

Brooklyn's Medgar Evers College Students Strike Against Reaganomics

Sally Avery Bermanzohn

New York, NY — "What do we want?" "Quality Education." "What are we on?" "Strike!"

The chants from the picket line vibrated through the halls of Medgar Evers College in Central Brooklyn. Striking students protested the impact of Reaganomics on their education, demanding Black Studies, an end to cut-backs, lighter teaching loads for faculty, improvements in physical conditions of the buildings, and daycare for student mothers.

College President Richard D. Trent's demotion of Dean Andre McLaughlin touched off the strike. A member of the faculty for eight years, Dr. McLaughlin is a long-time fighter for funding of the college. Many students and faculty perceived her dismissal as a threat to the survival of the school in the economic crisis.

Medgar Evers College was born out of the black liberation movement demands for quality education. In 1968, only 20 percent of community college students and eight percent of senior college students in New York City were black. No colleges existed in Bedford Stuyvesant, the largest black community in the nation. After extensive struggle with the Board of Higher Education, Medgar Evers College opened its doors in 1971 as a senior college to serve Cen-

tral Brooklyn. Students flocked to the tuition-free, open-admission institution.

The composition of students at Medgar Evers reflects its origins and commitment to the black community. The average age of students is 29, and most are the first member of their families to go to college. Ninety percent are black, 70 percent are women, and 54 percent are the heads of households. "It takes a lot for students to strike here," a picketer stated. "I'm a mother with two children. This school represents my last hope for an education and decent future for my family."

Medgar Evers lasted only a few years as a tuition-free senior college. When the 1974 fiscal crisis hit New York, the banks and big businesses banded together to force working and poor people to shoulder the crisis. The state slashed the budget of the City University of New York (CUNY) from \$539 million a year to \$466 million, and froze staff salaries for three years. For the first time in its 133-year history, CUNY institutions charged tuition. Medgar Evers College cut its budget by 17 percent and instructional staff by 20 percent.

Then, in 1976, the state board proposed that Medgar Evers be eliminated altogether. Spearheaded by Professor Andre McLaughlin, a student-faculty coalition pressured the state legisla-

ture and Board of Higher Education to save the college. But the institution's status was reduced from "senior college" to "community college," resulting in reduced funds and increased faculty teaching load.

Because of her competence and contribution to the college, Andre McLaughlin was promoted to Dean of Administration in 1979, the first woman administrative dean in the history of the City University of New York. When the economic crisis deepened in the '80s and Reagan entered the White House, Dr. McLaughlin knew harder times faced the college. She pointed out that Reaganomics would: 1) cut federal and state financial aid to students — 94 percent of Medgar Evers students rely on such aid; 2) cut federal and state educational funds, and the college depends on \$2.5-3 million a year from state and federal funds above the funding from CUNY; and 3) cut social programs such as aid to dependent children and childcare, preventing many from attending college.

"Medgar Evers College was created because of national insensitivity to black people's demand for education," Dr. McLaughlin told me. "Reaganomics has a direct bearing on the enrollment of the college. Confronted by survival, many people will not be able to go to college." After Dr. McLaughlin addressed the

faculty on Reaganomics in September, 1981, College President Trent said her remarks were "irrelevant," "inappropriate," and that she was not acting as a "team player." Six months later he dismissed her as Dean of Administration.

McLaughlin's demotion opened a Pandora's box of student concerns. Trent's comments that he "doesn't believe in black studies" particularly angered students. They formulated 10 demands and called for a meeting with the president. Trent refused, declaring that dismissing deans was part of his discretionary powers and that he would not meet with a "mob." Students then separated McLaughlin's demotion, asking to meet around other concerns. At this writing Trent continues to refuse to meet with the students despite resolutions supporting the students' request from faculty, deans, and community representatives.

"It may be a long battle," concluded one student, "but we're prepared for it. Our future is at stake."

Andre McLaughlin plans to file suit in court. Regardless of the outcome, however, she will remain at the college as a tenured associate professor. "I will continue to work for the stated goals of this college," she said, "and to speak out as a black activist and intellectual."

From the Grassroots

Black Capitalism: Profile in Poverty

Part One of a Two Part Series

Manning Marable

Disillusionment with Reaganomics has inspired a revival of a variety of black strategies for economic survival in the 1980s. Many black commentators, including Tony Brown, argue that Reagan is actually helping black people by pulling the federal government's social service "security blanket" out from under their feet. Blacks have sufficient resources to develop and sustain their own viable Black Capitalist economic program. Unfortunately, the neoconservative black Pollyannas are long on rhetoric and short on facts. A detailed analysis of the data on black-owned businesses in the U.S. illustrates the affluence of some, and a profile of poverty for the many.

