



**Jews against the Gulf blitz**  
Courageous, principled and under siege

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**Why vote socialist?**  
Alaniz and Durham are two good reasons

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# The Freedom Socialist

*Voice of Revolutionary Feminism*

Sept.-Nov. 1991

Volume 13, Number 1

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## Abortion wars in Eastern Europe

### Women confront unholy alliance of pope, profiteers and latter-day Stalinists

**A**s their parliament debated a bill to outlaw abortion last May, Polish feminists brandished placards reading "Welcome to Ceausescu's Romania" and "Into Europe via Iran."

Across Eastern Europe, women who two years ago helped topple the Stalinist monolith find themselves facing a counterrevolution. Women are being forced to pay the social costs of the "free" market, and their anger is deep and seething.

In Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, anti-abortion bills have been floated as trial balloons. Everywhere, incursions against abortion are coupled with cuts in childcare facilities and subsidies, restrictions on divorce, and layoffs of female workers. There has also been a dramatic decrease in the number of women in parliament. In Czechoslovakia, for example, the seats held by women plummeted from 30 percent to six percent.

At the same time, women are being assaulted by mounting pornography, racism, and anti-Semitism.

In Germany, where the nationalized economy has been dismantled, and in Poland, where capitalism has made vast inroads, women are hurting the worst. As a matter of survival, women there are hitting the streets and forming new organizations to defend their civil rights and social benefits. Often women put the first serious roadblocks in the path of the free-market bulldozers.

The situation of East European women exposes the lie that capitalism is the antidote to Stalinism. Women's absolute need for an alternative solution — democratic socialism — guarantees that the East's titanic battles are far from over.

The struggle over abortion rights shows the shape of things to come.

**Reunified Germany: women up against the wall.** The importance of the abortion issue became clear during the drive for East and West German re-



Participant in a 1990 International Women's Day march in East Berlin holds a sign which reads: "Women, fight together with the men for the future, for the children."

unification last year. The conservative party of West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl was able to impose all its political and economic demands — except on abortion.

When Kohl insisted that East Germany accept the West's regressive anti-abortion laws, the explosive response from women forced him to back off in order to avoid kiboshing the entire reunification deal.

As it now stands, the East's liberal abortion laws are supposed to remain intact until 1992, when adoption of an all-German law is scheduled. But Tatjana Bohm, a minister in East Germany's interim government in 1990, points out that this temporary security is illusory, as the unification treaty between East and West actually leaves open the possibility of parliament passing a new abortion provision before 1992.

Women do not trust Bonn — with good reason.

The social safety net that Kohl promised for the transition period has not materialized. Instead East

Germany, once the richest country in the Soviet bloc, is now in utter economic chaos. Unemployment is predicted to reach 66 percent by the end of this year. State industries are shutting down or going bankrupt without being replaced by the expected in-rush of Western investments. The much-touted West German economy is itself long on trouble and short on cash.

The big losers are East German women. Until a year ago, they enjoyed the world's most progressive programs for working mothers. Now they are the majority of Germany's unemployed, affordable childcare is disappearing, and food and rent subsidies are being cut off. And this in a country where single women are raising one-third of all the children!

**Defying the pope in Poland.** The scenario in Poland is similar. Women there, however, have the advantage of a well-organized and effective union movement. The mass workers' movement built by Solidarity has prevented a German-style capitalist blitz.

Nonetheless Poland, the supposed model for other workers states moving to market economies, is in dire straits. The economic shock-therapy program masterminded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has resulted in skyrocketing inflation. Gas prices alone rose 140 percent in May, in this year's third round of price hikes. Some 40 percent of state enterprises face bankruptcy. Underemployment and layoffs hit

women particularly hard. The regime is praying for economic salvation by trying to force women out of Poland's desperately overcrowded labor force and into the kitchen.

But the "go capitalist" cheerleaders are running into stiff resistance. Former prime minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, leading proponent of privatization and IMF booster, suffered a humiliating defeat at the polls last November. Worried politicians of every stripe now scurry to appear pro-labor.

The Catholic Church, however, continues to unabashedly represent the interests of capital. Bolstered by President Lech Walesa and Western advisers and investors, the church has become tremendously powerful. Last year it prevailed upon the Education Ministry to reintroduce prayer in the public schools — without parliament ever being consulted. But over abortion, the church has met its first major defeat.

**The situation of East European women exposes the lie that capitalism is the antidote to Stalinism. Women's need for an alternative guarantees that the titanic battles there are far from over.**

During the first half of last year, the church waged an all-out campaign for a legislative ban on abortion that included prison terms for doctors caught performing the procedure.

For months, both pro- and anti-choice demonstrators picketed parliament. More than 2,000 women participated in one abortion rights rally in Warsaw. A new national organization, the Polish Feminist Association, formed to carry on the fight. Surveys showed that Poles, who are 90-97 percent Catholic, favor legal abortion by 65 percent.

Walesa was forced to reverse his initial support for the ban.

In May, the lower house of parliament, the Sejm, voted to postpone a decision — indefinitely.

Having failed for the time being to make abortion illegal, Walesa and the church are pushing to make it inaccessible. Public clinics now require women seeking abortions to obtain permission from at least two doctors. Abortions at private clinics can cost the equivalent of two months' wages.

The government in May also banned four of the seven available types of birth control pills and tripled the price of other contraceptives.

But don't expect to see the women of

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## Freedom Socialist Credo

The Freedom Socialist boldly confronts and makes sense of the dizzying events shaping today's revolutionary world.

We're Marxists, Leninists, Trotskyists, feminists, humanists...we believe that all today's gigantic upheavals are links in an enormous global effort to topple the tyranny of imperialism or Stalinist bureaucratism or racist arrogance.

We hail the decisive leadership role played by people of color and by sexual and national minorities in the worldwide class struggle.

We focus on women's non-stop fight for equality which, in the final analysis, challenges every single basis on which capitalism rests. Feminism is essentially an energizing and unifying inducement to international revolutionary upsurge.

Our goal is to make these facts of life apparent. We aim to inject the socialist movement with the revitalizing ideas of Trotskyism and feminism in order to prepare it for victory in this crucial decade.

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## Letters

### Marxist scholar

I found out about Freedom Socialist Publications from reading "AIDS Hysteria: A Marxist Analysis," authored by Stephen Durham and Dr. Susan Williams, M.D., and presented at the Marxist Scholars Conference at the University of Washington in Seattle, April 11-13, 1986.

I would like very much to receive a listing of books or specific theoretical papers on any subject where the approach utilizes the prism of Marxist dialectical materialism.

**Sebastião Carlos de Aquino e Silva**  
Belém, Brazil

equipment) and to subsidize the tabloid publication of the periodical *En la Calle*.

Thank you for your collaboration! Mail donations to G.P.O. Box 29918, 65th Inf. Station Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico 00929.

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### Music to our ears

Enclosed is payment for a subscription (plus a small donation). I greatly appreciate your clear voice and much-needed vision and leadership.

**Sarah White**  
Edmonds, Washington

### Japan's farmers

The protests by Japan's small rice farmers against wealthy capital investors and bankers should be supported.

The basic reason is that capitalism is no longer progressive but destroys life. The tremendous wealth is used against society in order to keep profits up, capital expanding and the system maintained.

For the large capitalist, the small farmer is a block to large-scale investment and a source of cheap labor. The drive of the large capitalist to invest in land and turn small farms into large-scale mono-culture farms is an ongoing world campaign.

Conversion of large areas of prime agricultural land into large mono-cultural farms is destroying the land and poisoning the water through the overuse

of chemicals. The capitalists have no intention of changing their ways.

The driving of farmers out of the country into the cities is a boon for the capitalists who run the factories. This forces down the wages of all workers.

The struggle of the small farmer in Japan against cheap rice imports is also our struggle.  
**Manuel Sunshine**  
Pacifica, California

### Happy to oblige

Here's \$5 for a subscription to *Freedom Socialist*. Send me information about the FSP. How do you view Leninism? What's your opinion of the SWP's rejection of Trotskyism and departure from the Fourth International? How do you view the group Solidarity and its project of revolutionary regroupment?

**J. Kirkland**  
Trenton, New Jersey

These topics were covered in Volume 12 # 4 and Volumes 9 # 1 through 9 # 4 of the FS. We're sending you copies of the articles.  
—Ed.

Thanks to Gabriela Tello and Stephen Durham for their translations of letters from Spanish and Portuguese.

Readers are encouraged to submit letters, news stories, commentary, cartoons, graphics, photographs, and pertinent information on world and national affairs.

## Free Steve Farmer!

### Target of AIDS hysteria imprisoned

With a chanting throng of protesters supporting him, Steve Farmer walked through the doors of the King County jail in Seattle on July 16 to begin serving a prison sentence of seven and one half years — for being an HIV-positive Gay man.

The Washington state legal system is using Farmer as a scapegoat to whip up AIDS-phobia and to rally public approval for mandatory HIV testing of any government target.

Farmer's bout with the system began four years ago when he was convicted of paying to take pictures of a 17-year-old male prostitute. Farmer expected a small fine and probation.

But prosecutors suggested to the court that Farmer could have AIDS and demanded he be tested for the HIV virus. The court granted the bloodletting, and Farmer became the first

person in Washington to be tested involuntarily. He came up positive. The result was read in court — with TV cameras rolling — by the head of the Seattle/King County Health Department.

At the time of Farmer's ordeal, rightwing state legislators were campaigning for broad implementation of mandatory HIV testing and quarantine of people with AIDS. County attorneys used Farmer to bolster passage of a state Omnibus AIDS Bill by branding him as an out-of-control child molester. They pounded the media with the lie that Farmer was convicted of knowingly infecting multiple male prostitutes with AIDS.

Radicals, civil libertarians, and independent-minded people in the Lesbian/Gay community rallied to Farmer's defense. But the smear campaign, which was swallowed and regurgitated whole by most of the

media, scared off much of the "don't-rock-the-boat" layer of Gay leadership.

In 1988, Judge Charles V. Johnson slapped Farmer with the extraordinary sentence.

Farmer appealed and won a precedent-setting decision from the Washington Supreme Court which ruled his forced HIV test illegal. But the judges let the execrable prison sentence stand!

The Stonewall Committee for Lesbian and Gay Rights, Freedom Socialist Party, Radical Women, *Seattle Gay News*, ACT UP/Seattle, and many other groups continue to organize community action to free Steve Farmer. Legal strategies are underway, but Farmer needs \$10,000 to pay his attorneys. You can help by donating to the Steven Farmer Defense Fund, 1202 East Pike Street #1007, Seattle, WA 98122. □

—MATT NAGLE

## ...Gloria Martin

from page 4

Martin is a collector and archivist of movement books and memorabilia and historical photographs of women workers and activists. She is a connoisseur of art, music and writing with a penchant for the Bohemian era, the Harlem Renaissance, and the Beat poets.

A leader in FSP as well as RW, Martin passionately en-

courages young women and men in their political, artistic, and career endeavors. She keeps morale high with her sensitivity to people, matter-of-fact revolutionary commitment, mordant sense of humor, and barbed political commentaries.

"Gloria defies that old stereotype of the dry, rigid Marxist," Averill says. "You can never lose sight of what we're fighting for when you work alongside Gloria. The concrete stuff, the obvious stuff — the beautiful parks, the mass transit, the clean air, the leisure time — she makes it as real as a snapshot sent back

from the future and tacked on the bulletin board."

Since Martin has labored so hard to usher in that day, she intends to be around when it arrives: "When people have had enough, revolution can happen suddenly. I want to be alive when it happens here." □

—MATT NAGLE

To order First Decade, send \$8.95, plus \$1.50 for shipping for the first book and 50¢ for each additional copy, to Freedom Socialist Publications, 409 Maynard Ave. South #201, Seattle, WA 98104.

