner's interview with Dorothy Healey suggests, the Communist Party's politics remain the product of decisions by top leaders who remain largely unresponsive to their own members. Dorothy Healey is a person who is unusually well-informed about the Party and its politics; she was active in the CP for over 40 years (until 1973), and emerged as one of the most influential party leaders in the country through her work in California. Healey is in a good position to provide a critical but useful analysis of the CPUSA today; she is not an embittered ex-CPer of the God-that-failed stripe, nor is she a sectarian enemy of the Party who sees the organization as a primary obstacle to revolution in the U.S.

The *Radical America* editors are not as optimistic as Dorothy Healey is about the various reformist trends in communist parties around the world. However, we do believe that her responses to questions about the CPUSA will be very important reading for many people on the Left. For too long Marxists outside the CP have either ignored the largest organization on the U.S. left or dismissed it with polemical remarks. We must increase our *understanding* of the Party and learn more about why — after all that has happened — this organization continues to survive and grow. In previous issues, we have published articles evaluating the CPUSA in historical context, but our analyses have never extended beyond 1950.

The CP today is an important force to be understood and reckoned with, not only because it is the largest left organization in the country. It also displays the following important qualities: 1) the most significant trade union base of any left organization, despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that the Party has abandoned socialist politics in the AFL-CIO; 2) a legal defense network which remains a strong source of left opposition to political repression; 3) the most support among Third World groups even though, as Healey observes, the Party allows for no autonomy (a feat performed partly on the basis of the CP's established reputation as an anti-racist organization with influential black leaders). These qualities help to explain why the CPUSA has retained a loyal core of supporters for so many years despite its stubborn allegiance to the Moscow line. The CPUSA's uncritical support for orthodoxy over the years has cost it many resourceful members like Dorothy Healey, but others have remained loyal for various reasons, including the personal ties and social networks which have provided Party members with survival spaces.

Of course the context in which some European Communist parties are developing (e.g., Spain) is radically different from the US, where the New Left explosion of the 'sixties has given way to the conservative climate of the 'seventies and the multiplication of Marxist-Leninist groups dedicated to reliving various aspects of CP history. However, as Joe Martin's report from Portugal indicates, communist parties can remain Stalinist even in revolutionary contexts. The Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), according to its press representative, supports "the broadest democracy everywhere". This is a suspicious claim since in the PCP itself bureaucracy still stifles democracy.

The organs of popular power in Portugal have been weakened significantly since the military coup of November 1975, but they remain, as Martin shows, a more democratic vehicle for the Portuguese Revolution than the Communist Party. Unlike the Communist Party of Spain, which emerged from Franco's fascist dictatorship with hegemony on the left and popular support for its leadership in the continuing struggle against repression, the Stalinist Communist Party of Portugal emerged from the fascist period contending with autonomous organs of popular power and with important opposition movements of revolutionary Marxists.

Investigations into the realm of everyday life have been absent, for the most part, from socialist inquiry. We are pleased to feature the work of Phyllis Ewen, one of the editors in the RA collective, whose photographic essay explores an important institution of women's culture — the beauty parlor. Phyllis Ewen's photographs record an experience generally hidden from public view. Although as a woman with a camera she intruded into the private space of the beauty shop, the women being photographed cooperated willingly.

In the early days of the women's movement, feminists made mass culture a particular object for scrutiny. Beauty culture, for example, was understood to be solely a male contrivance to control women. But beauty culture as lived in the back stage of the beauty parlor is not simply the product of a male-dominated, consumer-oriented society. Women, as Ewen suggests, care for their appearance not just because men want them to. Women take this care *for themselves* and *for each other*.

The Radical America Editors

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THE NEW LEFT:

A Case Study in Professional-Managerial Class Radicalism

Barbara and John Ehrenreich

In the first part of this essay (RADICAL AMERICA, March-April 1977) we argued that advanced capitalist society has generated a new class, not found in earlier stages of capitalist development. We defined the Professional-Managerial Class ("PMC") as consisting of salaried mental workers who do not own the means of production, and whose major function in the social division of labor may be described broadly as the reproduction of capitalist culture and capitalist class relations. The PMC thus includes such groups as scientists, engineers, teachers, social workers, writers, accountants, lower- and middle-level managers and administrators, etc. — in all some twenty to twenty-five per cent of the U.S. population. The PMC's consciousness, we argued, is shaped by the apparently contradictory aspects of its existence: Both the PMC and the working class are forced to sell their labor power to the capitalist class, to which they share an antagonistic relationship. Members of the PMC, as the rationalizers and managers of capitalist enterprises (corporations, government agencies, universities, etc.), are thrown into direct conflict with capitalist greed, irrationality, and social irresponsibility. But the PMC is also in an objectively antagonistic relationship to the working class: Historically the PMC exists as a mass grouping only by virtue of the expropriation of the skills and culture once indigenous to the working class. And in daily life, its function is the direct or indirect management and manipulation of working-class life — at

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home, at work, at school. Thus the PMC's objective class interests lie in the overthrow of the capitalist class, but not in the triumph of the working class; and their actual attitudes often mix hostility toward the capitalist class with elitism toward the working class.

THE NEW LEFT AND THE PMC

We now attempt to use this analysis to understand some aspects of the development and current difficulties of the left in the U.S., starting with some observations on the New Left of the sixties. We will not try to give a complete and definitive account of the emergence of the New Left. Rather we will focus on the ways in which the PMC origins of the New Left shaped its growth and ideology, on how the originally PMC-based New Left ultimately began to transcend its own class, and on how it sought to deal with the resulting dilemmas.

The rebirth of PMC radicalism in the sixties came at a time when the material position of the class was advancing rapidly. Employment in PMC occupations soared, and salaries rose with them. The growth was so rapid that extensive recruitment from the working class became necessary to fill the job openings. (One early 1960s study indicated that no less than a quarter of the sons of skilled blue-collar workers and close to a fifth of the sons of semi-skilled workers were climbing into the PMC.) (1) It has become fashionable to argue that engineers, teachers, social workers and the like were becoming "proletarianized" — the fate Marx had predicted for the middle class. (2) But what was taken as a symptom of proletarianization, e.g., the expansion and bureaucratization of the university, was in many cases really a token of the rapid expansion of the class. The late fifties and early sixties were a golden age for the PMC, not a time of decreasing opportunities and compression into the proletarian mold.

With Sputnik in 1957 and Kennedy's election in 1960, the prestige and public visibility of the class reached new heights. Government and foundation funding for research, higher education and professional services began to skyrocket. Members of the class appeared in prominent public positions as presidential advisors, scientists, foreign-policy strategists, and social planners. New institutions — think tanks, consulting firms — emerged to meet the new demand for PMC skills.

The early student radicalism of the sixties had many sources — the civil-rights movement, the "Beatniks", the college experience itself, etc. For our present purposes, however, we only want to point out that this new radicalism also reflected the rising confidence of the Professional-Managerial Class. According to the sociologists' studies, the first wave of student activists typically came from secure PMC backgrounds, and were, compared to other students, especially well-imbued with the traditional PMC values

of intellectual autonomy and public service. (3) Their initial radicalism represented an attempt to reassert the autonomy which the PMC had long since ceded to the capitalist class. For example, SDS's seminal Port Huron Statement (1962) expresses both elements of traditional PMC class consciousness: scorn for the capitalist class and elitism toward the working class. Too many PMC elders, SDS argued, had capitulated to the demands of "the system":

Many social and physical scientists, neglecting the liberating heritage of higher learning, develop "human relations" or "morale-producing" techniques for the corporate economy, while others exercise their intellectual skills to accelerate the arms race. (4)

But, the statement continued, the working class could not be relied on as the source of social renewal:

Any new left in America must be, in large measure, a left with real intellectual skills, committed to deliberativeness, honesty, reflection as working tools. The university permits the political life to be an adjunct to the academic one, and action to be informed by reason. (5)

The Berkeley Free Speech Movement in 1964 articulated the problem of the class forcefully: "History has not ended... a better society is possible, and... it is worth dying for," proclaimed Mario Savio, the voice of the Free Speech Movement. Yet the university had sold out; it was not training future members of the class for their historic social and moral mission:

Many students here at the university... are wandering aimlessly about. Strangers in their own lives, there is no place for them. They are people who have not learned to compromise, who for example have come to the university to learn to question, to grow, to learn — all the standard things that sound like cliches because no one takes them seriously. And they find at one point or another that for them to become part of society, to become lawyers, ministers, businessmen, people in government, that very often they must compromise those principles which were most dear to them.... The futures and careers for which American students now prepare are for the most part intellectual and moral wastelands. (6) (emphasis ours)

The Free Speech Movement made a direct appeal to the class consciousness of the faculty:

We challenge the faculty to be courageous. A university is a community of students and scholars: be equal to the

position of dignity you should hold! How long will you submit to the doorkeepers who have usurped your power?

(7)

PMC class consciousness, with its ambiguous mixture of elitism and anti-capitalist militance, continued to be a major theme of "the movement" throughout the sixties. Expressions of it can be found in the "New Left",* the anti-war movement, the ecology movement, the women's-liberation movement — all of which defied "the system", but often with moralistic contempt for the working class. Ultimately, however, a significant part of the New Left decisively broke with this tradition and sought to transcend the imperatives of its own class base. It is to this evolution that we now turn.

As late as 1966, many New Left leaders held to Veblenesque theories of the unique importance of PMC-type occupations or of students themselves. Carl Davidson (then SDS Vice-President), for example, argued in a highly influential article that a student movement to control the university could be the base for the transformation of all of society. (8) But then — somewhere around 1967 or 1968 — there was a decisive break which made the sixties totally unlike the earlier (Progressive Era) period of PMC radicalism: Large numbers of young people pushed PMC radicalism to its limits and found themselves, ultimately, at odds with their own class.

There are reasons why this development should have occurred in the sixties rather than in earlier periods of PMC radicalism. One has to do with the evolving role of the university. The university is the historical reproductive apparatus of the PMC and a historic center for the production of new knowledge, disciplines, techniques, heresies, etc.: both functions which have acquired a semblance of autonomy from capital. In the fifties and sixties, however, the university was being called on to play a much more direct role in the functioning of the capitalist state as well as private enterprise. It had become, as University of California President Clark Kerr described it, "a prime instrument of national purpose". As in the Progressive Era (and the New Deal), public-policy makers turned to the university for expert consultation in design-

*By the "New Left" we mean the consciously anti-racist and anti-imperialist (and later, anti-capitalist) white movement, centered initially in the universities but ultimately extending well beyond them (e.g., it came to include underground newspapers; organizations of teachers, social workers, and medical workers; theater groups; community-organizing groups; etc.). Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was its most important organizational expression from 1964 to 1969. The New Left interacted with or was part of most of the other movements of the sixties, but it was not identical to them. To take two examples, the anti-war movement was far broader than the New Left; and the women's-liberation movement emerged in part in opposition to the practices of the New Left.

ing anti-poverty programs, health-care programs, etc., but on a vastly expanded scale. Beyond that, in the sixties, the state also increasingly relied on the university for military assistance, not only from engineers and natural scientists, but from anthropologists, sociologists, etc.

The university's involvement with business or even with the defense establishment was one thing; its complicity in the war in Vietnam was quite another. In the bleak Eisenhower years and in the brief glow of Kennedy's New Frontier, the university, despite its compromises, had seemed to many to be the repository of all that was good in the PMC-liberal tradition. For a while, it had been possible to ignore the conflict between the university's actual functions and its liberal ideology. But the liberal facade could not be maintained in the face of genocide. In the blinding light of the bombs raining on Vietnam, the brutality of American foreign policy was starkly revealed — as was the university's role in maintaining it. As far as the students were concerned, the self-righteous cold-war liberalism of the previous generation simply and abruptly collapsed. The moral legitimacy of the university, the older generation of the PMC, and the entire American system were thrown into question.

Student fury against the war in Vietnam inevitably turned against the government's accomplice, the university itself, and hence against one of the central institutions of the PMC. In response to the student attack on the university, liberal and even some Marxist faculty members began to dissociate themselves from the New Left. The older generation had a stake in the university: their grants, their careers, their image of themselves as being morally "above" the business world were tied to the university.

Furthermore, the older generation were more cautious — they had matured in the Depression and the cringing forties and fifties; the New Left was filled with the ebullience of the New Frontier. The gap in generational experience was just too great to be bridged by abstract class interests.

At the same time that many students of PMC origin and destiny were becoming disenchanted with their own class and its institutions, they began to find themselves challenged by the previously alien working class. For one thing, as the university struggled to keep pace with the booming growth in PMC jobs, the characteristics of students were changing. Unable to meet the demand for engineers, teachers, social workers, etc. with the sons and daughters of the existing PMC alone, the colleges were increasingly filled with the sons and daughters of the working class. As the student rebellion spread from elite PMC training grounds such as Berkeley, Columbia, and Harvard to the much less elite Kent State, Penn State, and San Francisco State, the class background of the activists shifted as well. Instead of student activists "well imbued with the traditional PMC values", there were student activists who had always viewed the PMC — their teachers, social workers and the

like — at the very least with some unease and hostility.

But the wedge that finally separated a chunk of the New Left from its own class was the Black liberation movement. White student involvement in the Southern civil-rights struggle had often been tinged with paternalism: something like the settlement-house experience for so many middle-class young people in the early twentieth century. The Northern Black movement was more challenging. Ghetto uprisings — especially the massive 1967 upheavals in Detroit and Newark — seemed to raise the possibility of an armed revolution, led by working-class Blacks, in which students would have to take sides. Black students, admitted to even the elite white colleges in response to the civil-rights movement, brought the Black rebellion to the campuses. Black students demanded that the white left support Black working-class demands (e.g., the demands for open admissions and for stopping university expansion into Black neighborhoods).

Contacts between the white student left and Black non-student groups (most notably the Black Panther Party) were characterized by arrogance on the latter side, near servility on the former. White PMC youths began to feel that their own radicalism, even their entire life experience, was a pale abstraction compared to this militance which came from "the streets". There was an acute consciousness of "privilege" — a static and fragmentary prelude to the notion of class.

Even more important to the student radicals' break with the PMC was the content of urban Black militancy. Consider the relationship which had developed between the PMC and the Black community: Lower-stratum PMC occupations, teaching and social work, had been in a close service/social-control relation to the Black community since the northward migration of the fifties. In the sixties, the official concern about poverty, much heightened by the Watts rebellion in 1965, led to a massive federally-sponsored PMC penetration of the ghetto. Job opportunities multiplied for (largely white) planners, community organizers, psychologists, anthropologists, trainers, etc. The Black community came to play the same role with respect to the PMC of the sixties as the white immigrant community had played in the 1900s: It was a nourishing medium for expansion, a bottomless mine of "social pathology". But it was far from a passive medium. By late 1966, Black militants and Black community groups were raising the demand for "community control" of the very agencies and institutions which were providing opportunities for the white PMC.

This demand did not fit into the traditional categories of the Old Left. (In the case of the New York City school struggle, the Progressive Labor Party decided that the community-control demand was a ruling-class plot against the only "workers" in sight — the teachers!) But it was a clear declaration of class warfare: the

Black community (largely working-class) against the invading PMC. In many instances, it was Black members of the PMC who won out under the banner of community control; but the radical, class-conscious thrust of the demand was "power to the people" — replace the professional and administrative elite with ordinary citizens.