# Freeway Hall radicals move to throw out harassment suit

## Judge declines to dismiss case, but praises FSP defense of constitutional rights



**Valerie Carlson (left) urges the court to dismiss Richard Snedigar's malicious suit against the Freedom Socialist Party. Snedigar's attorney Michelle Pailthorp takes notes.**

**M**aligned for six years and then ignored for a year and a half, the radical Freeway Hall Case defendants were fed up. They went on the offensive in July against the Freedom Socialist Party dropout who is suing them, asking the court to dismiss Richard Snedigar's political harassment case because he had failed to act at all since a crucial ruling went against him in February 1990.

At a July 25 hearing, Judge William L. Downing of King County (Washington) Superior Court praised the defendants for "benefiting everyone in the state" through their fight for constitutional rights — but he declined to throw out the lawsuit.

In arguing for the dismissal, attorney (and defendant) Valerie Carlson told the judge, "While Snedigar has done nothing for 17 months, the defendants have been on tenterhooks. They can't make plans, go out of town for any length of time, or allocate resources to other significant political work. They have had their reputations, credibility and integrity under siege for seven and a half years."

The judge agreed, saying, "I sympathize tremendously with the defendants," who were "in the position of having to decide whether to let the sleeping dog lie."

Representing Snedigar, Michelle Pailthorp did not even attempt to refute the fact that she, Snedigar, and his other attorney, Thomas Wampold, had done nothing to move the suit forward.

Downing said that though he had the "impulse" to throw out the case, he believed that would be too harsh in light of Snedigar's "expressed intent" to go to trial. Downing did say, however, that since the sleeping dog had been roused, it was his "wish and assumption" that the conflict would move quickly to trial.

Within a week, the court had assigned the case both a judge and a January 1992 trial date.

The defendants are ready. They are chomping at the bit to confront Snedigar in trial in order to decisively expose and defeat his true "intent": to intimidate, harass, and bankrupt the FSP by impugning its reputation and tying up its political and financial resources.

**Snedigar's strategy: old dog, no new tricks.** The courts should have quashed Snedigar's political vendetta and money grab long ago.

Snedigar's lawsuit claims that in 1979, while he was an FSP Executive Committee member, colleagues deceived and coerced him into giving a \$25,000 donation to an FSP emergency relocation fund when the party was facing eviction. Five years later he wanted his money back.

Unfortunately for him, Snedigar admitted under oath early on that the emergency was real and that he volunteered the contribution freely, with no pressure or even expectation from others that he give it.

Trial gave something he and his lawyers shuddered to anticipate. So they seized on a strategy they hoped would

win the case by default — they demanded the party relinquish its membership lists, meeting minutes, and other internal documents as "evidence."

The defendants knew that to capitulate not only would constitute finking on the party and its close friends, but would threaten the First Amendment rights of anyone belonging to an organization.

Naturally, they refused.

It took four years for the party to win state Supreme Court review after a lower court ordered it to hand over minutes. The high court's precedent-setting decision, issued last year, resoundingly upheld organizational privacy rights. It also reversed an earlier default judgment which, true to Snedigar's dream scenario, had awarded him \$42,000 without a trial solely because the FSP wouldn't produce minutes.

Snedigar then let the case sit. And sit.

The defendants were not the only ones hurt by Snedigar's waiting game. As Carlson told Downing, "As long as this case goes unresolved, people look at what is happening to us and are deterred from speaking out."

FSP decided to risk waking the "sleeping dog" because only a definite repudiation of Snedigar's entire wrecking operation will "make whole" the right to organize, as the lawyers say.

The party also needed to get on with its collective life. Snedigar's case did not prevent one of the defendants, Yolanda Alaniz, from running with FSP backing for Seattle City Council this year. (Please see story on page 6.) On the other hand, Guerry Hoddersen, a defendant and the

FSP's National Secretary, has been forced time and again to delay a long-promised working visit to the FSP affiliate in Melbourne because of Snedigar's witchhunt.

Defendants, then, were outraged that one of Snedigar's lawyers, Pailthorp, sought a postponement of the dismissal hearing because his other attorney, Wampold, was in the middle of a month-long vacation — in Australia!

To explain why she sought to postpone the dismissal hearing, Pailthorp offered the following excuses, eliciting chuckles from the defendants' supporters who were crowded into the courtroom: Wampold is out of town, the files are under lock and key, and no one else in the law office can read his writing anyway.

There are indications in the flurry of paperwork Pailthorp submitted in response to the dismissal motion that Snedigar is looking for another attorney to replace Wampold. His lawyers may now believe that this suit is not the smart career move they may have imagined it would be when they launched it at the height of the Reagan era.

After the hearing, Hoddersen told reporters, "We want the case behind us."

Individuals have joined friend-of-the-court briefs and issued statements witnessing to the damage that they have seen done by fishing expeditions like Snedigar's. One of the most compelling is a declaration recently contributed by Paul Bowen, a lifelong Black activist for civil rights and former Communist Party USA member. Bowen details the severe blows he, his comrades, and the radical movement took during government witchhunts against the CP.

Bowen was one of seven CPUSA members arrested in 1952 under the Smith Act, brought before the House Un-American Activities Committee, and subjected to a lengthy criminal trial in Seattle. One of his comrades committed suicide, another tried to save his own hide by turning government informant, and the rest, declares Bowen, "had the entire direction of our lives changed by the...persecution we suffered." Bowen, the last surviving defendant, says:

**I have experienced firsthand the chilling effect that "naming names" and divulging private political discussions has on internal debate and discussion and on independent thought. I have seen political organizations crumble because the fear of reprisals drastically curtails their ability to recruit and to retain members.**

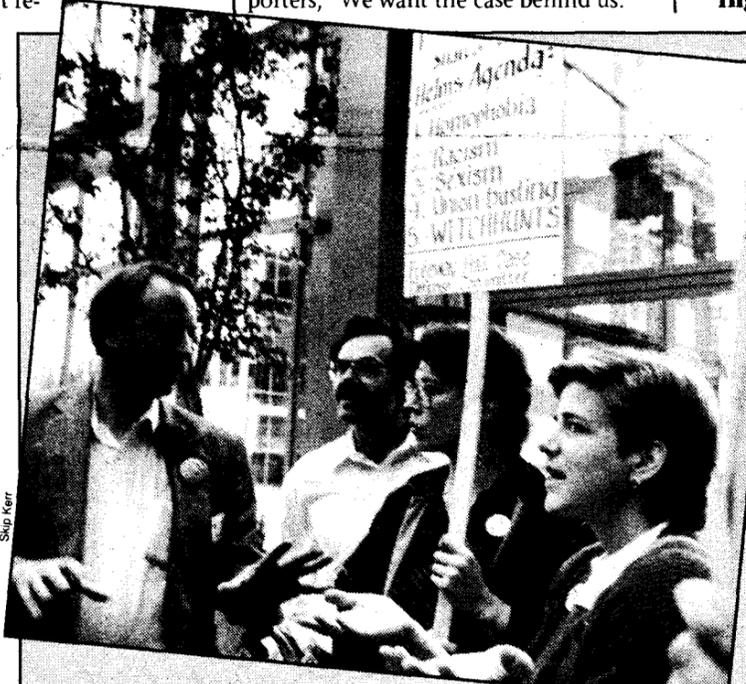
Describing the results of placing informants and spies in the CP, Bowen says, "Friends became wary of each other... Fear and suspicion weakened our bonds of trust... Many people fled the party immediately and others drifted away. These defections and the loss of support were crushing." He concludes, "The courts must protect, not destroy, people's privacy rights."

**Freeway Hall Case helps activists bite back.** While Larry, Curly and Moe — er, um, Snedigar, Pailthorp and Wampold — bumble for time, the defendants and case team have been standing up for other political organizations marked for extermination.

In July, Case Coordinator Karrie Peterson worked with local artists, feminists, and members of ACT UP and Queer Nation to organize a picket of Philip Morris Corporation's Bill of Rights tour on its Seattle whistle stop.

Philip Morris is the largest corporate donor to arch-homophobe and racist Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC). The picket exposed Philip Morris' connection to a search-and-destroy mission by Helms backers against ACT UP and other AIDS-activist and lesbian/gay organizations.

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**Pickers stand up for the First Amendment at the touring Bill of Rights exhibit sponsored by the Philip Morris company, the corporate hypocrites who back homophobic Senator Jesse Helms.**

We've paid an exorbitant price for defending First Amendment rights. We look forward to total vindication and then moving onward with our political work."

**Persecution of Reds: dog days of "democracy."** Are Snedigar's demands for constitutionally protected information over? Probably not. They're the only arrows in his legal quiver.

Over the course of the suit, dozens of

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# gloria martin

## six irreverent decades as a revolutionary feminist

**“W**hen you try to reform the system, you’re going to lose. It’s only a matter of years before all the rights you gained are taken away. It just doesn’t work. The only way to make change and keep it is to have a revolution.”

This is Gloria Martin, co-founder and organizer of Seattle Radical Women. Straight to the bone. Complete conviction. Ready to stand up to challenge. Small wonder, then, that Radical Women, a multi-racial group of workingclass women, is the oldest and only revolutionary feminist organization remaining in the U.S. Through the ‘80s, while other groups disbanded or turned “respectable,” RW stayed tough and clear in its socialist and democratic principles and grew to include branches across the country and in Australia.

Martin directs the nonstop activities of RW’s largest branch, headquartered at New Freeway Hall, while also working on weekends in her bookstore, Shakespeare & Co. At home, she takes care of her eight cats, plays host at times to one or more of her eight children and 11 grandchildren, and tends to her garden of flowers, as robust and colorful as she is.

Martin does not mince words or “act like a lady,” nor does Radical Women. There’s no time for dilly-dallying with the feminine mystique when you’re an engineer on the freedom train of socialist feminism.

“Women are taught to be so helpless and dependent,” Martin says disgustedly with a drag from her cigarette. “Clothing so much defines women’s roles — tight skirts, high heels. You can’t run away from a rapist in that crap, and you’re not even supposed to want to!”

Her own wardrobe normally consists of faded denims, sneakers and an oversized sweatshirt. She pulls her long white hair back in a ponytail.

Martin believes that feminist activists will continue to be on a treadmill of “win a few here, lose a few there” until the entire economic and social system is changed, an idea confirmed by

the recent Supreme Court gag rule to keep federally funded agencies from providing information on abortion. Martin holds that abortion advice should go on no matter what the laws say. “Just do what you have to do,” she says.

Though reforms aren’t the ultimate solution, they have their place — an important one. “We have to fight for survival issues like better pay, benefits, and childcare,” Martin says. “When we have a revolution, we can throw out the old fuckers who run this system and stop worrying that our gains will be taken away from us with the next act of Congress or court decision.”

### Making of a revolutionary. Martin was born in 1916



Above, Martin with Beat artist Robert LaVigne in San Francisco. Top photo, left foreground: speaking out at 1969 welfare rights rally in Olympia, Washington.

in Missouri and raised in Asheville, North Carolina until her family moved back to St. Louis when she was eight.

Her father, a closeted gay man, had a nervous breakdown and was institutionalized for a time. “He couldn’t handle living a double life,” says Martin.

At the age of 14, Martin dropped out of high school to work and help her family survive the Great Depression.

She did not stop learning, though. Martin devoured every book she laid her hands on. But

it was through talking to people, not through reading, that she became interested in the theories of socialism.

In her early 20s, Martin joined the Young Communist League (YCL), a Communist Party affiliate. She cherishes having had the experience of organizing in the Black neighborhoods of St. Louis, where she and Black friends and comrades challenged the Jim Crow segregation laws at restaurants and swimming pools.

But during World War II, Martin became disgusted with how YCL renounced its political ideas and campaigns — militant unionism, the fight to end segregation, etc. — in order to follow the twists and turns of policy in the USSR. This contortionist exercise climaxed in all-

struggle for change depends on nurturing the leadership of women of color, a central tenet of RW.

When the 1960s came crashing in, Martin was in the middle of it all, locking horns with movement macho men in meetings as often as with pro-war patriots at the countless demonstrations and marches.

Martin didn’t mourn over the sexism — she organized! She helped bring together women of the Marxist “Old Left” with New Left leaders through her participation in a workshop series called “Women in Society” at Seattle’s Free University.

Through the series, Martin strengthened her collaboration with Freedom Socialist Party women like Clara Fraser. Fraser too was a veteran Marxist, but a Trotskyist one, part of the movement which opposed Stalin’s installation of bureaucratic cliques in the USSR and at the heads of all the world’s Communist Parties.

Fraser had been a leader of a group within the Socialist Workers Party pushing the SWP to uphold democracy inside the party and to designate as a central class issue the oppression of women and people of color. This faction broke from the SWP to launch the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) in 1966.

In 1967, Martin, Fraser, and Susan Stern of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) established Radical Women.

They formed RW to offer women training as political leaders. Here, in contrast to the male-dominated culture, women can learn from each other, assert themselves, and develop an agenda that puts female demands first.

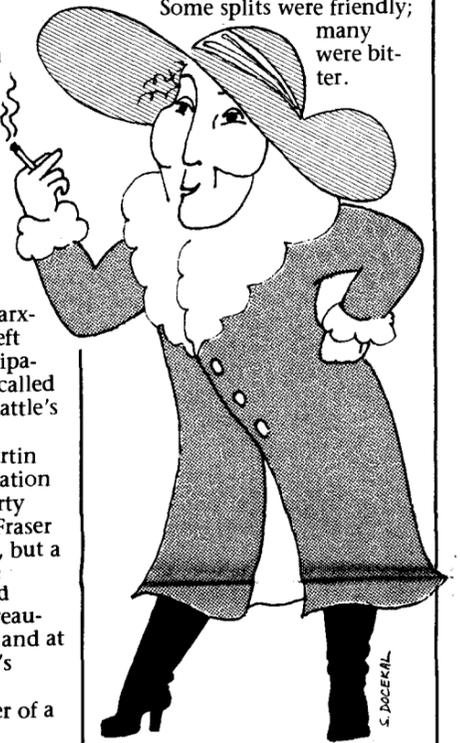
But RW is not separatist. It impacts all the movements in a unique way by teaching men, through discussion and example, to be feminists. Men are always encouraged to participate in RW events and campaigns. And one of Radical Women’s foremost principles is that no group will win liberation in isolation from the struggles of others.

In its youth, RW caused constant furor. Members marched with guns on Armed Services Day to protest the Vietnam War. They organized a coalition of Black and poor women and socialists of all colors which won legalized abortion statewide several years ahead of *Roe v. Wade*. They served as defense guards for the Black Panther Party. They made waves by espousing lesbian/gay rights — everywhere, not just where it was comfortable.

Where events ignited, Radical Women hit the scene — and vice versa.

At first, the only requirement to join RW was “radical consciousness” — any kind would do. Inevitably, tensions grew between the more radical and the less radical, those who wanted a broad program addressing every important issue and those who wanted a narrow focus. Members left over various disputes.

Some splits were friendly; many were bitter.



Martin’s book on the early years of FSP and RW, *Socialist Feminism: The First Decade*, describes why RW nevertheless was spared the “ignominious collapse” of other organizations. The Marxist and feminist analysis and guidance provided by a rock-solid core of FSP women, Martin says, always “enabled RW to recuperate from internal derelictions and external blows.”

**Radical Women looks forward.** Radical Women has never been bolder, stronger, or more respected throughout the world than it is today. Martin and others have taken its credo to Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua, South Africa, China, the Middle East, and Western Europe, among other places, building lasting comradeships with women of all colors and cultures. A delegation to Eastern Europe is being planned.

Linda Averill, Seattle RW’s assistant organizer, says the organization succeeds because “We don’t water down our program to make it more palatable. RW always says what needs to be said.”

Averill came to RW from the stop-the-draft mobilization when Jimmy Carter reinstated registration in 1980. Like Martin and Fraser before her, Averill was fed up with the sexism that stifled her voice in other groups.

As Martin’s assistant, Averill has grown politically and personally. And she has seen the numbers of branch members grow, as Martin involves every “old-timer” in a permanent recruitment drive that has lately been signing up one new sister per meeting.

to page 2

## Radical Women

An international socialist feminist organization in the front lines of the fight against racism, sexism, fascism, anti-gay bigotry and labor exploitation.

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## Join Us!

# Too hot for Newsweek

## The truth about Trotsky

**W**ho was Leon Trotsky, and why are people like *Newsweek* writers saying such terrible things about him?

After decades of being written out of history and ignored by most of the world's press, over the past couple years Trotsky's name is appearing everywhere from the *New York Times* to *Pravda*. Unfortunately, this burst of journalistic energy is throwing more heat than light in Trotsky's direction.

*Newsweek* reporters Harry Anderson, Tim Padgett, and Fred Coleman last year coauthored a good example of the phenomenon, a nasty piece called "In Mexico: Hot to Trotsky" (August 27, 1990). Noting that it was the 50th anniversary of Trotsky's assassination by Stalin's agents, they went on to say:

- Leon Trotsky was an architect of the Soviet (read Stalinist) dictatorship.
- His beef with Stalin was a personal squabble over who got to be despot.
- Trotsky is a cult figure for ragtag socialist zealots hopelessly out of pace with today's world.

Oh, really? If Trotsky was simply an unemployed dictator in search of a state, the question is: Why, 50 years after his death, do so many mainstream politicians and journalists East and West still find it necessary to pass off *Stalin's* slanders against him as history and objective fact?

Could it be that Trotsky's ideas — especially his analysis of Stalinism — still pose a threat to slick Soviet bureaucrats and their new-found buddies on Wall Street?

With glasnost cleaning the cobwebs out of Soviet closets, now is the perfect time to take a critical look at Leon Trotsky's place in history.

### Russian Revolution co-leader.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was a fight for freedom against the most despotic regime in all of Europe. Rebelling against unbearable poverty, taxation, landlessness, war, and the omnipresent secret police, the Russian people threw the czar and his aristocracy out on their ears in February.

During the ensuing months, Trotsky and Lenin were in the forefront of the battle for a government run by working people's councils (soviets). Trotsky was elected president of the Petrograd Soviet, just as he had been in the failed "dress rehearsal" revolution of 1905.

A brilliant strategist, Trotsky coordinated the final steps that guaranteed the revolution's victorious and nearly bloodless culmination in October.

Unlike the U.S. in 1776, when the colonists threw off King George's yoke, Russia had no vigorous class of landowners and entrepreneurs to spearhead a new society. Its small, weak, and late-blooming capitalist class was dependent upon both the native landowning aristocracy and the French Stock Exchange. This puny capitalist class clung briefly to power based on perpetuation of Russia's involvement in World War I, continued starvation for peasants and workers, and their own futile hope that the aristocrats could save them from the titanic rebellion which had overthrown the czar.

Capitalism's reign was short. The people wanted "Peace, land and bread." When they realized the new ruling class meant to reinstitute the monarchy rather than fulfill this slogan, they found Russia's solution in the creation of the world's first workers state.

Supreme power initially rested in the soviets — democratically elected councils of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies. And despite the exigencies of civil war, military assault by *twenty-one* foreign powers, and economic boycotts meant to strangle the revolution, the fledgling workers state was the freest and most egalitarian state that the world has yet seen.

It was certainly the most enlightened on social issues. It legalized abortion and homosexuality, passed liberal divorce laws, and moved to establish universal

childcare and to collectivize cooking and housekeeping.

What happened? This early promise of far-reaching democracy and profound social reconstruction was the program advocated by Trotsky, Lenin, feminist Alexandra Kollontai, and the Bolsheviks as a whole. How did it become transformed under Stalin into a vicious parody of socialism?

### Poverty and backwardness spawn Soviet bureaucracy.

The Soviet Union began life with a heritage of terrible economic and cultural backwardness. World War I and the incredible effort it took both to repel the invading armies of the Western "democracies" and to defeat the Russian version of a contra army brought the country to a state of ex-

*For forty-three years I have remained a revolutionist; my faith in the communist future of mankind is not less ardent, indeed it is firmer today, than it was in my youth... Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression, and violence and enjoy it to the full.*

—Leon Trotsky

haustion and economic ruin. These conditions also obliterated the cream of the new state's political leadership.

Perhaps worst of all was the USSR's political isolation. No new revolution burst forth in neighboring Europe, as expected, to bring material and spiritual aid. Starvation stalked the city and the countryside, killing hundreds of thousands in the '20s.

Wherever extreme poverty and shortages exist, people line up for the few goods available. As lines form, Trotsky has explained, policemen are brought out to keep order. With enough growth in the police and public officialdom, these "peacekeepers" rapidly congeal into a privileged, powerful and parasitic caste, rising above and ruling over the common people. This is the derivation of Stalin's bureaucracy.

In a land of want, the Soviet bureaucrats had the keys to well-stocked cupboards.

### Trotsky mobilizes against Stalin.

As the contours emerged of this horrendous degeneration from the original aspirations of the revolution, Lenin and Trotsky formed a bloc against Stalin, an alliance against bureaucracy, which was weakened by Lenin's stroke in 1922 and ended by his death two years later.

Trotsky carried on the fight, building the Left Opposition within the Bolshevik Party. The opposition movement campaigned unremittingly for the renewal of democracy and social justice. Young people especially flocked to the anti-bureaucratic cause.

Left Oppositionists denounced Stalin's pernicious claim that socialism — a system for equitable distribution of the world's wealth, shared ownership of its resources, and collective decision-making — could be built within the boundaries of a single country, the USSR. Genuine socialism can only be brought to life on the basis of material and cultural abundance, they said. Had not the experience of the young Soviet state proved that poverty and scarcity can produce only policemen and bureaucrats lording over the mad scramble for existence?

Socialism, Trotsky and his co-thinkers argued, can function only as an international system coming to power and expropriating capitalism's wealth worldwide.

History has proven them right.

The USSR never realized socialism. Nor did Eastern Europe, China, or Cuba. They are saddled with warped, defective counterfeits along Soviet lines.

Stalin consolidated his privileged regime through the mass murder, exile, and imprisonment of the huge Soviet resistance. The infamous Moscow trials of



battle against the rise of bureaucratism in the USSR his most important contribution. The opposition movement he built in the Soviet Union should rightly be seen as the progenitor of the antibureaucracy wildfire sweeping Eastern Europe today. The present upheaval is one which Trotsky predicted and hailed as a chance to clear the road for genuine socialist democracy.

No wonder Trotsky has not been "rehabilitated" by Gorbachev, but continues to be an anathema to him. The current regime is as threatened by the prospect of Soviet people taking real control of their society as Stalin was.

Glasnost has already ignited political fires that Gorbachev can't put out. National minorities demand sovereignty; working people protest the harsh realities of perestroika; artists and intellectuals demand creative freedom; and women are approaching open revolt against their burdens of unemployment, blatant discrimination, and shoddy, scarce consumer goods.

The current stirrings of interest in Trotsky and his writings will mushroom as Soviet citizens move forward to an all-out confrontation with retrogression and rule by administrative fiat.

Five decades after his assassination, Trotsky's philosophical and political legacy retains a remarkable vitality and pertinence to the Age of Glasnost.