Most white student radicals identified themselves with the community-control struggle without question. For one thing, it was the direct descendent of the civil-rights struggle which had, in part, given birth to the New Left. It also seemed to be a living link between foreign Third World struggles for self-determination (e.g., Vietnam) and the struggle to change U.S. society. In identifying with the community-control movement, the young PMC radicals were taking a position which ran counter to their own objective class interests. "Let the people decide," said the front page slogan in SDS's newspaper, NEW LEFT NOTES, even if they decided they didn't want you.*

By 1967 or 1968, the New Left was approaching a crisis: It had been born when the war in Vietnam forced thousands of PMC youths to confront the conflict between their class's supposed values and American social reality. It had been bred in the institution where these contradictions appeared most sharply — in the elite universities which both taught the old PMC values and abjectly served capitalist interests. But the student rebellion had spread to universities whose students often came from working-class families. Originally committed to the university, the New Left was now locked in battle with the university. And it was increasingly committed to supporting Black working-class-based movements which, for their part, rejected the traditional PMC attitudes toward the working class. The New Left was forced to examine its own class composition and class attitudes. Could it survive as a primarily

* The conflict between ideals and self-interest felt by some in the PMC is illuminated by the 1969 community and worker takeover of the Lincoln Hospital Mental Health Services in New York City. Only a few days before the administrators were locked out of their offices by 150 demonstrators, led by Black and Puerto Rican non-professional community mental-health workers. Dr. Harris Peck, the designer and director of the center, had written in READER'S DIGEST: "When there's a foot planted in the seat of my trousers to kick me out of here, I'll know we've succeeded. It will mean that the people want to take over the running of their own community. And that's the way it should be." But after the takeover, Peck commented that, while he still favored the principle of community control, "It's a long-term goal. We don't think it is possible to implement it at this time." (Health-PAC, THE AMERICAN HEALTH EMPIRE (Random House, 1971), pp. 253-254)

PMC-based movement? How could such a movement change society? What relationship would it (or could it) develop with the traditional agent of social change, the working class (and especially with the militant Black movement)?

The problem of the New Left's relation to the PMC as a whole was partially solved by the reaction of the older generation of the PMC. Many of the latter responded to the growing militance of the students with all the venom at their command. Psychiatrists theorized publicly that America's youth was searching for a father figure (and had found one in Mao, according to Bruno Bettelheim); educators blamed the rise in "anarchy" on Dr. Spock's permissiveness, and seconded Spiro Agnew's call for a collective spanking. College administrators and sometimes faculty cooperated with the police and the FBI during the violent repression which began in 1968. On their part, students radicals often turned on the University, not in order to "free" it from complicity with imperialism, but to destroy it. In the fall of 1967, University of Wisconsin demonstrators handed out a leaflet announcing: "We pick this week to demonstrate against DOW (Chemical Corporation), against the university as a corporation and against the war because they are all one." (emphasis ours)

Criticism of the university, by a twisted kind of logic, soon led to criticism of students themselves. Carl Davidson, who only a year before had seen students as the mass base for social change, wrote:

What can students do? Organizing struggles over dormitory rules seems frivolous when compared to the ghetto rebellions.... We organize students against the draft when the Army is made up of young men who are poor, black, Spanish-American, hillbillies or working-class. Everyone except students.... Students are oppressed. Bullshit. We are being trained to be the oppressors and the underlings of oppressors. (9) (emphasis ours)

By the end of the sixties, SDS was so repulsed by its own class that it would have nothing to do with the emerging ecology movement and held back from mass anti-war activities such as the nationwide student "moratorium" and the massive student strike of May 1970. Mark Rudd went so far as to reject SDS itself (of which he was then the National Secretary) as a "weird pile of liberal shit".

It was a serious impasse: Where does a movement go when it comes to feel that the concerns which motivated it were trivial, if not illegitimate? Or that the people in it are irrelevant, if not objectively enemies? The "Weatherman" tendency in SDS took self-loathing to its logical extreme, resolving, in 1969, that white babies are "pigs" and pledging themselves to a suicidal strategy of direct

confrontation with the police. For many women, the emerging feminist movement became the last legitimate refuge from the guilt which was engulfing the New Left at this time. The newly articulated understanding that women were oppressed as a sex allowed many white PMC women to continue to assert the demands for meaningful work, self-fulfillment, etc. at a time when these demands had lost all moral legitimacy to most male leftists.

By 1969, two overall approaches to handling the class problem were emerging for the New Left: one which we will call the "radicals in the professions" strategy; the other the strategy represented by what came to be called the "new communist movement". The "radicals in the professions" approach developed quite naturally out of the student life cycle: the undergraduates of 1963 were, by 1969, teachers, social workers, journalists, lawyers, or students in graduate or professional schools. Stated very simply, the idea was to use these positions, or at least whatever skills went with them, to advance the radical cause — which was now generally understood to be the cause of poor and working-class people, oppressed minority groups, etc., and only indirectly of the professionals themselves. For example, the Student Health Organization (medical and nursing students) worked on setting up preventive health-care programs in Black ghettos; the New University Conference (college and junior-college teachers and graduate students) worked for open admissions to the colleges; the Social Welfare Workers Movement attached itself to the cause of the National Welfare Rights Organization; and so on. Other "radical professionals" set up alternative law firms, health centers, etc. or dedicated themselves to providing technical resources and support for Black and Puerto Rican community organizations.



Certain streams of the radical professionals' movement could be interpreted as being little more than attempts to salvage PMC interests in the face of the Black working-class challenge. There was a search for more acceptable professional roles, such as "advocacy planning", and even some hopes that community control would bring an expansion of PMC opportunities:

...struggle by communities for control of their own development and services prepares the basis for a decentralized and democratized civil society. It is obvious that all such developments have profound need for the services of professional, intellectual, cultural and scientific workers. (10)

But on the whole, the radicals-in-the-professions took a dramatic step beyond traditional PMC class interests. The great importance of this direction, or strategy, of New Left activism is that it embodied a critical self-consciousness of the PMC itself — a kind of negative class consciousness. The radicals-in-the-professions challenged the PMC not for its lack of autonomy (as the student movement had in the early sixties), but for its very claims to autonomy — objectivity, commitment to public service, and expertise itself. "Demystification" was the catchword. Radical doctors wanted not only to free their profession from the grip of the "medical-industrial complex", but to demystify medicine. Radical lawyers would open up the law books and make elementary legal skills available to the people. Radical psychiatrists would lead the assault on psychiatric mythology and show that any sensitive community person could easily replace them. Radical teachers would expose the capitalist functions of education. And so on. Credentialing barriers would tumble. The rule of the experts would be abolished — by the young experts.*

It was, at best, a difficult approach to sustain. Clients, patients, students, etc. often turned out to resent their radical professionals' very lack of professionalism. Black aspirants to the PMC (briefly in demand in the late sixties and early seventies) had little interest in "demystifying" the positions they were for the first time attaining. Furthermore, conditions made it less and less pos-

* It would be hard to overemphasize how sharp a break this was with the dominant traditions of the Second and Third Internationals. The latter, for instance, following the model of the USSR, believed that technology was neutral: In capitalist societies it served the interests of the capitalists; in socialist societies it would be directed toward popular ends. The New Left, influenced by the Cultural Revolution in China, came to believe that the technology itself embodied bourgeois social relations. The contrast between Old and New Left attitudes toward professionalism and the privileges accompanying it are equally sharp. The New Left position, of course, was in no small measure the descendent of the militantly egalitarian SDS and SNCC tradition of "participatory democracy".

sible to give the radicals-in-the-professions approach a fair test. Repression destroyed the radical elements of the Black movement which had held the radical professionals in some sense accountable. Government grants and money for community programs dried up. Finally, the economic downturn of the seventies placed stiff penalties on radical activity among professionals or anyone else: Teachers who defied the administration by giving out all A's, social workers who attempted to organize their clients against the welfare department, etc., found themselves in case after case out of a job. The Student Health Organization, Social Welfare Workers Movement, New University Conference, Medical Committee for Human Rights, all collapsed in the early seventies, and radical caucuses in professional associations became at best centers of radical scholarship, at worst little more than job-placement networks for the hordes of ex-student-radical professionals.

The "New Communist Movement" arose out of the shambles of SDS in 1969 and picked up recruits with the collapse of the radicals-in-the-professions approach in the early seventies.* The New Communists explicitly dissociated themselves from the New Left and adopted a political outlook which was superficially not very different from that of the earlier generation of PMC radicals who had been Communists in the 1930s. They advocated the primacy of the working class in revolutionary struggle and the need to build a vanguard party to lead that struggle. But exactly who constituted that working class was not entirely clear. Sometimes (e.g., in describing teachers' strikes and the spread of union-like attitudes in professional organizations of engineers and nurses) the New Communists adhered to the orthodox Marxian two-class model and included all wage earners within the "working class". But most of the time, by "working class" they meant the traditional blue-collar (and in some cases, lower-level white-collar) working class.* Students and young professionals joining New Communist organizations were urged to "proletarianize" themselves in outlook, life

* By the "New Communist Movement" we mean those "Marxist-Leninist" organizations which grew out of the New Left, rather than out of prior left organizations such as the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party, plus individuals and study groups which identify with these organizations or their ideologies. National "new communist" organizations at this time include the October League, the Revolutionary Communist Party, and the Communist Labor Party. Although not affiliated with any of these groups, the weekly GUARDIAN is the most widely read advocate of New Communist ideas.

* In common New Communist Movement parlance, most of the PMC is lumped together with self-employed professionals, shopkeepers, small businessmen, etc. as the "petty bourgeoisie" — a distinctly pejorative description. As we have argued in the first part of this paper (see RADICAL AMERICA, March-April 1977), this is a grossly incorrect class analysis.

style, and even occupation. Factories replaced universities as the key setting for political activity. Issues which had preoccupied the New Left — personal fulfillment, community, participatory democracy, etc. — were dismissed as “petty bourgeois” or even “decadent”.

In positing the existence of a Professional/Managerial Class, we do not mean to suggest that society has entered some new, “post-capitalist” phase of development. The central dynamic in our society still lies in the contradiction between the socialized nature of the production process and the private appropriation of the fruits of production. The interests of the capitalist class remain fundamentally antagonistic to the interests of wage earners of all kinds, including those we have defined as members of the PMC. In fact, as we have argued, within the U.S., this antagonism has turned the PMC into an enduring reservoir of radicalism (from Progressivism and the Socialist Party to the New Left).

**IF STUDENTS STRIKE...
THERE IS NO SCHOOL.
IF WORKERS STRIKE...
THERE IS NO WAR.**

But as we have said, not only is there an objective antagonism between the working class and the PMC on the one hand and the capitalist class on the other; there is, in addition, an objective antagonism between the working class and the PMC. This latter antagonism has severely undercut the revolutionary chances of the working class (or of a combination of elements of both the PMC and the working class).

In the first place, as we have seen, PMC radicalism emerges out of PMC class interests, which include the PMC's interest in extending its cultural and technological hegemony over the working class. Thus the possibility exists in the PMC for the emergence of what may at first sight seem to be a contradiction in terms: anti-working-class radicalism. This possibility finds its fullest expres-

sion in the PMC radicals' recurring vision of technocratic socialism, a society in which the bourgeoisie has been replaced by bureaucrats, planners, and experts of various sorts. Nor is this vision restricted to the right-wing socialists and social democrats who come forth from the PMC; it has been advanced with great militancy by many who style their views as the "proletarian line". In fact, in any left ideology which fails to comprehend the PMC and its class interests, there is always a good possibility that the "dictatorship of the proletariat" will turn out to be the dictatorship of the PMC.*

Turning now to the effects of the PMC/working-class polarization on working-class consciousness, we should recall first that the very existence of the PMC is predicated on the atomization of working-class life and culture and the appropriation of skills once vested in the working class.* The activities which the PMC performs within the capitalist division of labor in themselves serve to undermine positive class consciousness among the working class. The kind of consciousness which remains, the commonly held attitudes of the working class, are as likely to be anti-PMC as they are to be anti-capitalist — if only because people are more likely, in a day-to-day sense, to experience humiliation, harassment, frustration, etc. at the hands of the PMC than from members of the actual capitalist class.

* At risk of considerable over-simplification, we would suggest that this is in a sense just what happened in the USSR: a "new class" of technocrats — government and party bureaucrats, industrial managers, professional ideologues, etc. — has come to preside over a society in which more or less capitalist relations of production persist, despite the absence of a capitalist class. In this context, Lenin's well-known interest in adopting the methods of Taylorism (see Harry Braverman, *LABOR AND MONOPOLY CAPITAL*, Monthly Review, 1975, p. 12) and, conversely, the Chinese concern with restricting the privileges of managers and reducing the gap between mental and manual workers in order to avoid the Soviet mistakes (see John Ehrenreich, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat in China," MONTHLY REVIEW, October 1975) are worth recalling. Similarly, "Arab socialism", "African socialism", and "military socialism" (e.g., pre-1975 Peru) can also best be understood not as "petty bourgeois socialism" but as "PMC socialism", based on the rising class of civilian and military government mental workers.

* We do not mean to suggest, of course, that the PMC alone holds the working class in check, or that restraining the development of working-class consciousness is always, or even usually, a conscious goal of the PMC. On the former point, other sources of control over the working class certainly include the direct use or threat of state and private employer power; pre-capitalist authoritarian mechanisms of control such as the Catholic Church; and the many forces leading to the segmentation of the labor market along lines of race, ethnicity, sex, and to the physical dispersion of the working class.

Now, add to the fact of working-class hostility to the PMC two observations we have made already: (1) the historic association, in the U.S., of socialist radicalism with the PMC; and (2) the PMC's proclivity for a technocratic vision of socialism in which the PMC would be the dominant class. The result is that there emerges in the working class another seemingly contradictory ideology, which we might call class-conscious anti-communism. This working-class anti-communism receives continual encouragement from right-wing demagogues who emphasize exactly these points: the role of PMC members ("pinko intellectuals", "effete snobs", etc.) in radical movements and social-control activities, and the supposedly totalitarian nature of socialism. But working-class anti-communism is not created by right-wing demagoguery (or bad leadership, or ignorance, though all these help); it grows out of the objective antagonism between the working class and the PMC. Often enough it comes mixed with a wholesale rejection of any thing or thought associated with the PMC — liberalism, intellectualism, etc.

We hardly need to emphasize the dangerous, potentially tragic, nature of this situation. It is reflected with painful clarity in the condition of the U.S. left today: isolated and fragmented, still based largely in the PMC, more a subculture than a "movement."

Is there a way out? Is there anything in the experience of either PMC or working class which could lead them to transcend their antagonism, to join together in some sort of mass radical alliance for social change? If so, how can such an alliance be built?

To answer these questions it seems to us we have to draw on the experience of the New Left. In a sense, the New Left represents a historic breakthrough: a first conscious effort to recognize and confront the conflict between the PMC and the working class. Learning in part from the Cultural Revolution in China, with its emphasis on the gap between mental and manual labor and its populist approach to technology, and in part from their uneasy alliance with (mainly Third World) working-class community movements, the radicals of the sixties began to develop a critique of their own class. The feminist movement extended that critique, exposing the ideological content of even the most apparently "neutral" science and the ideological functions of even the most superficially "rational" experts.

But the New Left was not able to complete its incipient critique of the PMC and its role. With the collapse of the New Left as a mass movement in the seventies, the very effort ceased: Guilt replaced self-confidence; sterile efforts at remolding the consciousness of individual members of the PMC along "proletarian" lines replaced the more fruitful search for ways in which the PMC-based left could help stimulate and unite with a working-class movement.

But the possibility of developing the emergent insights of the sixties and applying them to the development of a truly broad-

based anti-capitalist movement is perhaps more alive now than ever. Unlike in the early sixties, there are thousands of PMC leftists who remain aware, in however unsystematic a way, of the tensions at the PMC-working class interface. And, also unlike the early sixties, there is a growing number of young radical working-class intellectuals — people who were given a brief exposure to higher education (and to the New Left) in the period of university expansion in the sixties, and were then thrown back into working-class occupations by the economic crisis of the seventies. Thus, if only in terms of personnel, the opportunity exists for developing a politics which can address and overcome the class stalemate of the contemporary left.

What direction might such a politics go? We can only suggest a few beginning directions:

(a) The way out does not lie in falling back on romantic visions of the historical mission of the working class, manifested in efforts to expunge “petty bourgeois” — i.e., PMC — ideology from the left so as to uncover the “pure proletarian line.” The relationship between the PMC and the working class is complementary; neither class has a “pure” ideology, uninfluenced by the other, or by the capitalist class. It is in the nature of this relationship that “culture” (in the loose sense of knowledge, ideas, history), including the systematic critique of capitalism itself, is dominated by the PMC. In a sense, Lenin’s perception in *WHAT IS TO BE DONE* remains true: the possibility of building a mass movement which seeks to alter society in its totality depends on the coming together of working-class insight and militancy with the tradition of socialist thinking kept alive by “middle-class” intellectuals.

(b) The antagonism between the PMC and the working class cannot be wished away in the name of anti-capitalist unity — any more, for example, than the antagonism between men and women, or between black and white can be. The left, which is now predominantly drawn from the PMC, must address itself to the subjective and cultural aspects of class oppression as well as to material inequalities; it must commit itself to uprooting its own ingrained and often subtle attitudes of condescension and elitism. The tensions between PMC leftists and the working class can only be dealt with by starting with a clear analytical perception of their origins and nature. Guilty self-effacement on the part of PMC radicals and/or simplistic glorification of the working class simply perpetuate the class roles forged in capitalist society.

(c) Moreover, in order to forge an alliance between elements of the PMC and the working class, the left must address itself not only to “bread and butter” issues but to all the issues it has too readily shelved as “cultural”: the division of labor, the nature (and ideological content) of science and technology, art, psychology, sexuality, education, etc. For it is on these issues that the historic antagonism between the PMC and the working class rests. Both

classes confront the capitalist class over the issue of ownership and control of the means of production. They confront each other over the issues of knowledge, skills, culture.

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BARBARA and JOHN EHRENREICH have written widely on health and other topics. John teaches at the Old Westbury campus of SUNY; and Barbara is active in the women's health movement.

ERRATUM

In our last issue we left out two photo credits. Our cover, "Amnesty and Liberty", was based on a Madrid wall mural, photographed by Jose Delgado-Guitart. The picture of Cesar Chavez on page 75 was by Tom Uribes.

HANDS

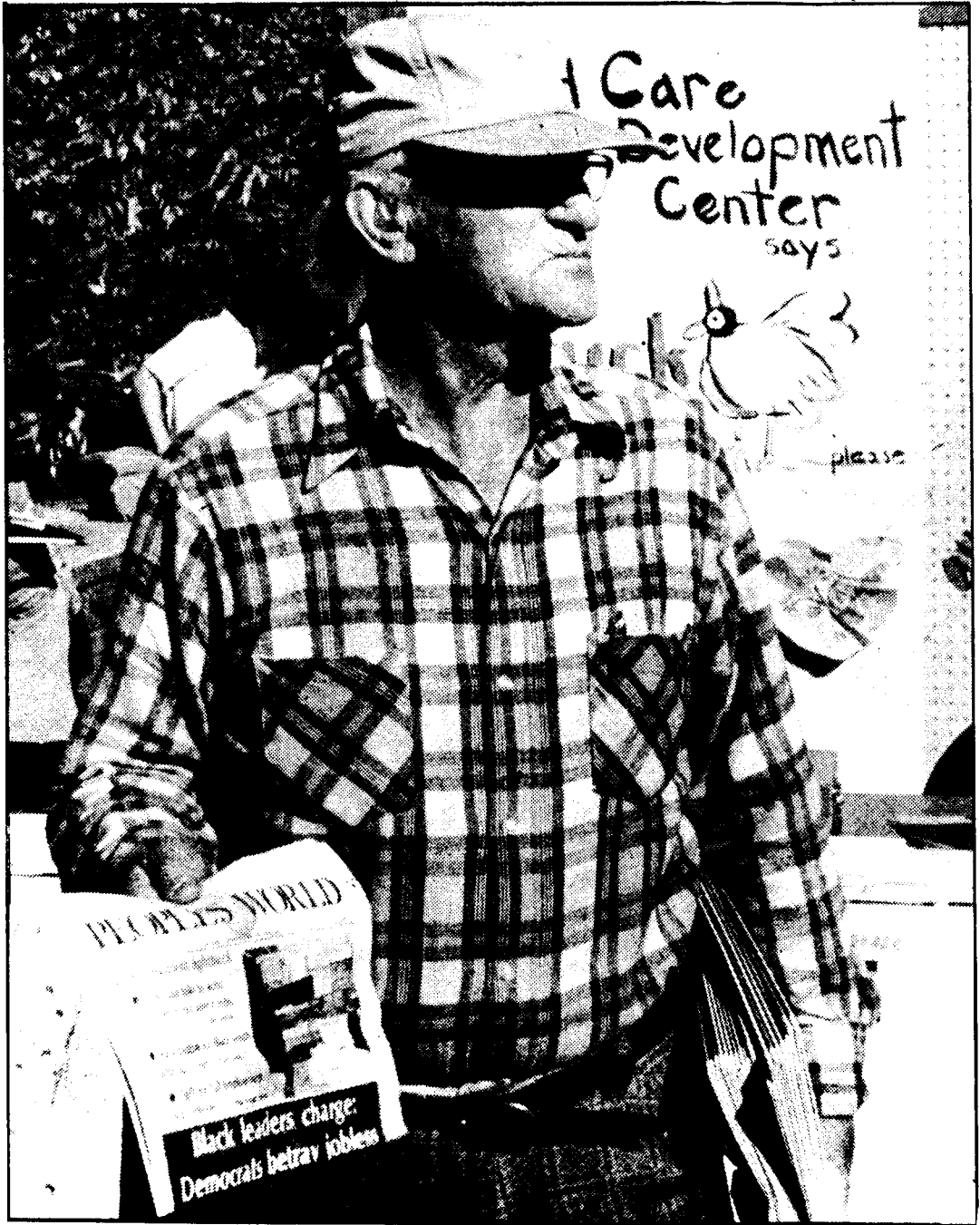
Harvey Bloom

Turning them over you said,
 "Your hands,
they're like worker's hands
not poet's hands.",
disqualifyingly
throwing them down stairs
where they kept landing on my father's hands.

Tonight as I sit at a poetry workshop
stubbing out a cigarette with my fingertips
so it won't burn a hole in the paper cup
they flash by: worker's hands, poet's hands

who have been ashamed of each other for so long

a world come between
what has one life line.



Lloyd Ramp, longtime member of the CPUSA, selling People's World in Eugene Oregon.

THE COMMUNIST PARTY TODAY AND YESTERDAY:

An Interview with Dorothy Healey

Jon Wiener

Dorothy Healey joined the Young Communist League in 1928 when she was 14 years old. She was chairman of the Communist Party of Southern California from 1949 to 1969, and a member of the Party's National Committee and National Executive Committee. Along with 11 other Party leaders, she was convicted in the second Smith Act trials in 1951. In 1966, she ran for Los Angeles County Assessor and received 86,500 votes. She left the Party in 1973. Today she is a member of the New American Movement (NAM) and serves on its National Interim Committee.

INTERVIEWER: How important is the CP today on the left?

HEALEY: It's the largest group, the largest by far.

INT: It claims to be growing.

HEALEY: I think that's true.

INT: Gus Hall's 1975 speech at the national convention claims they recruited 200 new members for that convention alone. (1)

HEALEY: But you have no way of knowing from the report of new members how many are still there a year later. Since they no longer give out membership figures, even to the national leaders, there's absolutely no way to know how much turnover there is. Up until 1948, the Party gave membership figures to the conventions. Every Party report indicated how many dues-paying members there were, and how many new ones had been signed up.

INT : How big was it at its peak ?

HEALEY : 75,000 in the Party, 25,000 more in the YCL. The top year for the rest of the country was 1938, but in Los Angeles, our top year was 1949, when we had 5,000 members in Los Angeles County alone. Today, my guess — the most charitable estimate — is around eight or nine thousand in the nation as a whole.

INT : The Party's main activity this past year was the Gus Hall Presidential campaign, which he describes as "a giant breakthrough" which "left an enormous impact on the electorate." (2) What did you think of it ?

HEALEY : The first time Gus started making that claim was after the '72 campaign, where his speech analyzing it started out by saying "we influenced tens of millions of people." That evoked enormous hilarity on the part of people who knew anything about the campaign.

INT : I was given a leaflet last fall that said, "Tired of the old party bosses ? Vote for Gus Hall for President."

HEALEY : (laughter) I love that ! When you think of tired old bosses !

INT : They claim that 600,000 people signed the ballot petitions, and that this is "critical in the struggle against anti-communism."

HEALEY : I think it was enormously important that they gathered those signatures. If the Party would just tell the truth, there's plenty of glory to be found in the truth. But when it is exaggerated, when it is argued that signatures represent a historical breakthrough, that's misleading, it's dangerous, it's untrue. Because most of the people who signed, signed believing "sure, be on the ballot; everybody should be on the ballot." And a big proportion had no idea that they were signing for members of the CP because the people getting the signatures didn't tell them. Sometimes that was necessary; you don't get a lot of signatures if you stop and talk to each person separately. This is true of all left electoral campaigns, not just the CP's. But the Party has got to tell the truth about that : it was a limited contact; while it had some significance, it was not exactly the first harbinger of a new political spring.

In my farewell speech as district chairman to the national convention in 1969, I said that Gus Hall was the Norman Vincent Peale of the left wing : the power of positive thinking. We were always winning everywhere. Everything was historic, everything was wonderful, never was there any analysis of what was happening in the real world, of the weaknesses of the Party, the problems, the handicaps to be overcome. The 1975 resolution of the Party, for example, says, "a growing mass movement against rising unemployment and inflation is now taking shape. Tremendous economic struggles are in the making as the working class and its allies move into their counter-offensive against the monopolies. The class struggle in the U.S. is entering a new, more advanced stage." (3) Now when that didn't happen, and clearly those huge

struggles did not take place, then it is absolutely mandatory to analyze why they didn't. One thing the Party had in the thirties, the forties, and even the fifties was a certain feeling for mass trends, for mass consciousness, for what was happening. The policies were not always great, but the starting point was always the real movement of history. That is no longer the Party's starting point today.

INT: Politically, what did you think of the Hall campaign?

HEALEY: I saw Gus on one television program — Black Journal — and I thought he did a good job. He selected good issues. There were an enormous number of television and radio programs, and there certainly was some influence gained by them. An enormous amount of money was spent. By the way, I bet you that per capita vote, the Party's investment was far greater than the Democrats'. The SWP spent a lot of money too. But to think that because you're on radio and television you are "influencing tens of millions"

INT: The campaign as nearly as I could tell was organized around the 30-hour week as an immediate answer to unemployment, switching federal funds from military to social programs, the proposal that "racism be made a crime" . . .

HEALEY: . . . that racist organizations be outlawed. That caused a big fight among a few people.

INT: And an emphasis on peace, on strengthening detente. (4) It doesn't strike me as a brilliantly radical set of issues, as anything different from what a lot of people in the Democratic Party would say.

HEALEY: I think that was true of all the left wing. It's just as true of the SWP. There is no linkup in any of today's radical parties between your immediate demands and your socialist objective. Therefore most candidates sound simply like left Democrats.

INT: Gus Hall says the Party is guided by the theory of dialectical materialism, the laws of which indicate that capitalism is in crisis, and that this crisis consists of inflation and unemployment. And our proposal for that is the 30-hour week. It's a case of the degeneration of theory.

HEALEY: That's right. It's characteristic of all Gus's approaches. Quite often when you're talking publicly you have to popularize issues, but in the speeches to the Central Committee and to the Party membership you will find the most vulgar expressions of economic determinism, of primitive Marxism, a kind that was never present in Party leaders' speeches in past decades. Go all the way back and you'll never find this kind of vulgar Marxism being projected — not by Gene Dennis, not by Browder.

INT: Earlier you said the Party has been growing.

HEALEY: Yes. The most significant recruiting has been among Blacks and Chicanos. The CP has more Blacks and Chicanos proportionately than any other left-wing organization.

INT : Why ?

HEALEY : Partly as a result of Angela Davis; partly because the Soviet Union draws people because of their support for Angola, Vietnam, and Cuba. And once a major breakthrough has been made, once you have a significant core with experience, a critical mass, it becomes that much easier to continue building. The Party today has more Blacks in significant positions of leadership than it ever had before. Also you must understand that when you have access to significant amounts of money, relatively speaking, you can do quite a number of things that produce results. They have almost a full-time institute to which they send Chicano youth from all over the country for special classes in Marxism. I think that this has had a success. The 1975 resolution claimed that over 200 Chicano youth had already gone through it — spending two to six weeks.

And by the way, it also helps recruiting to have the franchise. Delegation after delegation of young Chicano and Black kids are sent to the Soviet Union or other socialist countries; vacations are taken there, honorary degrees are awarded. I went on two such delegations. You are treated as most important visitors. And when you are not terribly important in your own country, this is a very heavy and corrupting thing. You are so enormously grateful for the attention you get. Of course what you see is extraordinarily beautiful; and it's one part of reality, not the full reality, but one part. You do not ask embarrassing questions. You are cautioned before you go on these trips; the head of the international department of the Party briefs delegations, saying, after all when you visit someone's home you don't look under the carpet to see where they sweep the dirt. It's no different when Maoist groups visit China. It's exactly the same.

INT : Do Blacks and Chicanos have more freedom to maneuver within the Party ?

HEALEY : I don't think there's any more freedom, but the most serious charge that can be used in Party struggles is the charge of white chauvinism. Once a Black or Chicano comrade is in any leading position in the Party, any criticism of the Party in that area is labeled chauvinism. In that sense, there is a certain immunity from criticism and challenge for Blacks and Chicanos, but no one has any particular freedom; the organizational structure really precludes any significant intra-Party freedom of organizing around challenging policy.

What happened to the Che-Lumumba club is significant. It was an all-Black club started here in 1967. We were the only place in the country that had such a club. The Party historically has always fought against any all-Black, or all-Chicano, or all-woman formation, on the ground that it violates internationalism. Our position in the Party here in L.A. was that that's nonsense; internationalism is content, not form. If the content at an all-Black or all-Chicano meeting is Marxist, you have internationalism; if you have Black

and white sitting together, that alone is not going to make it internationalist. Second, we argued that in an organization that is predominantly white, in a country that is overwhelmingly white, the only way in which minorities actually can be decisive in determining policy is if they can gather together by themselves to discuss and debate what the policy should be. And the fact remains that, for a long time after socialism comes, there is going to be far greater freedom if discussions among Blacks, or Chicanos, or women take place without others present.