A few months before his death, at the beginning of World War II, Trotsky drafted a message to Soviet workers, soldiers, peasants, and sailors called "You Are Being Deceived." It was smuggled into the country by sympathetic sailors.

In it Trotsky condemned the Stalinist bureaucracy as "bloodthirsty and ruthless at home" but "so cowardly before the imperialist enemies." At the same time, he called on Soviet workers never to surrender the nationalized industry and collectivized economy to the world bourgeoisie, because "upon this foundation workers' soviets can build a new and happier society."

To the very end, Trotsky remained an optimistic fighter for socialism.

No wonder *Newsweek* and *Pravda* still consider the truth about Trotsky too dangerous to tell! □

—SUSAN WILLIAMS, M.D.

the 1930s, with their trumped-up charges and coerced "confessions" by former-Bolshevik leaders, were the tip of an iceberg of bloody repression. It is estimated that more than 20 million people were murdered, "disappeared," or imprisoned during this terror.

Trotsky, from exile in Mexico, demanded trial by an international tribunal to enable him to respond to Stalin's charges against him. He staked his life by vowing to surrender himself to Stalin if found guilty. He was judged innocent by a commission headed by American philosopher and educator John Dewey.

**Still dangerous after all these years.** Of all his life's work, Trotsky considered his

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# Yolanda Alaniz

**"It's high time for a Chicana council-member committed to the needs of the poor, underpaid, and unrepresented."**



JIM COOLEY

ALANIZ, 41, comes from a farmworker family in Eastern Washington. She graduated from the University of Washington in 1977. A strong voice for immigrant rights, she is a longtime organizer on behalf of people of color, women, lesbians/gays, labor, and justice in Latin America and worldwide. She is co-author of "The Chicano Struggle: A Racial or National Movement?" an historical analysis of the nature and direction of Chicano efforts to end discrimination in the U.S.

A DEFENDANT in the Freeway Hall Case, she fights for free speech and privacy rights of social-issue organizations.

SHE IS A BOARD MEMBER of the Hispanic Association of City Employees and member of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers Local 17. Past member of the Seattle Women's Commission and former president of the United Workers Union-Independent, she was well-equipped to campaign for domestic partnership rights for city workers.

HER PAST EMPLOYMENT includes Seattle Rape Relief, Seattle Department of Human Rights, Office of Women's Rights, and driver for the Senior Services and Centers "Meals on Wheels." She is now employed at the Water Department as a Customer Service Representative. She is on the Video Display Terminal Committee, a labor/management group that studies VDTs and makes recommendations on preventive care for workers using them.

SHE IS A SINGLE MOTHER and a veteran activist for quality childcare. She has also fought against the forced sterilization of women of color and is a staunch supporter of abortion rights. □

# Socialists Champions of enliven S

The race is on — and this time two socialist feminists are in it! "Heidi Durham and I are running for Seattle City Council because we want to shake up City Hall and implement fresh ideas with dynamic new programs," Yolanda Alaniz told the media as she filed on July 22. Backed by the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women, these two municipal workers campaigned hard for two months before the filing date, garnering dozens of endorsements and thousands of dollars from common folk disgusted with status-quo politicians.

Their electoral bid strikes sparks among workers, the poor, and the disenfranchised.

• When Durham proposed taxing big business to fund the revitalization of decaying cities and provide nationalized healthcare, she won enthusiastic support from elder citizens at a senior picnic.

• When Alaniz demanded community control over police and repeal of the city's racist "drug-loitering" ordinance, she met with choruses of "Right on!" from African American Community Parade observers.

• When Durham, appearing with other candidates before Amalgamated Transit Union Local 587, called for firing Metro Transit bosses who refused to negotiate a fair labor agreement, she was the only speaker interrupted by applause.

• When Alaniz called for extending domestic partnership rights to all workers and an end to forced HIV testing, she was wildly

cheered by thousands at Seattle's lesbian/gay pride march.

Alaniz and Durham give expression to a wave of anti-two-party sentiment sweeping the electorate. They bring honesty and optimism to the hypocritical, jaded electoral



arena by laying responsibility for Seattle's ills squarely at capitalism's door and proposing radical but obvious remedies.

**For an independent Labor Party.** Voters are ready for Alaniz' and Durham's message that Republicans and Democrats can't represent the interests of working and poor people because the two parties are snugly in the pockets of big business. A recent survey by the Kettering Foundation shows that the reason people don't vote is not *apathy*, but *anger* about being "locked out" of the system.

The reason the Democrats and Republicans exist is to preserve the capitalist system, including its worldwide imperialist offshoot. So *both* parties get behind wars for oil, campaigns to put cops on every corner, and other related atrocities.

Alaniz and Durham assert that the profit system can't be reformed to meet the needs of workers, the retired, the unemployed, the disabled, students — especially not of the women and people of color and lesbians and gay men in these groups. That means the answer is socialism.

But if the system's diseases can't be cured short of revolutionary change, why are radicals running for office?

The campaign gives Alaniz, Durham, and FSP a unique, respected, and powerful forum to educate about socialism — to dis-

## Time to...

• Demand that Congress demolish the Pentagon budget and provide decent food, healthcare, education and training, transportation, and social services for all who need them.

## Time to...

• Provide a guaranteed annual income for poor families and individuals. No taxes on basic necessities.

• Eliminate tax escapes and increase taxes for major businesses. Slash property taxes on modest homes. Stop waste caused by expensive anti-labor and anti-human rights practices, futile lawsuits, and capricious mismanagement.

## Stop bigotry — insure across the board civil rights

- End redlining. Fund poor neighborhoods.
- Jail and rehabilitate hate crime perpetrators. Organize the community to stop racist, homophobic, sexist, and neo-Nazi violence.
- Allocate public funds for full abortion services and AIDS prevention, research and treatment.
- Outlaw forced HIV and drug testing.
- Overturn the unconstitutional Drug Loitering Ordinance.
- Enforce affirmative action and hiring/promotion goals that include the disabled.
- Make the Human Rights Department independent of the mayor and city attorney. A captive agency can't be a watchdog!

## Mandate environmental safety and job safety

- Make industry pay for a clean environment.
- Hold employers accountable for a safe, healthy and ergonomically sound workplace.
- Develop people spaces, not skyscrapers. Preserve our architectural heritage and historic places.

## Make the city accountable to women, people of color, labor, city workers, lesbians, gays, the disabled and elderly

- Furnish socialized healthcare for Seattle.
- Establish 24-hour, quality childcare centers.
- Create an independent Citizen Review Board to prevent police abuses.
- Establish a Labor/Community Board to oversee union contracts, key city policies, and financial decisions of the City Council.
- Reduce utility rates. Free service for the poor.
- Stop all business with South Africa. Divest city monies, direct and indirect, including retirement funds.

## Liberate the 1st Amendment

• Halt all arrests and jail terms for demonstrators, leafleteers/posters, and petitioners. Stop retaliation and harassment for whistle-blowers, critics, and those who file suits or belong to dissident groups. For free speech and association in Seattle without penalties!

## Supply government-funded jobs for the unemployed and housing for the homeless

- Create a Seattle Job Corps, Intern Corps, and Artists Corps to eliminate unemployment
- Reduce the work week for existing jobs without cutting wages.
- Secure public/private subsidies to build and maintain good low-income housing.
- Use vacant buildings to house the homeless.

## Public ownership of utilities and major industries

• The rules about owning and distributing resources are set by society. That means us. Change the rules to benefit the majority.

# sts Alaniz and Durham — of unconventional solutions Seattle City Council race

On the campaign trail: Alaniz (left) discussing the issues at the Seattle African American Community Festival, and Durham (right) speaking to transit union workers.



Alaniz (left) discussing the issues at the Seattle African American Community Festival, and Durham (right) speaking to transit union workers.

**Making headway against the Democrats.** Alaniz and Durham are running for two of five council positions open this year. After a September 17 primary, the top two vote-getters in each position will be on the ballot in the general election on November 5.

Alaniz' main opponent for Position #5 is Sue Donaldson, a liberal incumbent who supports the drug-traffic loitering ordinance, which is being used to harass people of color, especially the youth of color, throughout the city. Durham is competing for Position #1 against a pack of four Democrats — liberal lawyer Margaret Pageler, law-and-order small-business-woman Jan Drago, State Representative Dick Nelson, and neighborhood activist Earl Sedlik.

Despite professed differences, all are Democrats supported by the downtown establishment to one degree or another, and all would continue the current policy of balancing budget shortfalls through layoffs and taxes on homeowners.

In the midst of this crowd, Alaniz and Durham are making quite a splash, and they are receiving wide media coverage.

At rallies, picket lines, community festivals, street fairs, and political events, supporters sport flashy Alaniz-and-Durham T-shirts, picket signs, and buttons. The brochure outlining their platform (see below) has been distributed by the thousands and translated into Spanish and Chinese, with more translations coming. Dozens of door-bellers have brought the campaign into workingclass and poor neighborhoods.

A non-stop round of engagements by the candidates at meetings of labor and community organizations has helped to win dozens of important endorsements. Endorsers include **AFSCME Local 435; Bill Andrews, Alaskan Tlingit activist; Asian Lesbians Outside Asia; Janice Bell, Co-Director, Mothers Against Police Harassment; José Cervantes, Chicano community activist; Citizens for Non-Violent Action Against Racism; Trish Coley, member of the IBEW Local 46 Executive Board; Christina Gallegos, President, Hispanic Association of City Employees; Maryamu Eltayeb-Givens, organizer for the homeless and against apartheid; Tiersa Hampton, member of IFPTE Local 17; Lillian Holcomb, psychologist and disabled activist; Jorge Ibarra, advocate for Latinos with AIDS; Mike Kearney of Washington Vets for Peace; Selma Waldman, artist and co-founder of Women in Black; and Perry Watkins, Black gay leader.**

The upfront socialist electoral bid is having a telling effect on the other candidates, who are forced to address issues they would rather avoid, turning up at year-old picket lines for the first time, and trying to duplicate some of Alaniz' and Durham's heady oratory in their speeches.

**Socialist Workers Party treachery.** On July 26, two months after the FSP launched its can-

## Heidi Durham

**“City Hall needs a radical voice to challenge the stuffy status quo-ers and craft dynamic programs for the '90s.”**



**DURHAM, 38,** is a Power Dispatcher at Seattle City Light, where she has worked for 17 years. In 1974, she was one of the first ten women hired into the Electrical Trades Trainee Program at Seattle City Light. Fired along with five other trainees in 1975 for protesting the dismantling of their affirmative action program, she won a class-action sex-discrimination suit and was rehired the following year.

**AN OUTSPOKEN MEMBER** of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 77, she is a whistleblower against discrimination and management foibles and waste. She helped found the employee Committee for Equal Rights at City Light (CERCL).

**IN MAY 1991** she received the “Active Advocate of the Year” award at the Women in Trades Fair for co-authoring “Women Workers — Sparkplugs of Labor,” a ground-breaking analysis of demographic changes in the labor force. The document asserts that it is because of these changes that women have a new power in the workforce and also in society.

**AS CO-CHAIR** of the Ad Hoc Committee for Fair Employment and Open Housing, 1984 to 1987, and member of the City Council Human Rights Ordinance Review Panel in 1985, she helped roll back the city's attempt to gut its own anti-discrimination law.

**IN 1982** she wrote “The War on the Disabled: Adding Insult to Injury.” She has been a tribune for the disabled ever since suffering a serious spinal injury in 1977, when she was one of City Light's first female lineworker apprentices. □

cuss society's ills, their origin, and their cure. It provides the opportunity to listen to many different kinds of people.

And, win or lose, these candidacies make the working class stronger by uniting people around a fighting program to achieve reforms such as, historically, the eight-hour working day, women's suffrage, and civil rights legislation. Although the world that working people want can't be created by reforms alone, they need and deserve every advance gained along the way!