There was an enormous reaction at the national meeting of Party organization in '68 against our setting up the Che-Lumumba club, led mainly by Blacks, arguing that this was a violation of Party approaches and Marxism. Now nobody gets excited because there are only Jewish people on the Party's Jewish Commission, I should hasten to add that it's not because the Party trusts the Jewish comrades more, it's that everybody else would be bored going to the meetings because they don't really care about it. Nobody gets excited about the fact that large numbers of clubs, because of geography or industry, are all white. But when we set up the Che-Lumumba club, my god, you'd have thought we were committing the greatest heresy since Bernstein came on the scene in Germany. At that point, the younger Black comrades from L.A. fought like tigers for the right of this club to exist.

Today there is no such thing as an all-Black formation in the Party anywhere in the country. It's not that I don't think that form of organization doesn't have problems. And I don't think organizational forms are ever the determining question. But for the Party to make a battleground over the issue of an all-Black club has its own significance.

INT: Do the Party's policies on Black issues draw new members? In Party literature over the past 25 years there is always a campaign around a racist atrocity: "Free the Tallahassee Six." (5)

HEALEY: Even within the Party those campaigns rarely evoked any significant mobilization. I don't think there has been any major thrust toward leading outstanding struggles against racism. And with all of the Black youth who have joined the Party, I bet that not one of them understands the total absence of the word "self-determination" from the resolution the Party passed in 1975. The political thrust is simply around racial equality. I'm not arguing at this point that self-determination is a legitimate theoretical and political perspective; I'm arguing that there's no debate and no awareness about what it means to reject that perspective. Another example of a position none of the younger members are aware of is the definition of Blacks as a "nationally oppressed minority," while Chicanos are placed in the category "national groups." In old-time Party language that is a separate category considered not quite as decisive as allies of the working class.

INT: I never would have known.

HEALEY: All this reminds me of that phrase of Gramsci's, where he describes the tasks of the Jesuits as making the necessary changes to bring the dogma up to date, but in such a way that only the initiated know the changes being made, and the faithful are never disturbed.

INT: The Party does have a group that is supposed to lead anti-racist struggles; it came out of the Angela Davis defense, and is called the "National Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression." How does it compare with the front groups of yesteryear?

HEALEY: In the Party these are called "intermediate organizations." In the thirties, groups like the American League Against War and Fascism, the International Labor Defense, the American Youth Congress, were vigorous groups with significant non-CP and non-left participation. They were really important in that respect. Today's intermediate organizations no longer have that breadth. With each of them, and the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression is the best example, the first national conference has a significant turnout. You think that here is something really new and big coming. This was true of the thing they set up on African liberation...

INT: The "National Anti-Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation."

HEALEY: Right. It's also true of the Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy, and the Conference on Economic Survival. They all started with big conferences. They soon became simply Party-staffed organizations.

But one of the things that struck me in the last two years is that functions honoring either Black Communists or a particular united-front struggle around a single case will produce the broadest kind of Black support that anybody can mobilize. There was just a dinner in Detroit celebrating Bill Patterson's 80th birthday. He fought for Sacco and Vanzetti; he helped form the International Labor Defense, then he formed the Bill of Rights Congress. There probably isn't an older Black leader in this country that doesn't know who he is. There was a huge turnout at the dinner for him: not just leftists, but mayors, celebrities, really the kind of participation and public support around an issue identified as Communist that hasn't been present since the thirties. But in the operation of these organizations, they have not managed in any way to sustain any non-Party participation. That's not a particularly unique thing for the CP; it's a characteristic of this period. I don't think any group has been able to find a mass response to any issue.

The Mark Allen campaign in Berkeley is an exception; it's a good example of what the Party can do. He is a Black reporter on the PEOPLE'S WORLD who ran for Berkeley city council a few years ago and got 35 per cent of the vote. This year he's running again, and there's a big struggle around his being endorsed by the entire Berkeley coalition. My own opinion is that he should be en-

dorsed; he's an able candidate, he really has a base in the area, he ran an important and impressive campaign. Many organizations will endorse him that would not even have considered endorsing a Communist fifteen years ago. It's a healthy sign.*

INT: The New Left argued that one of the lessons of the anti-communism of the fifties was that, if Communists concealed their Party membership, they would be vulnerable to being exposed with charges of bad faith, and the New Left wasn't going to do that any more. The CP doesn't seem to have drawn that lesson.

HEALEY: Neither has that portion of the New Left that went into the so-called "New Communist Movement." The October League and the Revolutionary Union (now RCP — eds.) are far more secret and underground about their membership than the Party was at any time; they have much more stringent rules about secrecy. But I'm really rather surprised that in the last few years there seems to be in the Party a renewed emphasis on non-identification of CP membership. My memory of the past is that people might not have publicly proclaimed their membership, but in the organizations and groups within which they worked, there usually was an awareness of who they were: every Communist was selling literature, selling subscriptions, talking to individuals, making contacts — we were the greatest literature hustlers in the world.

INT: Why this renewed trend toward secrecy?

HEALEY: I really don't understand it. I can't see any reason for it. I'm appalled and dismayed by it. But it seems to be very much a characteristic of all the organizations on the left today; it's the same thing with the SWP, certainly as I said with the New Communist Movement. It's even more grotesque there, because they deny membership as a matter of high principle.

Part of my criticism of some New Left groups — for example, the NEW LEFT REVIEW — is that there are a hell of a lot of people who represent either Ernest Mandel's IMG group or the 4th International Trotskyists of one kind or another, who don't identify themselves. The NEW LEFT REVIEW is the most famous, because I would say about two-thirds of their editorial board are Trotskyists. People have a right to know where you're coming from, they have a right to know what's the framework in which you are presenting your analysis, especially if it is part of a total methodology and not an eclectic mixture.

INT: What about the Party's union activity?

HEALEY: In trade-union work, the Party undoubtedly has more organized strength than any other group on the left. Particularly in steel, less in auto. Steel is its major strength.

INT: The Party press was enthusiastic about the Sadlowski campaign.

* The Berkeley progressive coalition refused to endorse Allen and he ran separately as an independent. Both the coalition slate and Allen were defeated. (JW)

HEALEY: Yes.

INT: And also about the Farmworkers.

HEALEY: Yes, but not to the same extent. The big difference is that they have a number of members in the Steelworkers; it's an organized activity, which is not true in the Farmworkers. The Farmworkers are simply one of the things they support.

INT: Since the thirties, the CP has been close to the Democratic Party. This year, however, the Party was from the beginning critical of Carter; Gus Hall spent the fall warning of the dangers of supporting Carter as a "lesser evil." (6)

HEALEY: To understand that term you have to go back to the thirties; it took on its present political meaning after Hitler came to power. The German socialists refused to unite with the CP, and supported von Hindenburg instead, on the argument that he was the lesser of two evils. Because there was a mass alternative to von Hindenburg, because something else could have been done, to support the "lesser evil" was outrageous.

But in the last 20 years a different argument has developed on the left. The present opposition to "lesser-evilism" is based on the argument that there is no difference between capitalist candidates, that they are all interchangeable. That is just plain silly. When human beings are confronted with two dangers, one of which is greater, those who don't select the lesser danger are goddamn fools. But in selecting the lesser danger, you do so knowing that it is still a danger.

You want to move hundreds of thousands into struggle; therefore you single out the main features of your policy. But you run the risk of overlooking the secondary dangers that you must be concerned with and fight against. That's not a problem restricted to the CP today, or in the past; it's a problem in any revolutionary movement. In Marxist rhetoric, it's called the problem of fighting on two fronts. You don't have to worry about the dangers of right opportunism if you're in a sect that only talks to itself. Nothing is going to tempt your immortal soul. But if your party influences thousands outside its own ranks, pressures arise. That's what happened with the CIO in the thirties. Keeping this new organization unified was the dominant concern, and it was a correct concern. But because there was no debate on the dangers of unity, the uncritical approach toward John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman developed, (7) and then uncritical support of FDR, and then in 1944 the policy which simply eliminated any revolutionary position. And then McCarthyism came along.

INT: Starobin says the CP wasn't repressed out of existence by McCarthyism; it committed suicide with the five-to-midnight line.* (8) What do you think about that?

*Implying that there were but five minutes before the midnight hour, that is, before fascism. This line, introduced in June 1951, sent the Party leadership underground. Eds.

HEALEY: It's nonsense to say it committed suicide then, and it would be equal nonsense to say it was committing suicide now. I don't believe organizations do that. The Socialist Labor Party is still alive! But I think that he's right in the central thrust of what he's saying. The losses of membership came, not because of McCarthy's attacks, but because of our failures of judgment. But not so much in the period Joe is talking about, 1951-55, but in the period following the Soviet invasion of Hungary, 1956-60. That was when we lost our most able, experienced mass leaders and Party leaders, particularly from my generation of the thirties. Under the McCarthy repression we had some losses, but there was a much stronger tendency for Party members to group around the Party and defend it. We formed a wagon train around the Party. The great losses came later, in 1956-60.

The worst expression of the Party's losing its identity totally occurred during the sixties, especially in the vulgar, primitive analysis of the 1964 Goldwater-Johnson election. The Party simply embraced Johnson as the one who would save us from fascism. It did not take the position that you support Johnson against Goldwater, but never forget that on the morning of his victory Johnson is going to become the main danger you have to fight. The PEOPLE'S WORLD when Al Richmond was still editor maintained this critical independent position, but the DAILY WORKER totally eliminated it.

INT: Yet Gus Hall opposed Carter because he was "the hand-picked servant of the highest levels of monopoly power." (9)

HEALEY: That's pretty preposterous. They like him, but he certainly wasn't their preferred candidate. The question of Black representation is where the policy of opposing the Democrats has its Achilles heel. There was just no way they would break with that sector of the Black movement that expresses itself in the Democratic Party. They certainly are not going to repudiate Coleman Young. And in many states, the only possible left-liberal alliances that could take place are with the Democratic Party candidates. And there is the tricky problem of what to do in relation to the divisions in the ruling circles; how do you utilize them to create a better political environment for a radical movement to develop? Are you going to say that, in New York, Bella Abzug and James Buckley are interchangeable because all capitalist parties are the same? It matters to a radical movement whether a more repressive or more liberal aspect of capitalist rule is present. We need time, we need space, we need room in which to educate and organize and mobilize.

INT: Gus Hall's "Main Report" also says "CP election work is the most effective political mass work there is." (10) Isn't this an unusual position?

HEALEY: It sure is. No Communist leader would ever have said that in the past 60 years. We would have said "see where you can

bring that campaign into your mass work, test it out"; but not, "drop your mass work."

INT: What led to this tremendous emphasis the Party has placed on Hall's presidential campaign?

HEALEY: Hall was determined that the Party would get a higher vote than the SWP.

INT: He must have been disappointed. The SWP nationally got 90,000 and Gus got only 60,000.

HEALEY: But of course the SWP was on the ballot in more states. The CP was ruled off in Michigan and I think Massachusetts.

INT: In the past you have run as a candidate in local elections. In 1966 you got more votes in Los Angeles County than Gus Hall got in 19 states this year.

HEALEY: That's something you won't find in any Party history.

INT: Maybe you should tell us a little about that campaign.

HEALEY: We very deliberately did not mobilize the Party as the main vehicle for that campaign. We wanted them to be doing the work they were doing, which we thought was more important. The whole success of it was that we got non-communists active. Both the financing and the participation of that campaign came from outside the CP. Certainly there was no question who I was: I was the Communist spokesman in this area. It was on the front pages of the paper, there were efforts to keep me off the ballot. We very deliberately carried on what had originally been our approach: we were not going to use it to count votes, but rather use it as a part of mass education, to bring an analysis of existing reality to people in a way you can't otherwise do. I didn't expect to win; in fact my opponent beat me by over a million votes!

INT: What were you trying to do politically in that campaign?

HEALEY: The main thing was to use the issue of the tax assessor's office to epitomize the capitalist political economy, the inherent inequality of it, starting with the question of the property tax and its regressive nature, and then extend that analysis to the whole question of taxation in the U.S. You can depreciate machinery, but not labor power. We tried to show the unity of the small property owner and the renter. We proposed that all homes below a certain level not be subject to the property tax at all, and that where there was income property there be a sliding scale, and that renters be entitled to the same rebate as owners. Then we raised the whole question of political democracy, the fact that the tax assessor is accountable to absolutely no one, there is no organized body that he has to answer to. We proposed an appeals board in each community which would be elected and would determine the equity of tax policies there.

INT: The Soviet Union still looms large in CP literature. On Brezhnev's 70th birthday, PEOPLE'S WORLD had a two-page photo spread — Brezhnev with his wife, Brezhnev with Ford, Brezhnev with Gus Hall. (11) PW has regular articles on ecology in the east-

Andrews
DAILY WORLD



Cartoon from Daily World, February 18, 1977

ern bloc, on health care and senior citizens' programs in the SU. On the other hand, the 1969 New Program of the CPUSA says, "we declare ourselves bound by no decisions except our own: we are for the complete independence and autonomy of each national party." (12) How important is the Soviet Union to the politics of the CP-USA?

HEALEY: All-important. The Party is known throughout the communist parties of the world as the one that is used to say and do for the Soviet Union what it is not quite ready to say and do for itself. Example: an article on Spain in the December issue of POLITICAL AFFAIRS by Henry Winston which attacks the Spanish CP for trying to establish some independence from the Soviet Union. (13) The clearest example of that was when the Warsaw powers invaded Czechoslovakia and we held a press conference here in Los Angeles after we were inundated by calls from the media for our comment. All we did was quote that Party program you referred to on the question of the independence and sovereignty of each party. We did nothing except to read that quote. And for that we were censured, there was an official vote of censure against me from the National Committee. So you must always look between the self-serving statements and the reality. (14)

INT: Was there ever a moment when this was not true of CP?

HEALEY: There was a moment. It didn't last long. And that was after the 16th convention of the Party in 1957, after the 20th World Congress and the enormous shock of Khrushchev's speech, when the Party's resolution proclaimed self-critically that we had accepted positions without our own examination of them and that we would never do this again. For a period up to 1959 this was true of the National Executive Committee, and of the National Committee of the Party. That was a short period: '57 to '59.

INT: '59 is when Dennis went out and Hall came in.

HEALEY: Correct. You should know that when Gus Hall was running for office against Gene Dennis, for the first time in the history of the Party, an incumbent general secretary of the Party was being challenged. This is a no-no in the Party; you do not have competition for office. Gus toured the country. Most of us out here had never met him, didn't know him. He met with our board twice, and we asked what we considered the decisive question, his attitude toward the Soviet Union. We said that we were not apologetic about our position during the thirties on the SU, that in the long run we thought history would show that we were more correct than those who always were for socialism everywhere except where it was encircled by capitalism. It was the solitary conquest of working-class power in the world. That was no longer true in 1959. There were 14 socialist countries, and it was preposterous to have the same position in that period as in the thirties. Gus hastened to agree with us; he said, "you're absolutely correct," and went on

in great detail, because he was running for office.

INT: Gus Hall is the recent incarnation of this policy of unconditional support of the U.S.S.R., but it's a historic policy.

HEALEY: Absolutely. Except that it was never done as vulgarly as it is now. Even in the thirties, except for the period of the Nazi-Soviet pact. For example, a few years ago there was a big peace demonstration in Washington, D.C., which happened to be at the same time that Brezhnev was coming to the U.S. The CP's banner at the demonstration had only one slogan: "Welcome Brezhnev!" What was disturbing and politically not very good in past years becomes even more crass in this period, more stark and vulgar in its influence.

INT: A lot of this discussion seems to come back to Gus Hall, who's been the General Secretary since 1959. But Gus Hall is not going to live forever.

HEALEY: It won't make any difference. The young people who are being groomed for leadership are replicas. People who attended that 1975 convention in Chicago said that the young people, who had been bussed in from all over the country, were worse than the old people in their sectarianism. The old people at least participated in mass and class struggles. There was always a lingering note of that. The young people haven't had that experience. When they have the Party line, it sounds even worse than the old ones.

INT: In relation to the international communist movement, it's hard to escape the conclusion that the Party supports those who support the Soviet Union, and that's basically their only criterion. For example, the Spain article you referred to discusses what is probably the most exciting country in Europe right now in terms of left developments; and this, the CPUSA's big article on what is happening there, consists of an attack on Santiago Carillo for telling the New York TIMES, "I'm a Spaniard, not a Russian." That drives Henry Winston to remind Comrade Carillo what the working class of Spain will never forget, that the only state in the world that organized direct support for the Spanish Republic in 1937 was the first socialist state. The CP's analysis of the Spanish left today is that they are forgetting their debt to the SU.

HEALEY: You're absolutely right. The article is probably one of the worst exhibits of the Party being the cat's-paw for the Soviet Union. The Spanish Party can do what the Party in the U.S. has never been able to do, even though we were never beaten in a Civil War and forced underground by 40 years of fascist repression — and they can nevertheless mobilize a hundred thousand workers to demonstrate against the murder of the labor lawyers. The tragedy is that the American Party members don't have any idea what the issues are. They're totally incapable of debating them. I have checked in the Party since Winston's article appeared — the first article on Spain that has been in the magazine in ten, twenty years

—and it is this shabby attack on Santiago Carillo, and there is no discussion of it, no criticism, no nothing.

INT: The coverage of the Communist world has a kind of apologetic tone. "Henry Winston visits Vietnam" was a big theme recently, but what does he report? "Christmas in Hanoi." (15) I'm sure there is something more interesting going on in Vietnam than the fact that the churches of Hanoi are bedecked with flowers and filled with people.

HEALEY: He was there attending the Congress of the Party, the first one since the end of the war.

INT: On China, the 1975 convention of the CPUSA says, "Maoism is opportunism on the level of betrayal; it is petty bourgeois radicalism, 'left' revisionism, great power chauvinism, a capitulation to the wishes of imperialism." (16) That's just about everything bad it's possible to be. What do you think will happen to this policy now with the campaign against the Gang of Four?

HEALEY: The attack will be muted until they see which way China goes, but not so much in regard to internal questions; the decisive question will be whether there's a rapport with the SU. But any formal rapprochement is a long way away.

INT: The apologists would say in fact the international policies of the Party are not very important in the day-to-day mass work.

HEALEY: It's not true. We were correct when we said you can't separate foreign and domestic policy. That's as true for communism as it is for capitalism. As an example, the attitude toward Carter: you have to fight for that policy in your trade union, arguing that people shouldn't vote for Carter.

INT: What is the situation regarding feminism in the Party?

HEALEY: The Party's position reduces the question of women's oppression to simply the class question of exploitation. This is really genuine ignorance. It just doesn't understand the relative autonomy of oppression that rises above the class question, that crosses class lines. The Party's position from the beginning of the new wave of women's liberation in '68 was never part of that movement and always opposed it. It's considered bourgeois feminism. The Party is the only organization on the left that opposes the ERA; in New York you had the spectacle of the Communist Party and the John Birch Society as the main opponents of the ERA.

INT: Is there any struggle around the role of women within the Party? Need I ask?

HEALEY: Very little. There is a critique, written by one of the leaders of the L.A. women's commission, of the Party's position on women; it never has seen the light of day and it never will. However it should be said that historically the Party always did have more women in its leadership than any other organization. But you had to recognize the limitations of where women could go. I was the first woman District Organizer of the Party — that's our language for the district chairman. And that caused a great deal of

criticism from leading communists. They said very bluntly that women could be organizational secretaries but nothing higher.

INT: The most famous woman by far in the CP today is Angela Davis. In her autobiography she says she decided to join the Party after extensive discussions with you. (17)

HEALEY: It's a little ironic to realize that, when Angela and I were having those prolonged discussions, I kept insisting that it did not require any great courage to go to jail. It was ironic because only a year or two later she did go to jail. Workers with the most elementary class sentiment will go to jail to defend their union, I argued. The real courage comes in the participation in intra-party fights, in the struggle to make the Party a more capable revolutionary organization. Because that requires the fights with your loved ones, your comrades. It's the reason why civil wars are far more terrible than wars against an outside enemy. It requires both courage and long-range perspective. I don't think my advice had much meaning for her.

INT: How influential is she in the Party today?

HEALEY: She's enormously influential, but you've got to understand that Angela Davis is not any threat to the internal line of the Party, either in regard to the SU, or any other question of policy. She is part of the Party establishment.

INT: Is she a voice for feminism within the Party in any respect?

HEALEY: In the sense of socialist feminism which gets beyond Gus Hall's narrow approach — no.

INT: In regard to the internal structure of the CP — the issue of discipline, dissent, and democracy — Gus Hall's CRISIS book says, "we are unique in that we speak of our weaknesses publicly...."

HEALEY: (laughter)

INT: "...but the problem is how to examine things critically, without creating a platform for the enemy agent." (18) At the same time, POLITICAL AFFAIRS says of Al Richmond's book that it is "fundamentally anti-Party, from the cesspool of capitalist ideology," and that it violated a "standing decision that all leading Communists work with the Party on writing books." (19) What is the state of discipline, dissent, and democracy in the Party today?

HEALEY: There is less debate in the Party today than at any time in its history. There never was a significant continuity of challenge; when one saw it most was at a particular crisis. When Gene Dennis gave a speech in 1956 entitled "The Communists Take a New Look," for the first time a Party leader was criticizing the line of the Party. Always before it was said that the line was right, but it got distorted in being carried out. This was the first time a leader said, "we were wrong, the estimates were wrong."

Well, the reaction in the Party was very unfavorable. Party members want the feeling that the Party is always right. A leader

can be wrong, but the Party is always right. Since 1960 there has been a total paucity of criticism. Total. The structure of the Party does not lend itself to real intra-Party democracy because only the leadership has access to the membership. As a result, what people like me had to say in dissent would never be reported back to the other state organizations of the Party; it was never printed. You will never see any criticism of leadership in POLITICAL AFFAIRS. The Party structure is based on the definition of democratic centralism from the Stalin period, never Lenin's definition. That's not true internationally; the Italian party prints the debates among its leadership in the party newspaper. Another thing: until the '75 convention, conventions were supposed to be held every two years. Now it's every four or five years. Very nice and convenient; you don't even need to worry about having to account for your "stewardship" to the Party.

Everything I'm saying about the Party, I'd say double and triple about the Socialist Workers' Party: on intra-party democracy, on maneuvering; I don't want to add my voice to what I consider one-sided and distorted criticism of the CP. It does lend itself to oversimplification on my part. The SWP has a formal recognition of the right to factions, but god help those who make use of that formal right. According to one of their discussion bulletins, the leadership of the Berkeley branch of the YSA was challenging the national leadership. They simply floated in fifty kids from all over the country to Berkeley and took possession of the chapter and threw out the dissenters.

INT: Is there any difference in the CP between the older and younger members on this question of Party democracy? The older ones, after having survived the Smith Act, Khrushchev's Crimes of Stalin speech, the whole Dennis period reconsideration, then the switch to Gus Hall's orthodoxy, then Prague in '68 — anyone who would stay in for that entire period is obviously not about to start complaining now. But what about the younger people?

HEALEY: They don't know that things were ever any different. In California there's a small group of younger people who are critical of policy and the line, but most young members just take it for granted that this is the proper Leninist way to function. The older people who supported our position in the fight and who stayed, first, find it harder to fight, and finally, not only don't fight but embrace these current policies. Partly that is psychological. You don't want to stand out alone. You want to be good. And there is a need for that god-awfully wonderful feeling that all the sects depend on, that your leadership knows the truth, that your organization is the best.

INT: Al Richmond says he always had the feeling, "How could I be right, and this tremendous world organization be wrong?"

HEALEY: Exactly. Or you have another justification: first, you can't leave because that separates you from the world communist movement; second, you have to accommodate yourself to what is

if you're going to survive. And gradually of course you lose the ability to be critical.

INT: But the Southern California organization was different during your "stewardship." What were the differences, and why did they exist?

HEALEY: The main reason was that we were 3,000 miles away from them. How we loved that distance, you can't imagine. There was always a little bit more democracy in the California Party, a little more challenge. Some of that came from the history here, from the tradition of the old IWW, from a greater rank-and-file sentiment. I don't want to exaggerate; it wasn't a major difference, but it was a different style of work.

When our differences started here, in 1950, around the estimates of the five-to-midnight line, we never thought we were challenging the line of the Party. (20) We were questioning what we thought was a particular tactical question. And it certainly never occurred to us to challenge the leadership of the Party. Because we in California were far more involved in mass work and far better known publicly than any other districts, we had built up an acceptance within our Party membership of the policy questions that we were fighting on.

I gave a speech at the 1966 district convention in which for the first time I criticized the national leadership clearly and sharply on the question of the Soviet Union. The convention accepted that report with only one dissenting vote out of 200 people. The National Office just went berserk over that, refused to allow it to be circulated in other districts, and then demanded that I withdraw the report. Of course I refused to. They held a meeting of the National Secretariat. I had not done what was customary — you always start out with a tribute to the Party membership that had stayed fast in the period of the McCarran Act. That was attacked: how dare I denigrate the role of Gus Hall?

We held firm. We fought over the youth policy, over SDS. Gus's whole line was that they were a bunch of petty-bourgeois radicals. Who cares? Who needs these students? And consequently the Party set up the Du Bois clubs, which we opposed. We said our main effort should be to build the SDS. We and Boston were the only two areas to have even a few young communists in SDS. On the black liberation struggle, my god, what battles we had on that. Front pages of the WORKER under Jim Jackson's editorship denounced Malcolm X as the most outrageous and vile individual; we had terrible fights over that. Up to 1968, our position was supported overwhelmingly by this district.

But with the invasion of Czechoslovakia, that changed. Partly our own moods changed too. We might have been able to maintain some kind of sanctuary for our position in this district if I had stayed in office along with the others who shared our position. But I was totally fed up. On the one hand, I no longer wanted to go back

to National Committee meetings, which I considered a sheer waste of time. Gus Hall makes a three-hour speech, the National Committee members get ten minutes to talk, they can talk on anything that hits their head, there is never any debate on specific questions. Those meetings are simply applause sections for Gus. I just couldn't tolerate the idea of going back to any more of those. And even as far as the district here was concerned, I had for a long time wanted to be relieved of the post because 25 years is just too long for people in the leadership. Before I had been Chairman of the Party I had been the Org. Sec. I thought it was time for young leadership to take over. Those two moods coincided, and I left my post.

INT: You've said you thought today's left was reiterating the development of the CP. What did you mean?

HEALEY: That's particularly true with the groups that call themselves the New Communist Movement. They consider the heroic period of the Party to be the period up to 1935, up to the 7th World Congress and the United Front. They totally ignore the world situation of that period, and the doctrine of social fascism; they take the organizational forms of 1930-35 as the ones to emulate. They take what was our most sectarian period, and glorify it.

Today I read policy statements of groups that pledge always to be anti-revisionist, as if you can erect a force field around your organization that will guard against this terrible sin. It's just nonsense. Most of the groups that proclaim this will never have to worry; because they will never be in enough contact with large groups of people where the pressure arises to accommodate their long-term position to their short-term needs.

Another thing these groups do, which is equally devastating, is to take the concepts of that period as their bible, as universally applicable. For example, democratic centralism: this phrase is used by OL and RU in a more politically deceptive way than we ever used it in the thirties. They have a preposterous amount of secrecy, which is a great way to cloak bureaucracy. I have a copy of OL's manual on illegal work that forbids a member of OL in one district from writing to a member of OL in another district without the permission of the district organizer, in the guise of security. If people can't contact other members, then there's no way to fight what's going on in the Party.

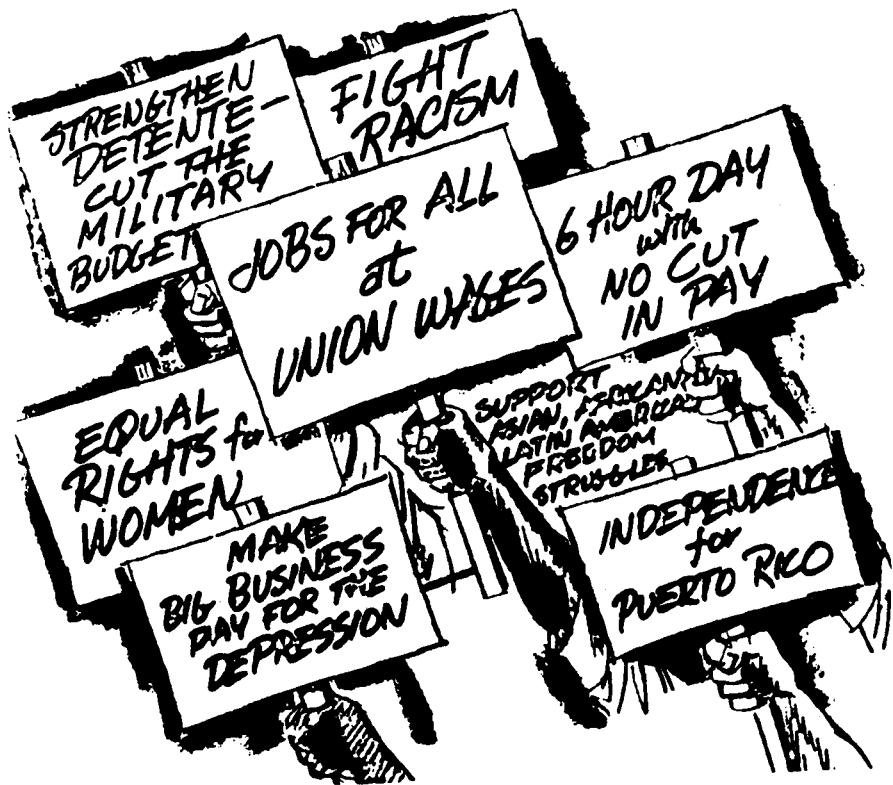
More basically what they do is to take Lenin's concept of what is to be done, written for a particular country under particular conditions of illegality, and make that their handbook, totally ignoring first his statements within that book that what he is writing has nothing to do, for instance, with the German party, where there are legal trade unions, where the Party can operate legally, where the Party leadership can be judged publicly and elected publicly; they totally ignore his statements in his 1907 article, "Preface to 12 Years," where he re-examines "What Is to Be Done," and says

it was written for a particular period, to deal with a particular phenomenon, it's not intended to be for all time. (21) That is just ignored by all of them. They also ignore — and this includes the Trotskyists — the difference between Leninism and Stalinism. What is required to rescue Lenin is an archaeological expedition, and that isn't to say that Lenin was right all the time anyway. For these organizations, their definition of "what is to be done" is totally defined by Stalin. The SWP's concepts of how a party should function are as Stalinist as those of the New Communist Movement.

My sorrow is that, not just with the CP, but with all of the organizations — SWP, RU, OL — you get dedicated young people who are going to be taken down a dead-end street. I don't believe you can build a relevant revolutionary movement on old dogma.

INT: Your membership in NAM suggests you think it offers a different trajectory.