And the class unity and confidence shored up by socialists like Alaniz and Durham contending for office will bring closer the day that workers have their own mass independent electoral party — a Labor Party, built by the rank and file and strictly answerable to them.

didates, the Socialist Workers Party entered candidates to run against Alaniz and Durham. The SWP chose **only** to run against these two socialist feminist women! Why didn't they file for positions not being contested by socialists? Pure sectarianism, especially galling because the FSP for years has urged its supporters to vote for SWP candidates, since they offered a clear anti-

capitalist choice, even though their campaigns were half-hearted and their program woefully incomplete.

FSP attempted to contact the SWP ahead of time in order to avoid competing in the same races, but the SWP didn't respond.

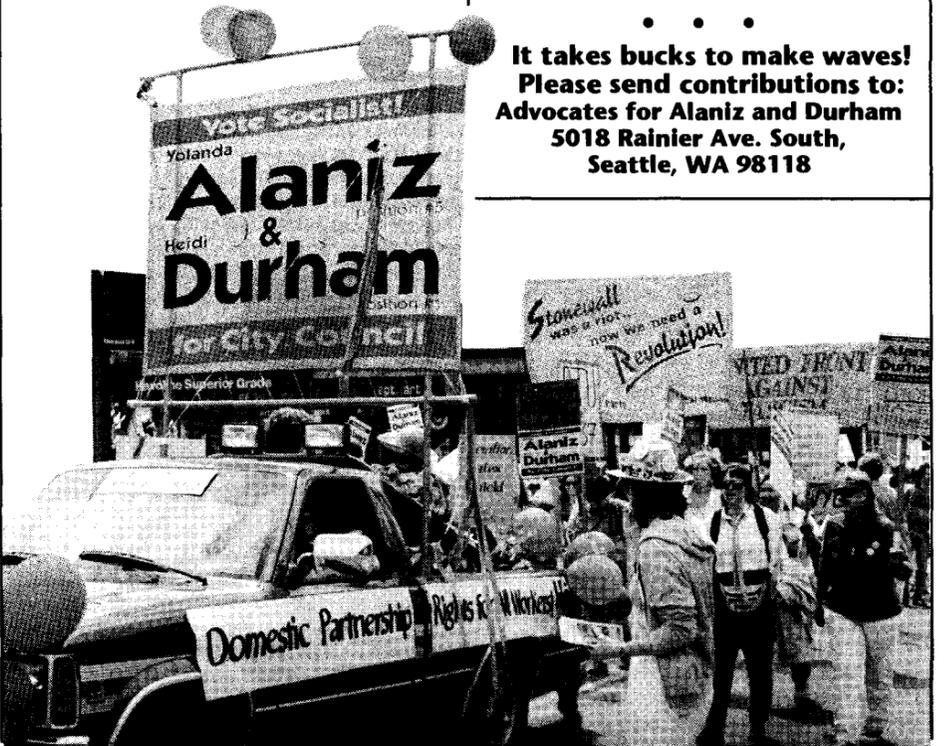
The SWP's move is breathtakingly

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## Stop Crime At Its Source

**Adding more police won't affect gangs. Robberies and assaults stem from the lack of decent jobs, healthcare, and housing. Thousands of Seattleites are forced to steal. Jobs, social services, housing, and training are the solution. Fund libraries and open neighborhood youth centers for arts/crafts, sports, recreation and education! And legalize drugs. Take the profits out of dope and let the community control drug distribution and treatment of abusers.**

**Socialist Workers Party treachery.** On July 26, two months after the FSP launched its can-



**It takes bucks to make waves! Please send contributions to: Advocates for Alaniz and Durham 5018 Rainier Ave. South, Seattle, WA 98118**

## Editorials

# One last time: Hands OFF our bodies

**HOVERING OVER** *Roe v. Wade* like vultures, the U.S. Supreme Court in May upheld a regulation barring federally funded health centers from discussing abortion. But the Court should expect a fight, because women's rights are far from dead. To survive, women will defy this arrogant, racist, unconstitutional gag rule.

The decision targets females who are poor, of color, or young, and who use clinics receiving federal money rather than private doctors. Now, more women will be compelled to seek dangerous, late-term abortions. More teenagers will be forced out of school and into poverty trying to provide for unplanned children.

The ruling robs women of autonomy and strips women and health care workers of free speech.

**THE HIGH COURT** is clamping down on women for the same reason it's dismantling other civil rights. Individual liberties and social advances are the hostages of recession and war. The military machine needs cheap labor and more babies for its armies. Women, now a vast and vibrant part of the labor force, must be fashioned into docile low-paid wage workers or forced back into unpaid housewifery. Otherwise, they are sure to lead a rebellion against the corrupt, chaotic, racist, sexist mismanagement of the U.S.

The buzzards are right to fear feminist wrath. Women didn't win abortion rights to begin with by being nice and obeying the law. When women of color and white women protested en masse in the streets, politicians capitulated.

**WOMEN AND THEIR MALE ALLIES** are not going to accept this contemptible sentence of deprivation and death for women and children. Women will deliver abortion information publicly and **demand unconditional federal funds**. If this does not demonstrate sufficiently that women's needs cannot be ignored, women will discover more radical ways to shake the government.

Those who courageously challenge the court's edict must be loudly defended — in the courtrooms, in the media, and on the pavement. A resolute and unified movement can rescue abortion rights from the bosses and their henchmen on the Court and in the White House.

The grueling, decades-long battle for reproductive rights shows the impossibility of gaining a **permanent** victory under capitalism. Capitalism is a predator, and its essential nature cannot be reformed. We need to make a socialist revolution to guarantee abortion on demand and to create the good life that the current system promises — but can't deliver. □

# Seattle war parade? No tank you!

**SEATTLE IS A MAVERICK** town. Protest is a city tradition.

It was in Seattle in 1919 that the Industrial Workers of the World led the country's first general strike. Seventeen years later, the area's reputation for seditious activity prompted Postmaster General James A. Farley to propose a toast to the "47 states and the Soviet of Washington."

On January 14, the night before Bush's war deadline, Seattleites lived up to their radical heritage: 35,000 protesters flowed like a dark river through Capitol Hill, the city's vibrant gay and lesbian community.

Earlier in the day, hundreds marched onto the freeway, in an exhilarating reenactment of a 1970s Vietnam War action. The next day protesters stopped freeway traffic **twice**.

**THIS TORRENT** of antiwar sentiment troubled Norm Rice, Seattle's liberal Black Democrat mayor. He met with movement leaders and promised a mammoth peace event if they would clear out the round-the-clock antiwar encampment at downtown's Federal Building.

After several nose-to-nose confrontations with a pro-war group called Operation Homefront, the Seattle Coalition for Peace in the Middle East pulled up stakes, leaving a handful of diehards to face federal cops and flag-wavers.

Overnight, peace was out, war was in...even in Seattle. And the mayor had that windblasted look of a politician caught in a tornado.

**WHEN THE BOMBING ENDED**, his staff — largely ex-radicals — came up with a plan for Seattle's "Official Homecoming Tribute" to U.S. soldiers. This would be a unity event bringing together the lambs and the lions — the pacifists and the military, the Seattle Church Council and Operation Homefront — under the theme "Support our troops."

There were a few problems. Promoter Alan Silverman had headed up Operation Homefront during the war. He'd also invited a couple of Moonies from the American Freedom Coalition (AFC) to work on the post-war extravaganza. AFC raised big bucks for Ollie North. Among its leading lights are ultra-rightist General John K. Singlaub, fundraiser Richard Viguerie, and fascist Slava Setsko, widow of the leader of the Nazi puppet government in the Ukraine during World War II.

As if this weren't bad enough, the military wanted guns and Humvees and a Patriot missile or two in the parade. Representatives from the Military Family Support Network and Help Our Planet Evolve (HOPE) strongly objected to the militarists using the pretext of a "homecoming" to glorify warmaking.

**THE LAMBS BEGAN** to feel they were being fed to the lions.

Even so, the Seattle Church Council hesitated about splitting from this military-cum-Moonies-and-Nazi committee.

Only when antiwar radicals tapped into the deep well of public disgust with celebrations of the massacre in Iraq — by openly opposing the mayor's event, helping to break the story in the press, and making plans to "rain on the victory parade" with a counter-demonstration — did the Church Council pull out.

The parade was postponed once and then canceled, making Seattle the only city in the nation to dump a Gulf war victory celebration. Fifteen hundred soldiers did eventually march in Seattle's annual fun-time Seafair parade, but the whole event was more a celebration of summer than of war. The Soviet of Washington lived up to its name.

**The lesson of all this? In an age of imperialist wars and political polarization, helping Democrats hang onto a nonexistent consensus can be downright dangerous. You could find yourself searching for the "middle ground" with a bunch of Nazis.** □



## David Sohappy 1925 — 1991

On May 7, David Sohappy, intransigent and respected warrior for Native American sovereignty, died after suffering a series of strokes brought on by his imprisonment for fishing the Columbia River. Below are excerpts from condolences sent by the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women to his family, who continue the struggle to preserve their ancient way of life.

Sohappy's son Andy and nephew Jeff Sohappy now need support in fighting illegal-fishing allegations brought against them by the state Department of Wildlife in June.

David Sohappy was an inspiration to us as a fellow fighter for justice. We join with you in mourning the loss of this courageous, resolute elder.

It is a measure of his greatness that he gave his life to defend the traditions of the Columbia River fisher people. We hold the U.S. government criminally responsible for the deterioration of his health.

David Sohappy dauntlessly defended sovereignty rights. He knew that the very future of Native Americans was at stake. The legal cases which he initiated and tirelessly pursued strengthened fishing rights for Pacific Northwest tribes and inspired others to join the fight and carry it forward. His spirit of tenacity and struggle will stay with us forever.

## Dateline Australia

# With friends like these...

**T**he Australian Labor Party (ALP) does not have many friends these days among workers, students and welfare beneficiaries, but party leaders aren't singing the blues. They have new pals: media magnates, multi-millionaires and high-flying entrepreneurs. A judicial inquiry in Western Australia has only begun to unearth just how special these new friendships are and how costly they have been for Australian workers.

**Australian Labor Party sells out.** The 1980s were Australia's "Labor years." R.J.L. Hawke was elected prime minister in 1983, when Labor was in power in almost every state in the country. On promises to be the most efficient managers of capitalism, Labor won the hearty support of the Australian ruling class. U.S. capitalism also embraced Prime Minister Hawke: he'd already proved his loyalty as the CIA-connected head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

True to his promises, Hawke's government presided over massive pay cuts, public sector job layoffs, increased hospital waiting lists, reintroduction of university fees, deportations, abolition of unemployment benefits, cutbacks of aged and disabled pensioners' benefits, smashing of militant unions, privatization of key public services, and the continued oppression of Aborigines. In addition, Labor strengthened Australia's role as an imperialist power in the Pacific, betrayed the Bougainvilleans, the Timorese and the West Papuans who fought for liberation, and committed Australian forces to the Gulf war.

Little wonder, then, that working people in this country have well and truly had it with Labor.

**The price of betrayal.** The ALP has paid a price for its treachery. Party membership is at its lowest level ever. Doves of rank-and-file activists quit the party after each new betrayal.

An ALP decision to mine uranium, despite heavy opposition from the party majority, caused the first mass exodus in the early '80s. The privatization of transport, telecommunications and state-owned banks has pushed many others out.

Today the membership base necessary

to supply the funds for party activities is evaporating. A number of unions have disaffiliated from the party, some of the largest won't sign up, and others, while formally affiliated, refuse to pay extra dues to fund election campaigns. Rank-and-file unionists do not want their money to go to a party which has slashed their living standard.