HEALEY: Totally. And it is a great headache in NAM that it's so totally different. When Gramsci said that mechanical Marxism's hold as a faith is the most powerful thing, he sure knew what he was talking about. When you join any of those other organizations, including the Fourth International groups, you accept the idea of the infallibility of their policies. Without any question, the backward working class is someday going to recognize you as the vanguard, the definitive leader. It's much easier to work in an organization where you have that kind of faith. You don't have to think about questions all the time; you don't have to fight.



That's not true in NAM. In NAM, every structural change, every organizational change is as hotly debated as the major political questions. Whether or not you can build an organization that challenges and questions everything, I don't know. These other organizations can evoke a greater discipline and commitment. When you know the truth, you're much more willing to give up your time to build the organization. But when an organization says, "If something better comes along, we're prepared to join it, we don't consider ourselves infallible, we don't think we have the definitive word," well — you're not so sure you're going to sacrifice. For NAM to find and develop a way to build an organization that doesn't rely on these tools is still the challenge before it, and I don't know that it will be able to do it.

But I simply cannot understand the people who worked in the YCL or the Communist Party who have feelings of bitterness or regret. I have only a great feeling of gratitude that those of us who were in the Party in those years acquired knowledge that we never could have gotten any other way. My respect for, and love for, the thousands of people with whom I worked in the Communist Party, including many who are still in it, is a strong part of my feeling today. The visions that motivated me when I was young remain the same. The real challenge to people is to see that the organization is only a vehicle to reach the objective of socialism, that loyalty is to that objective, not to a particular organization.

1. Gus Hall, *THE CRISIS OF CAPITALISM AND THE FIGHT BACK* (New York: International Publishers, 1976).

2. Gus Hall, "The Elections and After," *POLITICAL AFFAIRS*, November 1976, p. 4.

3. Draft Main Political Resolution for the 21st National Convention, Communist Party, U.S.A., Feb. 1, 1975.

4. "The Elections and After."

5. The best known of these was the Scottsboro case, which began in 1931: See Dan T. Carter, *SCOTTSBORO: A TRAGEDY OF THE AMERICAN SOUTH* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), esp. ch. 5, "Red on Black." Another CP campaign of the thirties was organized around the defense of a leader of the Alabama Sharecroppers Union; his story is told in Theodore Rosengarten, *ALL GOD'S DANGERS: THE LIFE OF NATE SHAW* (New York: Knopf, 1974), part of which first appeared as "Shoot-out at Reeltown," by Dale Rosen and Theodore Rosengarten, *RADICAL AMERICA* 6 (1972), pp. 65-84. For an examination of its political aspects, see Jonathan M. Wiener, Essay Review

of ALL GOD'S DANGERS, in JOURNAL OF SOCIAL HISTORY 10 (1976), pp. 170-178.

6. PEOPLE'S WORLD, Jan. 1, 1977.

7. This period is analyzed in Stanley Aronowitz, FALSE PROMISES: THE SHAPING OF AMERICAN WORKING-CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1974), pp. 239-247.

8. Joseph R. Starobin's argument is in his AMERICAN COMMUNISM IN CRISIS, 1943-1957 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), pp. 219-221. See also Eugene Dennis, "The Communists Take a New Look," (1956). The Party took its leadership underground in the belief that McCarthyism was the beginning of fascism and the active preparation for a new global war. The underground period lasted until 1955.

9. PEOPLE'S WORLD, Jan. 1, 1977.

10. Gus Hall, "Main Report to the Central Committee Meeting," Aug. 28, 1976 (mimeo).

11. PEOPLE'S WORLD, Dec. 18, 1976.

12. 1969 New Program of the Communist Party USA, Second Draft, Revised.

13. Henry Winston, "Spain in My Heart," POLITICAL AFFAIRS, Oct., 1976. For a different view, see Temma Kaplan, "Turmoil in Spain: The Communist Party and the Mass Movement," RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 11, No. 2 (March-April 1977), pp. 53-72.

14. Healey returned to condemn Czech repression in March, 1977, when she and 14 other leftists sent an open letter to Czech leaders. It said: "We who fight for socialism in our land are shamed and crippled by the violations of socialist legality in your land.... Do not tell us your internal affairs are none of our business. During the McCarthy period, when we ourselves were jailed, black-listed, and harassed, it was international outrage that helped us regain our rights." See LOS ANGELES TIMES, March 2, 1977.

15. Henry Winston, "Christmas in Hanoi," PEOPLE'S WORLD, Jan. 8, 1977.

16. Draft Main Political Resolution for the 21st National Convention, Communist Party USA, Feb. 1, 1975.

17. Angela Davis, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY (New York: Random House, 1974), pp. 187-188.

18. Gus Hall, CRISIS, p. 91.

19. POLITICAL AFFAIRS 8 (June, 1973), pp. 8-9.

20. Healey was a leading critic of the five-to-midnight line, even though at the time she was in the L.A. County jail awaiting trial for "conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by armed force." See Al Richmond, A LONG VIEW FROM THE LEFT (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972), pp. 312-313.

21. V. I. Lenin, COLLECTED WORKS, v. 5, p. 347; v. 13, pp. 94, 100; see also v. 10, p. 20.

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BEAUTY PARLOR: A WOMEN'S SPACE

Phyllis Ewen









"I always say, when you have your hair done and you got on a nice pair of shoes, you're all dressed up."

— Betty Kelly, 76, Cambridge, Mass.

The Beauty Ritual is a fact of everyday life for most American women. We are asked constantly to present an image of "who" we are. The time and care we give to this preparation indicates its extreme social importance. The conscious development of self-presentation is an attempt to cover social vulnerability. We use appearance to command personal authority where we lack social power.

Hair, like clothing, is a cultural symbol. And because it is part of our bodies, hair is seen to represent, more closely, the Self. Hair, like the rest of a woman's presentation, becomes a political statement: at the same time an expression of social position and a manifestation of individual identity. We recognize social class, race and age in a hairstyle. We intuit sexuality and personal style.

Women have internalized the social meanings of appearance and we have an intense relationship to how we look — it says to others what we feel about ourselves. Older women spoke to me of dignity and pride. Younger women about expressing who they are.

In this essay I am exploring what goes on behind the scenes, the Preparation. The Beauty Ritual can be experienced as creative expression, sensual self-absorption, a time for letting go, or a routine "taking care of myself." It is also something women do with and for each other. The photographs record a ceremony, familiar to me since childhood when I accompanied my mother each week to the beauty parlor. *Ceremonial Robes*: plastic bibs patterned with kitsch, cotton dressing jackets, winding sheets; *Ritual Headdresses*: rollers, pincurls, perm-rods, henna mud packs, shiny foil wings, hairdryers; *Ceremonial Tools, Anointing Oils*. Seen in this way, objects of beauty technology become anthropological artifacts for studying a specific time and place.





"We were brought up on the farm and didn't notice much how people looked, they were your friends, that's all. Those were horse and wagon days and we couldn't come into town every fifteen minutes to find out about the latest styles. When I was a little girl I had long hair until I was about fourteen. My mother parted it and put it in two thick braids, way down to where I could sit on them. When I left home to work in Lynn, Massachusetts, my sister-in-law thought I should go to a beautician and get a "Marcel", that's a curl done with a hot iron. And that's what they still give me."

— Mary Barnes, 88 Camden, Maine

The beauty parlor is a recent historical phenomenon, although hairdressing is an ancient craft. These commercial establishments grew up suddenly in the 1920's as "bobbed hair" came to symbolize the "New Woman". Hairdressing, which had been done in the home for thousands of years — for the wealthy by household servants, for most women by mothers, sisters and friends — has in the last fifty years become part of the market economy. Women's productive and social lives have changed drastically since industrial capitalism, and the spread of beauty parlors reflects forms of contemporary American life. We schedule time and pay, for rest, for community, for personal upkeep.

The new trend is toward large hierarchically-organized beauty salons. Like fast food restaurants, beauty chains are opening in suburban shopping centers and giant malls. but most shops are still small local businesses. The front parlor of a neighbor's home, in rural America and many small towns, is outfitted with dryers, reminding us of the beauty shop's origins as a home industry. In these small parlors and in working class urban neighborhoods, most hairdressers are women; the shops often owned by women. Famous hairdressers, like famous chefs, are men. But hairdressing, like preparing food, is still done primarily by women.

"I don't go for that co-educational bit. I have nothing against men having a permanent, but they should have their own place for doing it. Women do tend to talk a little vulgar; more than they would at a social tea with a man present. With a man in the salon we wouldn't say some of the jokes we say to each other, we'd be watching ourselves."

— Peggy Ciolfi, 45, Rockland, Maine

Entering a beauty parlor I am aware of crossing into a special kind of territory; one that is overwhelmingly female. The pace, the talk, the movement and gestures all define a women's space. For all its commercialism, it retains traditional elements of women's culture, and as such, is an important social institution. It is especially important as it provides one of the few places where women of all ages may meet. The parameters for social interaction may be set by forces outside of our control, but the space becomes inhabited by people who transform it into their own. It is more than a place where images are created. It makes time for social interaction and personal space.

It is a place to find out what's been happening in the community, to analyze political events, to discuss childrearing, birth control, sex and work. Recipes are exchanged, advice offered, confidences shared. The relationship between many women and their hairdressers is often of an intimate nature; long-term and trusting. In a small beauty shop on the block where I live, women sit with their neighbors over coffee, children play, members of the local girls' basketball team plan strategy, and people leave messages and packages for one another. Like the grocery store on the corner or the playground across the street, it is a neighborhood hangout.

Caring for other people is the daily routine for most women. Time spent at the hairdresser's is an opportunity to be taken care of in turn. It is a cure, a laying-on-of-hands. The sensual pleasure of having one's hair washed and set, scalp gently massaged, hair brushed and combed, treated with lotion or henna. Time under the dryer may be the only time a woman has to sit, read, or relax with her thoughts. It is a time for giving up of control, for being receptive, for being touched. This time is a brief escape from adult responsibility, a respite from the reality of day-to-day hard work, a trip back to childhood and being mothered. It is a reminder of the nurturing of adolescent friendships among girls. It is a hold-over from the time when women cared for the community's health needs; delivered each other's babies.

The beauty parlor is a space in which to unwind; a space to fantasize or reminisce, to dream.





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Photo by Jerry Berndt

POPULAR POWER IN PORTUGAL, 1976

Joe Martin

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

Since my stay in Portugal last September and October of 1976, important trends in the balance of political forces have come into bloom which were then only germinating, on the Left and in Portuguese society in general. I believe most of the material in the following article is still relevant and that these new developments may be better understood in the context of what was happening then. The first of these developments is the clear consolidation of the pro-western Soares government. That government is by no means a stable

one, but a former source of crises has been relieved. Until quite recently, western governments and capital were holding back on any kind of really supportive investment in the regime. They were waiting it out, observing the fate of their temporarily threatened interests in Portugal, saying in short, "The burden of proof is on you, Mr. Soares." As they waited the national debt reached 3.2 billion dollars and inflation leapt to 20% in 1976.

But Soares has demonstrated his loyalty in a myriad of ways. NATO has been welcomed in with open arms and large troop commitments made. The de-occupations of much cooperativized land (as reported in the article) are now complete. Anti-strike legislation and an emphasis on discipline in industry are among the economic strategies. The PIDE's (Caetano's Gestapo) are released from prison and Antonio Spínola has been accepted back into the country despite his involvement in the Rightist coup attempt of March 11, 1975. There have been no further nationalizations.

So now the government, although in a weak economic position at home, is at least underwritten by western capital. What was a burning revolutionary situation in Portugal has been gutted by a party which claimed to have emerged in that revolution.

The effect of this consolidation on the strategy of groups that are trying to spark Portugal's revolutionary torch anew is hard to determine. The "councils" clearly do not function at the level of the period before the so-called "Leftist putsch" in November 1975 when the "moderates" consolidated. But the GDUP's (Grupos Dinamizados de a Unidade Popular) which were assembled around the presidential candidacy of Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho and the revolutionary strategem of the autonomous workers' and neighborhood councils, were able to match their 17% vote of June 1976 in this winter's municipal elections, while the Communist Party returned to 17% from their June '76 fiasco of 7%. The combined vote of the far-left groups and the CP, in other words, was significantly greater than in June '76.

The GDUP's of course don't stress the significance of results in elections set up by a bourgeois government for a bourgeois government. But it may be that some lack of forward progress can be attributed to internal contradictions in the Leftist alliance. Although a great number of members are unaffiliated to a party, at least three parties play a prominent role: The PRP-BR (Proletarian Revolutionary Party), MES (Left Socialist Movement), and the UDP (Popular Democratic Union). Interparty rivalry, intensified by conflicting ideas of party vanguardism, is an alienating source of tension for the non-affiliates. The UDP in particular, a group much influenced by Maoism and possibly the largest of these parties, has fed this tension by statements to the effect that it is at the helm of the Popular Unity movement.

Such contradictions have always existed within the revolutionary Left. They are perhaps inflamed by the pressure generated by the reemergence of open fascist groupings. Isabel do Carmo of the PRP-BR stated in an interview, "If you don't have a genuinely socialist Portugal with the workers in power... if it doesn't happen by 1977, one year, I'm sure you will have fascism. The economic situation is bad... they can move very quickly to a regime with autocratic power."

James Mittelman, in the March 1977 issue of *Monthly Review*, asserts, "There is no mistaking it. The military coup had the mission of saving the ruling class from defeat." With the advantage of hindsight, the Left in Portugal is shedding many illusions clung to during the revolution of carnations period. But still we must wait to see how Portugal's Left will handle its inner contradictions.

You only have liberty
When you have peace, bread,
Health, education, and habitation...

You only have liberty
When you can decide and make changes,
When the people own what they produce.

From "Pode Algium Ser Quen Hao E?"
Sergio Godino

"Chile" is like a new word in Portuguese.

One evening I go with friends to see a showing of the French film "It's Raining in Santiago" at a Lisbon theater. As is the case with most entertainment art forms in Portugal, we had to reserve our tickets days in advance. The film, partially based on the testimony of a French correspondent, portrays the brutal destruction of Salvador Allende's "peaceful road to socialism," and spares no abhorrent details. As Pinochet's fascist troops move in on a factory and begin the summary executions of workers whose defenses have crumbled under the treads of American-made tanks, I ask for a translation from a friend seated next to me. She doesn't hear my question, but stares unmoving at the screen.

A woman begins gasping at a far side of the theater. People fan her with programs, but the gasps soon turn to wails. She goes limp and begins sliding down in her chair. Several people move quickly to carry her out of the theater. I can hear someone sobbing in back of me. A moment later a man runs from his seat and up the aisle to the back exit, screaming "Death to fascism."

The Portuguese people lived in the clench of fascism for fifty years. This film says something which in Portugal doesn't have to be said. Yet "Chile" is almost a new word in Portuguese, signifying much more than simply a country on the map.

* * * *

Although a resurgence of fascism is their first worry, the members of Portugal's revolutionary Left are not concerned simply with the growing strength of the Right under the now entrenched "Socialist" party government. They point an accusing finger at the "reformist organizations" which, during the turbulent events after April 25, 1974, offered socialist rhetoric in behalf of non-revolutionary goals. The accusation in short: they aided and abetted the "recuperation of capitalism." The organizations they accuse would of course include the "Socialist" Party, which now forms the minority government. The charge is also pointed squarely at the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP).

The PCP was clearly the largest, most active and durable part of the resistance under fascism. It was during those last six or seven years of the fascist regime's life that various movements emerged through breaks with the PCP, discouraged by the Party's



Photo by Jerry Berndt

inability to take decisive action or even to broach the idea of socialism. At that time anti-fascist and anti-colonial groups began voicing their disillusionment with fighting the fascists on their own terms, the so-called elections which the PCP-led opposition relied on so heavily. Isabel do Carmo, who led one of these break-away groups, the PRP-BR (Proletarian Revolutionary Party-Revolutionary Brigades) had this to say about the period :

“At this time, at the beginning of the Caetano government (1970), there were legalist illusions in the reformist organization. At that time we put forward...the problem of the use of violence to finish fascism. That was the first question. Also, we put forward the question of socialist revolution in Portugal...and the CP didn't discuss these problems.”

After the 25th of April the Communist Party experienced a rapid growth from about 10,000 to 45,000 by summer 1974, and by 1975 they achieved a membership of 100,000. The PCP played a relatively strong role in the series of five provisional governments from 1974 to 1976 under the auspices of the Armed Forces Movement (MFA), and often responded at least to a degree to pressure from the Left and the radical “captains movement” within the MFA. In the summer of 1975 the PCP even participated briefly in a coalition, the Revolutionary United Front (FUR) with MDP (its former electoral front during the fascist years, now an ally but a separate party) as well as groups it termed “ultra-left” or “adventurist.” That is: PSP (Socialist Popular Front), PRP-BR, and MES (Left Socialist Movement). The coalition was inherently unstable, and the PCP was soon voted out of the coalition by the other groups.

Despite the differences, many people on the revolutionary Left felt a terrible loss when the FUR broke with the PCP. It was explained to me thusly by a PRP-BR member: “We feel there is a base who have been with the Party (PCP) for years, who still believe the Party will bring them to communism.” No doubt there were many who wondered if it were possible to drive forward to socialism without the fuel of the Communist Party, even if its coordinates were completely off target.

Although the fifth government of Vasco Goncalves, during the heyday of the PCP in the MFA, pushed through many vital reforms such as the nationalizing of 50% of industry and all but three of the banks, the other groups of the Left remained unconvinced. They pointed out that the PCP and Goncalves were repeating an old pattern, “socializing from the top” without relying on the “autonomous organizations of the workers in the bases.” In fact, some charged the PCP with conciliation with the Right parties just to ensure its own power. They cited the lack of support for workers occupying the factories and the land, and for the workers' and

neighborhood commissions. They also pointed to such instances as the forced dismantling of worker-run media such as the newspaper REPUBLICA and Radio Renaissance, which the PCP did not oppose in the sixth government.

In addition to the charge of reformism, the Leftists began to level another charge at the Communists. The crime: autocracy. Many in the FUR, Robeiro Mendes of MES told me, believed "the experience of Stalinism has confused the giving of political direction with bureaucratic control over mass organs." It was probably in reaction to this "experience" that the GDUPs (Dynamizing Groups of Popular Unity) originally decided to operate on the basis of "by-passing" parties. This coalition of the groups of the old FUR and other individuals, which united initially around the "candidacy" program of Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, has stressed also the autonomy of the councils and commissions.

* * * *

Fernanda P's mother was a teacher in one of the northern regions. According to Fernanda, like many teachers who had expected a go-ahead in revamping the educational system away from traditional lines, she found only frustration during the fifth and sixth governments in 1975. It was a time when the Communist Party held sway over the "political transformation." But as was the case in other industries and social-service institutions, the structure of the bureaucracy was not changed. What occurred was a replacing of the old supervisors and bureaucrats of the dead fascist regime with PCP members. Many of these people had been Party members only several months during the Communist Party's vast leap in membership in 1974-1975. Suddenly it became a social advantage to be a member of the Communist Party. It became less difficult to join, and membership made it a bit easier to ascend to a "good job."

"The teachers in the North wanted to change things," says Fernanda. "But there were CP members sitting with their feet up on big desks. My mother and the others wanted to know what to do, but all these people would tell them was, 'Just wait. We're waiting for word from Lisbon.'"

Thus a "revolution from above" tried to consolidate itself in Portuguese society. After the so-called "Leftist uprising" was crushed on November 25th, 1975, the new government simply removed these new supervisors, and suddenly workers in social institutions all over Portugal saw the faces of their old "more experienced" supervisors from fascist times once again.

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At Communist Party national headquarters in Lisbon I speak with Domingos Loupes, press representative for the PCP. He pulls me out of the hubbub of the reception area with its coffee bar, "Octavio Pato — Presidente" posters, and publicity for an "Avante Festa." We talk in a closed room at a long table lined with chairs, a meeting room of some sort. As we begin, he explains the PCP's relationship to the new government of Mario Soares.

"We think this government is trying to restore capitalism in Portugal, therefore we do not support it. We do support its positive measures, but the PCP will struggle against any of its negative measures causing the workers to pay for the crises of capitalism."

He says the votes for the Socialist Party indicate a "mathematical majority" are "Left," but that these numbers need to be transformed into a "political majority." But does he believe that conditions are ripe for socialism in Portugal?

"We need a democratic revolution in Portugal that creates conditions to advance to socialism. Liquidation of international monopolies is a condition Portugal must meet to advance towards socialism."

But does the concept of "popular power" play a role in the PCP's program?

"The PCP," he says, "supports for Portugal democracy with complete freedom and democratic reforms to liquidate the economic and political power of the monopolies. That is, we want the broadest democracy everywhere, freedom of religion, a free press, freedom to strike, and also the freedom to liquidate the freedom of the monopolies to exploit our people."

"The PCP has no model for socialism in Portugal. No schema. Life is stronger than models. Socialism has no schema for us... it is built upon Marx, Engels, and Lenin and the application of these ideas to the political circumstances of Portugal."

He seems to anticipate that my questions are leading to a comparison with the "ultra Left."

"Our party is not an adventurist party. Our activity is led under a scientific theory.... We support the structures that the people desire here. But the workers' organizations, the commissions and so on, they would not have been possible without the Communist Party's involvement. You know, they already existed before the 25th of April."

"We can maintain some of the structures that are commonly used by workers in Europe, and workers' control. But they must all point the same way: the consolidation of our revolution and moving on the road to socialism."

It is striking to me that he is talking about "consolidating" the revolution, while the people of the Popular Unity (GDUPs) insist that what was left of any revolution was crushed on the 25th of November. I ask him how he would respond to accusations from these groups that the PCP is reformist. Domingos Loupes laughs at the question.

"We are accused of being reformist, Leninist, revolutionary, everything! Helmut Schmidt in Germany calls us the genuine Leninist party of Europe. The Left says that we are reformist. We can't be concerned. We apply Marxism-Leninism in our work, and we are the revolutionary vanguard of the working class in Portugal.

"Those who call us reformist," he says, pointing an accusing finger, "if you are attentive you will see that they are from small and medium bourgeoisie and they can't accept the hegemony of the working class in the Portuguese revolution. They want socialism in their own image. Like they hold up a mirror and see their own face and call it socialism."

He does not have much to say about the results of the vote in which the GDUPs received 17% of the vote and the PCP only 7% (the June presidential election).

"If we represent nothing," he says with his palms up in frustration, "why is everyone talking about us? Why is Helmut Schmidt so preoccupied with us? And so many others if we are a minority? Or is it possible...?"

He cuts off dramatically.

I ask what the attitude of the PCP is toward Portuguese national big business.

"If they are willing to respect the law and the constitution, they can make much money here. They will do quite well. If they try to take all of the money of Portugal for themselves, they will be making a serious mistake. But we can negotiate with them. And if they choose they can make a lot of money here."

Big business in a socialist society? I ask what he envisions life to be like in a socialist Portugal.

"The end of exploitation of man by man, an end to depression and repression, freedom, peace, work, and the national independence of Portugal.

It sounds good, but often so do the campaign promises of any politician or group who needs to garner quick support in order to get to a seat of power, and then must deal with concrete and painful realities. But did other groups, the revolutionary Left for one, propose anything different for the future, anything that sounds good but at the same time real in a socially and economically devastated Portugal?

* * * *

The organs of popular power, referred to by people on the Left as "the autonomous organizations," can be pretty well divided into four groups: the village councils, the factory councils, the soldiers' committees, and the moradores' (squatters') commissions. (We will examine the agrarian cooperatives later.) Although many of them had their origins in the years of resistance against fascism, they didn't come into bloom with clearly defined political roles until after the 25th of April. (9)

The councils in Portugal are supposed to carry through the aspirations of the workers in both political and economic spheres. They often take a role in economic struggles that was at one time reserved only for the syndicates (trade unions). All of them are supposed to function upon principles of direct democracy. There are meetings of entire communities or factories which occur periodically, but generally six or seven officers are elected to direct the work of the commission. If members have an issue or a grievance they think is important, they must get a specified number of people to support them, and they can then ask the commission or council for a "plenario" to discuss and perhaps take action. The councils unite into central councils to which they all send elected representatives which are intended to be active political bodies preparing and pushing forward to the revolutionary transformation.

The principle of being able to recall leaders is vital. The officers of a council or commission can be recalled at a mass meeting if the commission is felt to be inadequately pursuing the interests of the community.

* * * *

THE "EMERGENCY MEETING ON THE HOUSING SITUATION"

GDUPs held an "emergency meeting" on housing in Bareiro on September 17th.

Due to the crises in housing, thousands upon thousands of housing units were occupied by homeless families in the urban areas of Portugal in 1974-75. They took over units that builders were allowing to stand empty in hopes that prices would go up. Over eighty thousand flats were taken over by the poor who became known as the "moradores." These takeovers were encouraged by the Left, and during most of the first two years these people who had never had real houses or flats before were allowed to hold their new homes. But in order to defend their positions and contribute to the revolution, the Moradores Commissions (Comissoes de Moradores) were formed alongside the factory councils and the soldiers' committees. They were one more grass-roots manifestation of "popular power."

Bareiro is a working-class town in one of the most industrialized sections of Portugal. It is on a peninsula about 35 minutes outside of Lisbon by car. It is here that the Communist Party had its greatest organized strength during the years of fascism. In the last elections, though, many of the PCP's votes in Bareiro went to Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, candidate of the GDUPs.

There are all types and ages in the room. Young and middle-aged workers, older women in modest clothes, children, a few student types. About a hundred people have come together to dis-

cuss the issues. At the front of the room sits a panel of five. In back of them is hung a red banner with a smiling portrait of Otelo in its center.

A man by the name of Hipolito, a member of the CNPUP (Provisional National Committee of the Popular Unity), is chairing. He opens the discussion by speaking in broad terms about the function of the Popular Unity movement, and condemns the Soares government for its cooperation with capitalists and landlords. Two other representatives of GDUPs speak, and then a representative from a study group on the housing situation gives a presentation of the relevant facts and statistics. A woman on the panel representing AIL (Lisbon Tenants Association) also speaks. Then the floor is open for discussion.

A moustachioed worker in the back of the room states angrily that the new housing laws implemented by the Socialist Party government work against the tenants. He says the new law allows the landlords to raise rents, sweeping aside what minimum rent control already existed. He wants to know what can be done. What can people do against these measures?

One of the GDUPs' members on the panel, a young fellow in a black beard, responds. He says the first thing to be done is to support the moradores to maintain the tens of thousands of occupations of housing. "If we allow the authorities to put people out," he says, "the rent will certainly go up." He explains that the builders and the landlords will leave apartments empty and wait for prices to rise due to the pressure of the demand.

A young worker in the center of the room says he is about to be married and has no place to live. He asserts bitterly that this poses a problem for newlyweds. There are some giggles in response to his animated disgust at his plight.

A woman, fiftyish, rises from her chair. Angrily she complains that she is not getting enough help in her battle to keep her apartment. "The moradores commission is isolated from the people here," she complains. "The authorities have been trying to kick me out, and the commission has given me no help. I went to them and they've done nothing."

Another even older woman, holding a child in her arms, agrees. She too is a moradore, and has found that the same commission in Lavradia (a part of Bareiro) was "not listening to the needs of the people." Hipolito answers that it is now up to her and others who feel the same to give the necessary support to each other and try to recall the six elected officials of the commission. They should insist, he says, on having responsive leaders.

After a final animated hour of open discussion, Hipolito ends by urging that everyone "help to organize on all levels" of Portuguese life. "We must move forward, we must continue to organize and strengthen our movement, or face a fate like that of Chile or the other Latin American countries."

The meeting breaks up at 12:30 am. People had already been edging out at 11:30. The panel, friends and participants from the meeting are engaged in mini-debates around the front table.

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COOPERATIVES — POPULAR POWER IN AGRARIAN REFORM

In early October 1976, the government announced that it was sending troops into Alentejo (the southern region of Portugal) to "de-occupy" some of the lands. By winter this operation should be completed. Although some lands will, at least for the moment, remain in the hands of the rural workers, it means that the land-reform process will grind to a halt about two years after it began.

During the days of 1974 and 1975, when it was thought that the momentum was leading ever-leftward toward socialist transformation, the revolutionary Left used structures the government allowed them to set up in the countryside to nurture popular-power organizations. In other words, they intended to bite the hand that fed them. Working sixteen hours a day among the people of the farmlands, the organizers put together dozens of sessions and meetings in every region and every village to promote organization that worked "from the bottom up." "From the beginning," says Mari Luiz Pinto, an agrarian-reform activist, "our idea was to help the workers construct their cooperatives because their cooperatives gave them independence from the state. We thought it would give them more status and power. After the fifth government of Goncalves fell and the sixth didn't organize any expropriations, the people began to occupy the land." The organizers didn't like the looks of what was happening in the reshuffled government and encouraged the farm workers in these actions, fearing that the new government would not even expropriate lands already judged eligible for expropriation. "We told the people," says Mari Luiz, "it was better to occupy quickly while it was still legal and pressure the new government to expropriate." Eventually all the latifundios (great farms) in the districts of Santa Taren, Castello Branco, Port Alegere, and Lisbon were in the hands either of autonomous cooperatives or of UCPs, which are generally run by the syndicates.

Since that time there have been a lot of developments on the land, and relative success not only in creating viable forms of collective work, but also in production itself, which has gone up 20% since 1974. There are continuous comparisons made between the cooperatives, which are organized by the leftist agrarian-reform centers, and the UCPs, which are run by the syndicates, and more often than not the Communist Party. Representatives are sent in by the syndicates with the rationale that it will boost efficiency to have expertise at the helm. The cooperatives, on the other hand, are coordinated by "delegates" or "secretaries," but these are

Photo by Jerry Berndt



positions that arise out of the base; that is, they are elected by the workers' commission of the cooperative by direct vote. The UCPs began with the idea of wage differentials, but the Centers encouraged an equalization of wages for all workers, unskilled and semi-skilled together, and in most cases have managed to achieve that goal. But the radicals have not been able to stamp out every vestige of old attitudes, and were unable to rise over a familiar hurdle, which Mari Luiz describes almost apologetically.

"In the cooperative in Setubal all the men now have the same salary and all the women have the same salary, whether they are truck drivers or pickers. But, yes, the women accept a lower salary. It's so hard to change it. And we'd have to decrease men's salaries to raise the women's. Machismo is very strong." But to have equalized men's salaries even separately among men and women, she argues, "is a great step."

During the period of land reform there was no time for actual "communes" to develop, as had happened in Chile before the coup. I heard of only one instance in Portugal where cooperatives in an area had pulled together and had begun sharing machinery and re-

sources for their mutual benefit and had even gone so far as combining to produce certain products. But any moves toward communitization would appear to be growing much less likely with the financial vacuum that has developed due to the SP government's lack of support for land reform.