**Corruption in high places.** Now comes a Labor scandal known as "WA Inc."

The Labor government of Brian Burke in Perth, Western Australia (WA) was elected in 1983. Strapped for funds, party leaders ran the state to serve the interests of selected Perth tycoons who paid them directly for their help.

When Rothwells Bank, run by ALP "mate" Laurie Connell, got into trouble, Burke and others came to the rescue. They bailed out their chum; then, Burke resigned as premier and received a sweet political appointment as ambassador to Ireland and the Vatican.

Peter Dowding, bright boy of the ALP Left, became the new premier. He was in the hot seat when Rothwells crashed and it was revealed how much public money had been poured into the failed enterprise by Burke. Dowding was tainted and the leadership of the Western Australian party passed to Ms. Clean, Doctor Carmen Lawrence. She immediately promised a full enquiry.

Since the Royal Commission into WA Inc. began hearings in March this year, the truth is being revealed about where the Labor Party gets its dough and about the Hawke government's intimate links with big business.

Tales of Labor's special fundraising lunches and prime ministerial fishing trips with Perth's big bourgeoisie hit the tabloids regularly. So do stories like this one: The Labor government decided not to introduce a planned gold tax after Hawke had lunch with the representatives of the gold industry. It seems the ALP received some pretty healthy donations — in the millions — and the gold tax was dropped. Very neat.

Attempts by the Federal ALP to distance itself from the fiasco in Perth are failing miserably. Donations from the now-failed Western Australia tycoons to

to page 10

## Voices of Color

# Jews on the Left: Don't turn right!

(Editor's note: The author thanks the Freedom Socialist Party's Comrades of Color Caucus for making its column available to him as a guest writer.)

I wish to address my antiwar *landsmen*, my fellow Jews, now being pressured to forsake the Left and bow down before the U.S. and Israeli governments.

Thousands of Jews marched in the many protests of Bush's Gulf war. We were in the streets before the January 17 onslaught and after, while hundreds of thousands of bombs rained on Iraq and occasional Iraqi Scuds fell on Tel Aviv. When a quarter-million people rallied against the war January 26 in Washington, D.C., more than 50,000 were Jews (*Washington Post*). I was one of the many who participated in the antiwar movement in the other Washington.

But Jewish nationalists have equated opposing the war to being an enemy of Israel. And, according to their "logic," any enemy of Israel is an anti-Semite.

**Big Lie: anti-Zionism equals anti-Semitism.** Consider this letter from Jerusalem last Freedom Socialist: "I have just experienced a month of Scuds. Kindly stop sending me your anti-Semitic newspaper."

The FS isn't anti-Semitic. All my Freedom Socialist Party comrades promote Jewish liberation and fight discrimination against Jews as vigorously as they fight all bigotry.

The letter writer falsely equates resistance to Zionism with anti-Semitism.

Don't be fooled. Zionism is a rightwing theology based on Jews' alleged "historical right" to an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine. It arose in the 1800s as a reaction to pogroms and discrimination, but remained a minority movement until the Jewish Holocaust. After World War II, the victorious nations embraced the Jewish state. Israel would serve two functions: it would be a dumping ground for the Jewish refugees spurned by Western countries, and it would be a breakwater against the rising tide of Arab revolution.

Revolutionary socialists like Leon Trotsky warned that a Zionist state would stand Jewish humanism on its head — negating a progressive tradition dating back thousands of years — and turn into a death trap for Jews.

Military were right. Today, Israel is a theocratic, sexist, racist theocracy.

Because of the history of the

Zionist state and its utter dependence on the West, it could not be otherwise. Its economy functions only through ceaseless infusions of massive foreign capital. It did not organically evolve; rather, it was created by the expulsion and suppression of the indigenous people, which spawned a resistance that makes this "haven" the most dangerous place on earth to be a Jew.

Many Israelis fight for democratic reforms, but these cannot be realized short of a radical transformation to a secular,

Hitler?

Some of us did so, when we could get to a mike. (Often those running the show tried to censor radical opinions.)

But some well-known Jewish activists on the *other side* found ample outlets for wooing Jewish support of the U.S. war on the false basis of protecting Israel. These cowards capitulated to the might of their own capitalists rather than stand up to the war-mongering of the U.S. and Israel.

John Judis, social democrat and *In These Times* writer, defends Bush's war and smears the antiwar coalitions as anti-Semitic. He now is telling Jews to leave the Left or fight to purge it of both anti-Semitism (meaning anti-Zionism) and what he calls "excessive anti-Americanism."

*Tikkun* magazine editor Michael Lerner urges us to join with other patriots who are, in his words, proud of their country's "higher moral purpose" in the war to "contain Saddam."

### Our fate is everyone's fate.

Jews who felt genuinely ambivalent protesting the war while worrying about the safety of Holocaust survivors, refugees, and loved ones in Israel should know

that there is a solution — but it requires rejection of the Zionist crap. Most know instinctively that you cannot base a safe and just society on the oppression of another people. But Jews have been conditioned to believe Israel is different. Believe me, it isn't. Ask a West Bank resident.

Saving Jews is important. Saving Iraqis, Kurds, Moslems and Palestinians is important. Who can know whose child will grow up to cure cancer or AIDS?

Jews must stay in the Left to further their proud history of struggle and advocacy for the oppressed and to insure that socialism achieves its international, democratic, and culturally liberating potentials.

The solidarity of progressive U.S. Jews with their natural workingclass allies among Arabs, Israelis, and U.S. people of color is the only road to making permanent change that will save everyone on this planet.

Hang in there! Become a prominent Left Jewish spokesperson yourself. □

—HENRY NOBLE

**Henry Noble, a Seattle computer programmer, is an all-around activist in the best tradition of Jewish Marxists. He entered radical politics as a Vietnam War protester more than two decades ago.**



Clara Fraser

## Excerpts from an Affidavit (and a Life)

“Before the Washington Public Disclosure Commission In Re: Application of FSP for Campaign Disclosure Exemption

Clara Fraser declares as follows:

**I AM THE NATIONAL CHAIRPERSON** of the Freedom Socialist Party. I joined a socialist youth group in the 1930s and was engaged in radical and labor organizations throughout high school and college. In 1944, I joined the Socialist Workers Party and stayed with it until 1966 when I helped found the FSP.

I have firsthand experience with police, government and employers spying on, infiltrating, firing, intimidating, and discriminating against individuals and organizations. I know that public disclosure of the contributors to Advocates for Alaniz and Durham — FSP candidates for City Council — will have a seriously chilling effect on people's willingness to give money to our campaign and will result in harassment.

I can readily testify to the power of redbaiting, blacklisting, slander, threats, and enforced isolation to silence activists, send sympathizers underground, and shatter organizations.

I have been subjected to considerable personal retaliation for my beliefs, associations, and activities: job losses; antagonism from school authorities against my children; physical assaults; death threats; avoidance by certain friends, associates, coworkers, neighbors and relatives; attempted FBI invasions of my home; extensive (and absurd) police files on my beliefs and activities; arrests and jailings; character assassination on the job and in the media; punitive insurance rates; denial of credit; and frivolous lawsuits.

**FOR TEN YEARS** after I was fired from Boeing for my views and leadership in the 1948 strike, I was unable to hold a job for more than six months before an informer or government agent notified my employer of my ideas and associations.

Only my good education and wide span of job skills enabled me to work at all.

Nor did political discrimination end with the McCarthy era, as exemplified by my political ideology and sex discrimination case against Seattle City Light (1975-82). The punitive harassment of my supportive coworkers at City Light prevails to this day.

**MY FBI FILE** contains names of people who signed antiwar and other petitions. Informants stole our mailing lists and turned them over to the FBI. Names of persons who signed nominating petitions to get our candidates on the ballot were promptly turned over to the FBI by state officials. FBI agents harassed our supporters, making it extremely difficult to obtain the required signatures.

During a 1952 speech by Myra Tanner Weiss, SWP candidate for U.S. vice president, uniformed Seattle police openly photographed supporters entering and leaving her meeting, causing a number of people to turn away out of fear of being publicly identified.

**OBTAINING A LAWYER**, or help from public agencies, continues to be difficult. Only a very few lawyers assisted us. I had to search long and hard to find an attorney to represent me in my divorce/custody trial, which featured flagrant political slander, red-baiting, and feminist-baiting by my husband.

Lacking an attorney, I had to resort in 1971 to defending myself against bogus criminal charges resulting from a group raid on a Freeway Hall fundraiser for the Seattle Seven, a police of Seattle Liberation Front leaders on trial for their antiwar actions.

After years of search failed to locate a lawyer, I had to drop a 1971 sex and political ideology discrimination claim against Seattle Opportunities Industrialization Center (SOIC), a federally funded anti-poverty program, for wrongfully firing me.

Later, the Seattle Human Rights Department (HRD) attorney handling my City Light case was pressured away from it. The replacement attorney dumped my case after the deposition process. The third attorney walked off the case at a critical juncture in the trial and had to be ordered back. Both private attorneys who represented me in Superior Court against City Light have been the target of separate harassment lawsuits that arose out of their public association with me. One HRD investigator who handled my retaliation case after I won and returned to work was fired immediately after finding in my favor, and others were pressured.

**BECAUSE OF THE HARM** caused by disclosure of names of supporters and defenders, I have adamantly refused to do this for the government or courts. Recently, in the *Snedigar v. Hoddersen 'Freeway Hall'* case, my commitment to this principle was tested by imposition of a \$42,500 default judgment and a jail sentence for contempt of court when I refused to disclose information that would identify FSP members and supporters.

I was gratified when my right not to betray sacred confidences was upheld by the state Supreme Court in February 1990. The FSP should not and indeed cannot *now* be asked to violate the confidentiality of donors as a condition of participating in the electoral process as a minor party!

Bureaucratic insistence on disclosure would totally exclude us from the supposedly democratic process of electoral politics and rob the FSP and its supporters of the fundamental rights afforded to capitalist parties and mainstream candidates. ”

(Editor's note: The Seattle Times on August 15 front-paged the FSP request to be exempted from disclosure of names of contributors. A companion story featured a large photo of Alaniz and Durham and lauded their platform for being serious, tough, clear, candid, and humorous.)



Marching against the Gulf war: part of a Jewish peace contingent in a Washington, D.C., demonstration in January.

multi-ethnic, socialist country freed from the necessity to serve as the military, political, and economic outpost of Western imperialism in the Middle East.

### Opportunity beckoned.

The strong public opposition to the Gulf war gave U.S. Jews a golden anvil. We could have used it to forge movement solidarity against divide-and-conquer tactics.

Jews could have taught that the Arab masses — not Western crusaders — will end the despotism of Saddam and the sheiks and emirs. We could have argued that lasting security for the region's Jews depends not on Israel's allegiance to imperialism, but on revolutionary unity between Arab masses and Jewish workers.

Who better than U.S. Jews to assert the need to include Palestinian demands in any peace agreement? Or to puncture the myth of Israeli "restraint" during the war by revealing Israel's role in intelligence-gathering and strategy-development?

Who better to condemn the anti-Arab racism that eventually infected the antiwar movement itself? Or to castigate the big media, which humanized American and Israeli casualties but censored the unthinkable Iraqi devastation and loss of life? Or to expose as humbug the comparison of Saddam and

## ...Sandy Nelson

from page 12

picket sign against the war or displaying a pro-choice bumper sticker, have a 'conflict of interest.'

University of Washington's Roger Simpson asserted that ethics codes (prohibitions of a range of expression and activity), "demean, devalue and denigrate the intelligence of reporters. Preventing reporters from making political affiliations denies the public the privilege of benefiting from those affiliations. These are the people we depend on for knowledge about our culture. They are the sentinels at the tower. Yet they're not allowed to relate to things that give them the knowledge to do this."

Other journalists are feeling heat from management, too, said the speakers. United Press International fired reporter Julie Brienza because of her free-lance work on a gay newspaper. Writers for the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* have been reprimanded for participating in the April 1989 abortion rights march in Washington, DC. Santa Rosa Press Democrat bureau chief Mike Geniella was removed from his timber beat for comments he made to an environmentalist weekly. And NBC kicked stringer Jon Alpert off its news team after he returned from Iraq and offered to air devastating footage of U.S. bombing.

"It's censorship, the corporate reasoning goes, if the government does it," said Newspaper Guild president Murray. "If a newspaper, radio station, or TV station does it, it's simply 'management rights.' In keeping with the national trend of the

past ten years, I guess you could call this the 'privatization of censorship.'

"So the cuts, kicks, bites, slashes, cudgelings and bludgeonings to our freedom of speech and the press go on. And on. And on. And every time the Sandy Nelsons get told what not to print or say, a little piece of our collective soul goes down the liberty rat hole."

**Tenacity wins friends and influences people.** Nelson's defense committee has fought hard to cut through the blackout of her case by the major local media. That breakthrough finally came by way of a speaking invitation extended to Nelson by organizers of this year's Gay Pride march and rally in Seattle. In its coverage of Pride Day, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* synopsised Nelson's conflict with the MNT and quoted from her speech.

New champions of Nelson's fight for fair treatment continue to step forward. Prominent among them are the National Lawyers Guild, which passed a resolution supporting her at its August national convention, and AFSCME Council 2, representing government employees throughout Washington state, which voted unanimously to back Nelson and give a \$200 donation.

You can help Nelson and her defense committee rally support and keep the pressure on management. Demand that Nelson be reinstated to her reporting position by writing to Managing Editor Norm Bell at the *Morning News Tribune*, P.O. Box 11000, Tacoma, WA, 98411. Send a copy to Art Joyner, Newspaper Guild, 3049 South 36th Street, Tacoma, WA, 98409. If you can gather signatures on postcards or petitions supporting Nelson, please call her defense committee at 206-572-6643. □

—MATT NAGLE

## ...Australian Labor Party

from page 8

the 1987 ALP federal election campaign amount to at least \$950,000! What trade union would have that kind of money to give?

### Time for a real workers' party.

Evidence from the Perth inquiry will haunt Hawke and Co. for a long time to come. Meanwhile, Labor governments, especially in the economically depressed state of Victoria, are planning horror budgets with increased taxes and charges, savage cuts to services, and job losses of monumental proportions — all while supplying hefty tax breaks for their

"mates" in the corporate boardrooms.

The Australian Labor Party is a tool for capitalist interests. Its leadership identifies with billionaires and lives accordingly — Hawke, for example, has just bought a million-dollar house on Sydney's posh North Shore — and the ALP will go to any lengths to preserve the system. Workers have seen this coming for some time and are turning their backs on the world's first Labor Party.

Now there is talk of forming a genuine workers' party, a party which challenges the system rather than lining its pockets with handouts from the wealthy. Such a party must identify capitalism — including the ALP's rich benefactors — as the cause of economic crisis and oppression, and organize to tear it out by the roots. □

—ALISON THORNE

## ...Freeway Hall Case

from page 3

ACT UP last year began a well-publicized boycott of Philip Morris products (Miller beer, Marlboro cigarettes) because of its propping-up of Helms. In retaliation, Helms' campaign committee stirred up a federal investigation of ACT UP and some groups supporting the boycott, claiming that these groups had violated Federal Election Commission rules.

"If we allow the government and Jesse Helms to use the Philip Morris boycott as a pretext to destroy our organizations, we won't have any basis from which to organize against the right wing," said Peterson at a soapbox rally just outside the doors of the Bill of Rights exhibit.

She added, "We learned from our own experience in the Freeway Hall Case that though you have to fight very hard, you can beat back these attacks on constitutional rights. And you can even gain ground for others to stand on."

**New and faithful support on the way to trial.** The case continues to attract new endorsers. Three radical

writers signed up: Manning Marable, African American scholar who pens a column syndicated internationally; Michael Parenti, author and contributor to *Political Affairs*, the Communist Party's theoretical journal; and Annette Rubinstein, Marxist literary critic and historian.

Case attorneys, defendants, and members of the defense committee also participated in the August general convention of the National Lawyers Guild, held in Seattle. The NLG has been one of the staunchest and most hard-working champions of the case since the beginning. At the Guild's convention, the defense team gained the endorsement of Robby Meeropol, who is the son of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the famous alleged "spies" murdered by the U.S. government for their leftwing affiliations, and serves as Executive Director of the Rosenberg Fund for Children.

**The socialist feminists who have been the target of Snedigar's smear campaign all these years are on the move to trial.** They need your help — specifically, they need your money — to conclude this historic legal battle. **Please send contributions to the Freeway Hall Case Defense Fund, New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. South, Seattle, WA 98118.** To volunteer other help, call Peterson at 206-722-2453. □

—MATT NAGLE & ANDREA BAUER

## ...candidates

from page 7

irresponsible and destructive. In splitting the socialist and protest vote against the capitalist-party politicians, it breaks with a decades-long tradition of Trotskyist collaboration with other socialists in the electoral arena. The SWP is following the path of the German Communist Party Stalinists who allowed Hitler to rise to power in 1933 by refusing to join forces with the Social Democrats to beat the führer at the polls.

What happened then could happen again; the rise of fascism is not an academic question. FSP has been on the front lines against the nascent Nazi movement across the U.S. In Seattle and Tacoma, Washington, FSP helped lead United Front Against Fascism demonstrations which kept the fascist Populist Party from gathering enough signatures to become a recognized party statewide. Nationally, more and more neo-Nazis are running for office.

Alaniz and Durham are the real social-

ist alternative not only to the mainstream parties but to the far-right and the pseudo-socialists as well.

**Give 'em a choice.** That alternative needs to be broadened. What the Left needs is to field more candidates in many different races in order to stand up to the ultra-right, better judge the amount of support for its ideas, and make the strongest possible statement against fascism, war, racism, and sexism.

That time will come. Meanwhile, Alaniz and Durham are running to win — because they are serious about running the city as representatives of the economic interest of workers and all who are currently shunted aside, mistreated, and oppressed. They and their energetic campaign committee, Advocates for Alaniz and Durham, are permanently changing Seattle's political landscape.

As far as alternative-hungry voters are concerned, it's not a moment too soon.

Vote socialist! Vote for Alaniz and Durham! □

—DOUG BARNES  
CAMPAIGN MANAGER

## ...East Europe

from page 1

Poland marching to the people's rhythm!

**Placed to fight and win.** Accustomed to independence because of their great numbers in the workforce, Eastern women are well-equipped to lead the fight for a society that meets their needs. Although the brutal Stalinist system took a heavy toll, women had social leverage as workers which only now some of their sisters in the West are approaching.

In West Germany, for instance, where fewer women are in the workforce than in almost any other industrialized nation, the government has ignored demands for abortion rights for more than a decade. By contrast, East German women brought Kohl to his knees on the issue in a matter of weeks.

Many Eastern women were so furious at the old regimes that they initially tossed the socialist baby out with the Stalinist bath water. But new experiences have shown them that capitalism offers neither freedom nor economic improvement. While recently defrocked Stalinist bureaucrats may have enough clout and cash to benefit from privatization, the average worker can only look forward to becoming part of the pool of cheap labor for Western multinationals.

**Learning from history.** In growing numbers, groups such as Germany's Autonomous Movement of Women are discussing how to build the fight for authentic socialism. One of their first tasks is to unearth the hidden history of women and revolution.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was a milestone in women's liberation. Women won rights then which are still being fought for under capitalism today. Abortion, divorce and homosexuality were all legalized. Healthcare was nationalized. The new government pledged itself to create childcare centers and communal laundries and dining halls to free women from domestic drudgery. The nuclear family lost state sanction.

But the poverty-stricken USSR, hindered by a legacy of backwardness, could not implement many of its dreams. Stalin and his vast, criminal bureaucracy rose to power on the bones of those who made the revolution, producing a political degeneration which robbed women of their new-found freedoms. (Please see "The Truth About Trotsky," page 5.)

Stalin discredited the ideas of socialism in the minds of workers and women for generations. But the tearing down of Stalinism — not by Western rulers of state with all their armaments, but by the people whose aspirations Stalinism crushed — is giving Marx's ideas a new lease on life.

Today's East European women are not about to smooth capitalism's way by handing over the abortion rights and other advances they held on to throughout the bleak Stalinist years. They have no choice but to reject both Stalinist tyranny and the profit-makers who are maneuvering to come to power in its place.

Female willingness to defy church, state, bosses, and bureaucrats signals the beginning of a revitalized socialist movement that will carry out the original promise of the 1917 revolution. The rising of the women will bring the rising of the race. □

—SUSAN DOCEKAL

### Woman Sitting at the Machine, Thinking

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**1. February 1986**

Dreams this terrible week.

Su and I are standing on an open porch waiting for people to arrive. In every direction, a pure and fierce and gentle snow is falling.

I'm dancing a kind of waltz-polka, faster, faster, till I spin off from my partner, off balance, careening.

A tiny dog yaps at my heels, harassing, covered with seaweed. won't let me BE.

Someone turns a waterhose full in my face, washes me down concrete steps. In the dream I think, "What did I do to deserve this?"

Some people act a little funny now, awkward about cancer—I try to put them at ease with jokes. At times, the anxiety rises in me like a flood.

The dr. says that once you have cancer, you are followed by the medical profession for the rest of your life.

Wading through brush in the night, a man is following me. I am not sure if this is by chance or if he menaces. I turn to study his face. I whip my hands through the air cutting at the brush to threaten him with how fierce I am. He keeps following. I keep watch, beating at the brush, wake, gasping. His face is young, square, somewhat twisted, watching me.

I have seen his face.  
He has seen my strength.  
Who will win?

**2. March 1986**

When I was a kid someone would say, ok, what would you choose, death by fire or water? Pragmatic, I would never play that game. Now I have to. A new twist, the bribe is life. Life by fire, death by percentage, life by water, drowning all your cells just enough.

Remission is disappearance for the time being. Cure is death by other causes.

My chances for recurrence are 35% without chemo, half that, with. A clear choice.

Till you add barbarities of treatment. Would you prefer to chance diabetes or heart failure, dizziness or seeing halos round the moon?

I've never been the least religious. Now they're tossing halos round my neck like horseshoes, and I'm the pole, no angel, stiff and afraid, arm protective of the missing breast.

What will happen when I swallow the poison? Which poison should I choose?

Someone flips a coin and here I stand in my body, one more gamble, one more statistic.