Even as the government moves toward its "moderate" "pluralistic" stance (pluralism in this context meaning that both big land owners and farm workers have a place in society), in many regions of the South there are increasing sentiments in favor of cooperativization. Word about the cooperatives has spread over district lines, and ideas of autogestion in the fields can be sowed in the head of a UCP farm worker in Beja by his brother working the croplands of Setubal in a cooperative. But resistance by the PCP to the "Leftist" approach has taken on intriguing forms. Mari Luiz recounts the events in Alentejo when the sixth government began to reorganize the Centers and curtail the agrarian reform in a pact signed by the PCP, the SP, and the PPD.

"We had a demonstration against the pact of the parties. The PCP began telling workers in their areas that it was a demonstration of reactionary organizers who dealt with the farmers. Workers in our area knew the facts, but the others didn't. When we arrived in Grandola the leaders of the PCP of the village received us at our MES meeting screaming 'Fascist! PPD!' They had some of the workers with them. . . . When the CP controlheros (controllers) met us at the steps of our meeting house, they tried to get their people to yell at us. But now the workers recognized us and they became very curious, because for the first time they saw it was we, going to our Party meeting. They stopped attacking us then. And I'll never forget an old woman — I suppose she's an old member of the CP — she came up and said: 'I don't understand. Two weeks ago you were the best people in the world. Now you are the enemy.' She was so confused."

Such surprise and confusion has been expressed by many people who admire the goals of the revolutionary Left, yet cling out of a tradition of loyalty to the Communist Party, the only instrument with which they could fight on their own behalf while living fifty years under fascism's grasp. This conflict between old loyalties and ideals was heightened by the PCP's signing of the "Three-Party Pact." The pact established a policy of reimbursement to the "family corporations" for the price of the land, coming from tax revenue, and created a standard whereby only farms of more than 700 hectares or 50,000 "points" (based on acreage and land utilization) could be expropriated. It is the principles set down in this pact which the Soares government cites as its mandate for the sending of troops to the South in October to begin de-occupations of many big farms to return them to private hands (promising the workers that if they don't resist, all lands that are eligible for expropriation will be . . . within a year.)

In the agrarian reform the people of the Popular Unity look at what a group stands for and practices, not what it calls itself. A "socialist" may stand for putting farms in the hands of "capitalists." A "communist" one might discover is opposed to communes (or even cooperatives). And although there are differences among those on the Left, the common denominator that binds them and sets them apart from the parties of the "Pact" is their unyielding stand that workers must control their movement, and soon production and society.

But these are all goals of the Left which they recognize can not exist or survive as "socialist islands" in a capitalist society. Already the land reform is facing reversals. This does not necessarily mean that the Socialist Party government will restore all the lands to capitalists and "family corporations." But they have the power to weaken, then blackmail, then co-opt the cooperatives. If they choose they can strangle even the highly successful cooperatives by withholding credit in the state-controlled banks. And even the best of them can be inserted into a capitalist economy by forcing them to become dependent on the middleman. An old form of exploitation will simply have been given a face lifting instead of being driven off. The capitalist "recuperation" serves to block any of the experiments Portugal's revolutionary Left have in their sights, and so it follows that the goal of "state power for the workers and the people" is the core of all their present organizing. It's grown clear that it is only the revolutionary Left that can propel revolution in Portugal. Whether the GDUPs (the Popular Unity) will survive to be the revolutionary front equal to the task, or if it will have to take some other form still remains to be seen. The advocates of popular power have revealed that they are divided in a good number of ways but are united in the opinion that there's very little time to squander.

And once again Mari Luiz makes the analogy which many in Portugal use to explain the urgency. The agrarian reform, she says, is like everything else. "Like the communes in Chile, if things don't move, the recuperation is done."

For this piece I made use of articles in various international and Portuguese newspapers and periodicals. In Portugal these include A TERRA (a political organ of the agrarian areas), REVOLUCAO (published by PRP-BR), VOZ DO POVO (published by the UDP), LUTA POPULAR (organ of the MRPP), AVANTE (published by the PCP), DIARIO POPULAR (Independent), PAGIMA UM (Independent), PODER POPULAR (published by MES), A LUTA CONTINUA (bulletin of the GDUPs), A LUTA (Independent), and DIARIO DE LISBON (Independent). Internationally these include the WASHINGTON POST, the NEW YORK TIMES, the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, AFTEN POSTEN (Oslo), DAGBLADET (Oslo), EL PAIS (Madrid), and EL NOTICIERO UNIVERSAL (Madrid).

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JOE MARTIN, a former editor of New Left Notes, is now a free lance journalist in Washington, D.C. He was in Portugal between August and October, 1976.

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Letters

(Editors' Note: We would like to encourage our readers to send us brief (maximum: 1000 words) responses to our articles and comments on important political issues for publication in this section. We will print as many as we can of those which seem of general interest to our readers.)

Dear Radical America:

The temptation to make sweeping comparisons between the crisis in Britain and Italy is nearly overwhelming, but ought to be cautiously exercised. The editorial introduction to your three surveys on the British and Italian left (RA, November 1976) bounds in where Marxist angels should fear to tread, and for the sake of some attractive schemata extracts an excessively gloomy perspective.

By singling out the Italian abortion campaign as the sole exception to a general defeat of independent working-class action, you inadvertently underestimate the importance of the Woman's Movement in Britain. Had Ellen Cantarow been reporting the National Abortion Campaign in Britain over the last two years, she might have drawn a strikingly similar picture. The resistance to James White's Private Member's Bill, which attempted to restrict the liberal abortion law of 1967, has seen a public engagement between the forces of sexual conservatism and the Women's Movement and its allies, the liberals in Parliament and the revolutionary socialists in the streets. This has become the biggest campaign on a woman's issue since the Suffrage movement, complete with massive demonstrations, backed by local direct action and petitioning in working-class localities, hospitals, factories. The campaign has also included soapbox oratory, street theater, and an International Tribunal in January with over 3,000 people present. Feminists have chained themselves to the altar in Westminster Abbey, and left-wing doctors invaded the British Medical Association's headquarters. The scale of activity is smaller here, and women's rights and sexual issues are still steered out of mainstream political debate as far as possible; whereas in Italy the abortion issue was clearly the historical monkey wrench in the historical compromise, landing in just the area the Communist Party is yielding to the Vatican and the Christian Democrats. But it would appear that the British campaign has been rather more successful in gaining the support of organized labor on the basis of "a woman's right to choose". This makes possible again the potential link between sexual self-determination of women and the movement for worker's control, suggested by the sexual radicals of the 1920s like Stella Browne, who first campaigned as a Feminist and a Communist for legal abortion in 1922 using the slogan "Our bodies are our own", and who argued that "birth control for women is no less essential than workshop control and the determination of the conditions of labor for men".

Many union branches, including some all-male branches like the Hull dockers and the Yorkshire coal miners, supported the National Abortion Campaign (NAC). The delegates to the 50th Women's Trades Union Congress (whose own charter studiously ignored abortion) insisted that the leadership take up the issue. The proposing speech made at the national conference of ASTMS, the largest technical and scientific union, shows the kind of arguments raised: "As a trade

unionist I want to stress why it is so important for ASTMS to take up the fight for women's rights to free and safe abortion. Trade unionists now accept that women should get equal pay, equal job opportunities and equal rights and opportunities to participate actively in the trade-union movement. But these things can only become a reality if women can be freed from their position of having sole responsibility for the care of the family. This means not only campaigns for things like the provision of day-care facilities; it means that the labor movement as a whole must lend its weight to a campaign for women to choose if and when to have children." This battle has been renewed now that a Tory MP, William Benyon, has successfully introduced another, more sophisticated restrictive abortion bill into Parliament in February, 1977.

The problem with a direct comparison between Britain and Italy on apparently identical issues is the very different historical background. The authority of the Catholic Church over working-class life in Northern Europe was broken by the emerging bourgeois state four centuries ago; and the modern capitalist state in Britain has attempted to provide free health care. Whereas our comrades and sisters in Italy quite literally fight state power — the police and the prisons — if they perform abortions, in England we are engaged in an attempt to defend and extend the abortion facilities provided by the National Health Service. Italian women are, in historical development, fifty years behind their British sisters in terms of their involvement in paid work and unionism, their access to contraception and medical services, and in the general power of superstition, clericalism and male authority. Perhaps it is the starkness of the contrast between the general state of subjugation of Italian women and the ideas of Italian feminism flowering among the young women of the cities, influenced by the women's movement in North America and independent of the CP, which produces its explosive potential — a kind of sexual equivalent of the law of combined and uneven development propounded by Trotsky and Parvus to explain the particular force of Marxism as it arrived in the tiny Russian working class. It certainly seems likely that the ideas of women's and gay liberation, which American revolutionaries have ruefully watched being slowly digested by their social system, might yet prove of shattering importance to the revolutionary Left in Mediterranean Europe.

This ought not to detract from the practical and theoretical achievements of the Women's Movement in Britain, which has by no means disappeared since RA's last, rather starry-eyed report (RA, July 1973). It's hard to generalize about the political effect of a movement notoriously poor at assembling large numbers in one place but very effective in spreading itself locally. It's clear that independent bodies like NAC, Women's Aid, The Nursery and Under 5s Campaign, the network of local Women's Centers and the Working Women's Charter knit together a formidable patchwork of activity. It is a constant problem that groups initiated to develop women's own power can end doing a disguised form of charitable work (this was certainly the case in some of Sylvia Pankhurst's activity); but it's also the case that, while the Italian left has a tradition of prefacing often quite reformist action with much lavish talk of Lenin and Gramsci, so British workers, especially women, often make very radical attacks on property and authority justified in highly reformist language. There is now in Britain a formal, regional socialist feminist network; but a much broader area of political consciousness would stretch from women from the autonomous movement active in campaigns among working-class women, to feminists who are members of mixed political parties — a range of socialist feminist opinion and approach spanning SPARE RIB and SCARLET WOMAN to the magazines like RED RAG and WOMAN'S VOICE produced by women in the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party (formerly the International Socialists). Feminism and sexual politics have produced a considerable if often "underground" impact on the established Left groups, especially since the abortion campaign, and the groups themselves are altering in a way which will prob-

ably be fully revealed only in the next wave of political advance for the British Left.

Above all there are signs that working women will play a more active part than ever in the wave of political activity we are now, after two years of stagnation and paralysis, entering in Britain. Women have certainly not been exempt from the general mood of resentful passivity that state control of wages has engendered. But the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act, introduced to stave off working women's restlessness and strike activity, might yet serve to do the reverse, to raise women workers' confidence, dignity and sense of what's theirs by right. The difference between men's and women's wages; discrimination against women at work, in the unions, in benefits, and in the law; and the pressure on women caring for children are all increasing with inflation, public-spending cuts, and the Social Contract. The twenty-two week strike by women workers in the Trico windshield-wiper factory in London, mysteriously omitted from Ian Birchall's survey (RA, November 1976), was perhaps the most important strike in 1976: not only in the sheer determination of the women picketers, but in its implications for the wages battle as a whole. And it's working-class women, especially West Indian women in the National Health Service, but also those employed in the low-prestige ends of the education and social services sectors, who are behind most of the resistance to the re-structuring of the Welfare State which the Labour Government is carrying out under the euphemism of "The Cuts". Women, probably for the first time ever, outnumbered men in the mass lobby of November 17th, 1976, called by the public-sector unions against the cuts. It is likely that it will be women's struggles — over work, welfare, and, with Benyon's new anti-abortion bill, reproduction — as much as the traditionally militant male sections of the class which will find a way out of the present impasse.

The prospects for the revolutionary organizations which have survived the last two years' setbacks and can find a real footing in the forthcoming wave of mass struggles are by no means gloomy. But real success among working-class women will only be possible to the degree that the Left emancipates itself from masculine domination and a definition of politics and a way of organizing which excludes women. This critical debate, in Italy and England, continues.

David Widgery
London
February 1977

March, 1977

It was good, for once, to have a discussion of the army in the context of the political economy, which also strategized about left intervention. The following criticisms are to be taken in light of the positive contribution I think Alband & Rees have made on that issue.

The major weakness I find in the article on women in the military is that it focuses exclusively on those units traditionally reserved for combat on "foreign" territory in a period when the war has come home.

The domestic peace-keeping apparatus is not only as significant in size, but politically and economically its operations more directly affect and are affected by the daily class struggle in this country. Currently, the expansion of the official arms-bearing population can be seen in daily life by the rise of private security-guard systems. Even probation officers are being designated legally as "peace officers", which means they are authorized to carry and use guns in their course of work. A growing proportion of these employees are women, too. Insofar as who their guns will point at, consider the following variables:

1. shrinking employment opportunities in municipal contexts
2. the trade-offs between affirmative action and seniority systems of retention and promotion
3. rioting welfare recipients
4. union dynamics both between officials and rank-and-file members and at the point of strikes in the private and public sectors of the economy
5. the rise in squatter movements
6. the expansion of terror squads in Third World communities
7. the persistence of undercover surveillance operations
8. in the event of civil war

In all of these instances of internal class conflict, the critical role of an active peace-keeping force of working-class people can be anticipated and the presence of large numbers of blacks in uniform will be certain to have a lightning-rod effect. The clash between black Marines and KKK members at Camp Pendleton is one indication that the sharpest point of conflict within the class continues to be racial in this period....

As regards women, specifically, I find the analysis unsatisfactory in its failure to differentiate the situation and consciousness of black and white women....

With respect to black women's ideological and historical relationship to armed struggle, our warrior tradition is lengthy. One can go back to Harriet Tubman and before. One need look no farther, however, than Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, who, though believing non-violence was the Christian way, also knew that white Mississippians tended to act more like animals than like human beings. Her body bore the scars from the beatings that taught her that lesson. Even the doctors who operated on her were butchers. The question of taking Christianity in any form to those people led her in more than one "peaceful", "non-violent" demonstration to sing "We are soldiers in the army, we've got to fight although we have to die; we've got to hold up the blood-stained banner, we've got to hold it up until we die." In 1977, the year of her death, the current generation of black mothers are telling their daughters the significance of their lives for their own conduct. The major lesson is: turn everything into a weapon — from key chains, to whistles, to shoes, to picks, to fists, to songs — when your humanity is threatened.

...our continuous training in self-defense in civil-war conditions in this country over hundreds of years has made the question of bearing arms, in whatever institutional or territorial context, a reality for black women. Not chosen; but imposed. A certainty; not an eventuality to be ethically determined.

Even a black woman like Lillian Hatcher, Detroit UAW official and active CLUW member, will reminisce about how in the 40's when she was one of the only black women hired into assembly-production, she'd never go anywhere — in the plant or outside — without her gun. It is a habit she retains today. Mary McClendon, president of the Household Technician Workers Union, tells a variant of the same story and stands similarly prepared as she rides the suburban buses which take her members out to Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills to do daywork.

As formally enlisted soldiers, some black women have learned from their brothers' experience in Viet Nam that the front lines are no place to be and that the next armed engagement will be on another level, entirely. This realization, however, has not led to withdrawal. Instead, some of us have responded by being in the forefront of demanding training in the most sophisticated weapons technology the military has to offer as well as supporting the demands of white women to get general field training....

These are just some quick observations. I hope Alband and Rees understand that I don't write this to engage in a fruitless debate over who is the most oppressed, or the most advanced. On the contrary, a concrete examination of the uneven development of portions of the class who are thrown together in strategically important institutional contexts at precise historical moments is a precondition for forging an objective basis for their unity and collective action....

In solidarity,

Michele Russell

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