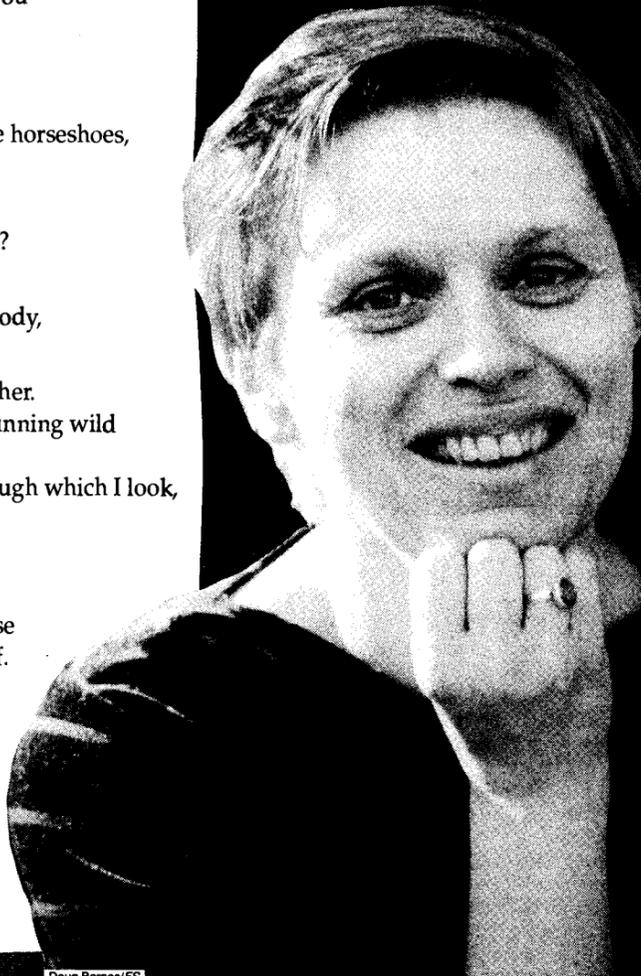
I'm like a boy on one side, a woman on the other. Doesn't bother me so much, reminds me of running wild and lithe through the woods like a colt. What bothers me is I may lose my lashes through which I look, shaded and protected, at the world.

The dr. says he's biased towards research. I've got another bias. The dr. says he can't say what he would advise if it were his wife or daughter or even himself. Because he's not in my position. But what are imaginations for?

Too many times I have imagined my mother, wrestling with her tardy, errant heart, anchored to that couch by a failing muscle. Still she came back, dragging half her body at the leash, into determined movement and life.

# By Fire or by Water

# Karen Brodine



Doug Barnes/FS

**3. April 1986**

Trying to guide a horse and a lion to safety, yarn about their necks, hands tangled in their manes. The animals are wild, want to wander through the woods, directionless, but we must go toward home. Rough, make-shift tools, the wild animals of the body. Vigilance, unconsciousness, the ability to fight. Understanding in order to fight.

An evil woman kept changing shape. She kept striking when I turned my back. When I looked again, she had taken all the tires off my car.

I knew it was her because she wore One earring, icy blue, shaped like a wind chime, irregular, jagged.

I faced her down. We stared at one another. I knew I couldn't look away. This was a contest and I must not even blink. We stared and stared and finally, she changed into a yolk-like substance and disappeared into water, dissolved.

I had won, for this moment.

Trying all angles, everything I can think of, not giving up, keeping steady in the assault of the chemo that drains your energy out your feet till you can't move. I fight the chemo more than the cancer.

I don't trust in my weapons entirely. The cell model helps, but it is abstract, a picture, distant.

The reality is very complex and my mind clamors to alter it into something concrete: wicked witches, lions and horses, seaweed dogs, men stalking me, and me, always turning, straining to see, to see and to engage in whatever fight is required

**4. May 1986**

Here, on that new strange plain where my left breast is no longer where the angry scar blanches out to a thin reminder Here, my heart is closer now to my lover's ear, listening to the sun lazing its warm palm on my pale skin, closer now to the traffic blare to shouts of street people to the rasp of each day, the rough, practical tones. My heart is closer now. Hear its steady, stubborn drum.

This poem is from a collection called *Woman Sitting at the Machine, Thinking*. Please see facing page for order blank.

**Radical organizer and poet Karen Brodine (1947-1987).**

# Mary Pitawanakwat suit

## Canadian federal office charged with racism, hypocrisy and sexual harassment

**O**n the same day Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney signed an international Proclamation to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, his government fired Ojibway Mary Pitawanakwat from the Secretary of State office in Regina, Saskatchewan, in retaliation for her protests against racial and sexual harassment on the job.

That was in 1986. Pitawanakwat first brought her discrimination charges to the Canadian Human Rights Commission in 1984. Now, after she has spent seven years circumventing legal stonewalling and hurdles, her charges are finally scheduled to be heard by a human rights tribunal in October.

Others might have given up, but Pitawanakwat, a single mother of two, is a fighter. When friends jokingly tell her she has a "bad attitude," she smiles broadly and retorts, "Thank you!" Mary is also a tireless organizer and speaker who doesn't scare and who leaves her anger at the stupidity of a thoroughly racist and sexist bureaucracy with an ironic sense of humor.

These qualities and a strong defense committee have kept her going in what has become a marathon battle to regain her job as a social development officer administering programs to Aboriginal people. That Pitawanakwat is fighting the federal department responsible for organizing a national anti-racism campaign makes the outcome of her case of critical significance for everyone concerned with the alarming rise of racism across North America.

**Government denials, diversions and delays.** After more than six years with the government agency, Pitawanakwat was given the boot for "poor job performance" following her complaint about being subjected to rampant discrimination. After refusing to take on the case until lengthy ap-

peals forced them to do so, the Human Rights Commission conducted an investigation in 1988 and 1989.

Its inquiry confirmed many of the incidents cited by Pitawanakwat.

The examiner found, for example, that one official had referred to indigenous people served by the agency as "savages" and that other officials joked about being "scalped" and characterized Aboriginal people as "lazy."

An official who admitted to touching Pitawanakwat's buttocks claimed he had done so "trying to make her feel better"! And the inquiry turned up office memos making jokes and puns on the words "rape," "screw," and "shaft."

The commission's investigator concluded that the ignorance of Aboriginal culture demonstrated by Pitawanakwat's supervisors "was severe enough to create a poisoned work environment for Mary."

After issuing its report in August 1989, it took another four months for the commission to recommend that Pitawanakwat's case be reviewed by yet another body, a human rights tribunal. In response, the government asked a federal court judge to bar Pitawanakwat, the human rights tribunal, and the Human Rights Commission from carrying her case forward.

In April 1991, the court ruled against the government, ordering a tribunal to be held October 7 in Regina on the instances of racist persecution. However, the court threw out the sexual harassment charges on a technicality, forcing Pitawanakwat to refile them separately.

**Woman warrior in forefront of Aboriginal upsurge.** In a nation rocked by the growing rebellion of indigenous people, Pitawanakwat's case has garnered increasing support from labor, women's rights organizations, and Aboriginal groups.

With her defense committee's help, Pitawanakwat has won the backing of

the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union, University of Regina Women's Center Collective, Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism, Native Women's Association of Canada, Quebec Native Women's Association, Public Service Alliance (Pitawanakwat's union), and National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

In June of this year, Pitawanakwat spoke on her case in San Francisco at the Bay Area headquarters of the Freedom Socialist Party and Radical Women. Solidarity statements were delivered by representatives of FSP and RW, the International Treaty Council, and the Irish Republican Socialist Party.

Pitawanakwat's case is one front in the resurgent mobilization by Aboriginal Canadians for first-class citizenship, land, and sovereignty, a fight marked recently by armed confrontations at the Mount Currie Indian Reserve in British Columbia and last summer's standoff between Mohawks and the provincial police at Oka, Quebec.

During a recent visit to Seattle, Pitawanakwat said, "I think the struggle that was uncovered by the crisis with the Kaneshatake people [at Oka] is going to have a lasting and permanent effect for the upcoming generation. I think the struggle is going to be even more intense because [indigenous] people won't take the second-rate status we've lived with for centuries."

Pitawanakwat's battle for justice has exposed the Human Rights Commission as "a filtering system to discourage people from pursuing cases," she said. "It gives us the illusion of having our rights protected."

The protracted fight has taken a toll. While battling a recurrence of breast cancer which required a mastectomy in De-



Kathleen Merrigan/FS

ember 1990, Pitawanakwat is raising two children, Brock, 15, and Robyn, 13. Yet she continues her effort to win redress, she said, "as a way to work toward a discrimination-free society for my children and to protect my right to work."

Mary Pitawanakwat's defiance and persistence in the face of judicial stalling, government threats, and physical illness are an inspiration to other indigenous people and all civil rights warriors.

Finding allies is gratifying, she said. "Significant numbers of non-Aboriginal people are supportive because they see justice for us tied in with a more egalitarian society for all people."

Supporters can protest the Canadian government's attempts to subvert Pitawanakwat's human rights complaint and can demand her immediate reinstatement with back pay by writing to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney at the House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6. Copies of letters and donations to Pitawanakwat's defense fund should be sent to the Mary Pitawanakwat Defense Committee, St. Peter's Parish, 100 Argyle Street, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 4C3. □

—SANDY NELSON



Nelson addresses Seattle 1991 Lesbian/Gay Pride Rally.

**T**alkin' about free speech — that's how journalist Sandy Nelson and her defense committee filled the Metropolitan Community Church in Tacoma, Washington, on June 8. Gay men and lesbians, feminists, students, radicals, and on-and-off-duty reporters turned out that night for a forum on her battle with the *Morning News Tribune*.

Speaking on a panel with Nelson was Roger Simpson, University of Washington associate professor of communications specializing in media ethics. Emmett Murray, president of Nelson's union, Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild Local 82, sent a prepared talk.

Peggy Platt, popular Northwest comic-

with-a-conscience, did a benefit gig and Laurie Jenkins, attorney and vice-chairperson of the City of Tacoma Hate Crimes Task Force, chaired the event.

The number of forum participants and their financial generosity showed that people are eager to help defend a lesbian socialist against union-busting, anti-gay witchhunters in corporate suites. More than \$1,000 was raised.

Organizations taking up Nelson's cause are coming through with significant new endorsements, donations, and speaking invitations. More than 4,000 people have sent in postcards or signed petitions demanding Nelson's reinstatement to her former position. This rush of support has helped produce some recent concessions from management.

**Tackling McCarthyites at the workplace.** Since August 1990, Nelson has been fighting to wrest her rights to free speech and assembly back from the *Morning News Tribune*, one of Washington's largest dailies.

MNT management banished the award-winning education reporter to the evening copy-editing desk because of her off-the-job organizing for gay rights. The reassignment is both an unfair labor

practice and a violation of constitutional rights.

Management's pretext: Nelson's advocacy of a proposed gay rights law potentially compromised her "objectivity" and the paper's credibility. This is ridiculous. The presentation of fair and balanced news depends on journalists who are politically knowledgeable and involved.

The *Tribune's* real reason for exiling Nelson: She is a radical, a lesbian, and a union activist. By unilaterally imposing an unratified "ethics code," management clamped down on her to shut her up and make an example of her. What better way to attack the union and intimidate other outspoken employees?

Through methods like these, the McClatchy chain, which owns the *Tribune*, hopes to continue stonewalling contract negotiations, as it has for four years, and ultimately to bust the union. The company is supporting a union decertification campaign which will come to a vote in August.

In the meantime, the bosses have engaged Nelson in a war of nerves. After shuffling her to the copy desk, management replaced Nelson's usually excellent performance evaluations with the lowest rating possible. They refused to give her copy-editor training, yet threatened to fire her if she didn't "improve."

Nelson's high-profile defense is getting results. In her most recent evaluation, management judged her work "satisfactory," and MNT has now promised to assign her a tutor to teach her the new job.

On the original battlefield, however, Nelson's boss informed her that he will reinstate her to the newsroom only if she gives up *all* her political work. Nelson says, "No way!" She wants what's rightfully hers — a beat and a byline.

**Two-faced bosses not bound by "objectivity."** The rule of "no political involvement" used against Nelson applies to journalism's lower echelons, but not to the higher-ups with their editorials, much-sought political endorsements, and speeches at public affairs.

During the forum, Nelson explained the chimera of objectivity which MNT and media owners nationwide exploit to maintain the capitalist status quo and all its trappings.

Said Nelson, "Publishers routinely hobnob with corporate influence-peddlers like Weyerhaeuser and Boeing and routinely publish news in the class interest of big business. These same people insist that rank-and-file workers who dare act in *our* own interests, by carrying a

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