Census research on black owned businesses also indicates a profound pattern of concentrated wealth and power in the hands of a relatively small number of black businessmen. Only 164,177 workers (mostly blacks) found employment in the 39,968 black firms which hired personnel in 1977. Within this figure, however, 32,581 businesses (81.5 percent of firms hiring workers) employed between one to four persons during the year. These firms hired an average workforce of 1.45 employees, paid average annual gross payrolls of \$9,695, and recorded average gross receipts totaling \$68,831. Moving up the employment scale, a different picture emerges. Only 230 black firms in the U.S. in 1977 hired between 50 to 99 employees. This group retained an average workforce of 67.6 employees, had average annual gross payrolls

of \$540,035, and average yearly gross profits of \$2,357,909.

At the pinnacle of Black Capitalism were the 113 U.S. black firms which employed 100 or more workers in 1977. This tiny elite is part of the dominant U.S. corporate establishment. With an average workforce of 247.5 employees, these firms met average annual payrolls of \$1,960,221.

Average annual gross receipts for the elite in 1977 were \$8,952,469. Throughout the U.S., there were 1,060 black-owned corporations and partnerships that hired 20 or more employees. This small fraction of all black entrepreneurs was only one half of one percent (00.46) of all blacks engaged in private enterprise. These 1,060 affluent black firms had gross receipts which totalled \$2,467,958,000, 38.6 percent of all gross receipts acquired by black firms with employees, and 28.5 percent of the gross receipts received by all black-owned businesses.

Only a few enterprises earn the vast majority of profits. 103 manufacturing firms out of a total of 4,243 received 67.3 percent of all gross receipts in that sector, and employed 52.8 percent of all employees. In wholesale trade, 5 percent of the firms had 75.3 percent of all receipts and 58.3 percent of all paid workers. In finance, real estate and insurance, 90 firms (0.9 percent of the total number) earned 69.2 percent of all gross receipts and had 77.1 percent of all employees.

Black Capitalism in the 1980s, must be subdivided into three distinct constituencies — the "proletarian periphery;" the intermediate black small entrepreneurs; and the black corporate core. Over four fifths of all U.S. firms, 82.7 percent, belong to the proletarian periphery. These 191,235 enterprises have several common characteristics: 1) almost all are sole proprietorships, unincorporated firms owned by a single black individual; 2) most are started by black

blue collar or marginally white collar employees; 3) the firms are undercapitalized from the outset, and owners are forced to subsidize business activities by drawing upon personal savings, loans from friends and relatives, and by allocating a portion of their salaries at their other place of employment; 4) all of these firms have no paid employees; 5) the vast majority are concentrated in two traditional sectors of the segregated black economy, human services and retail trade; 6) at least 75 percent become bankrupt within three years; and 7) their average annual gross receipts vary between \$3,000 and \$15,000. Economically and politically, these blacks are essentially workers who are attempting to become successful businesspersons.

These small entrepreneurs uniformly pay higher rates for insurance, since majority-black communities are defined as "high risk" areas. They are exploited by banks which "redline" black districts, making entire communities ineligible to receive loans at reasonable rates. Smaller retailers with low sales volumes and a small number of items for sale must charge higher retail prices for goods or services than larger white-owned companies. McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken, for instance, can sell their fast foods at nominally lower prices than the black "mom-and-pop" chicken establishment, because of higher sales volume. Human service-oriented firms started by blacks who possess personal skills (hairdressers, cooks, barbers, caterers, etc.) can be established with little capital, but they are also very vulnerable to recessions. Black workers and the unemployed have precious little discretionary income.

At every periodic downturn in the economy, black lower and middle income families cut back on their spending for services and goods. As a result, in both 1973-75 and 1980, tens of thousands of black businesses failed. Unfortunately, thousands more will fail this year.

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military is creating federal deficits of monstrous proportions. The deficit is running well over \$100 billion in 1982 alone, and is sure to soar into the \$200 billion range in the years to come.

As the federal government tries to cover the unprecedented deficits, its increased borrowing will keep interest rates high. Continued high interest rates and, fundamentally, the inability of the working class to buy what it produces means plummeting sales and a bigger surge in business failures. As bankruptcies increase, unemployment will spread more and the economy will stagnate even deeper. Furthermore, the crash military spending and the widening deficits will inevitably trigger spurts of runaway, double-digit inflation.

This would aggravate the economic uncertainty that already exists and threatens to hurl the depressed bond market into further collapse. This is one of the dangers the ruling class fears most. The bond market is one of the main ways the bourgeoisie finances the country's economic infrastructure long-term. Further collapse in the bond market like the 1979 crash could irreparably damage the economic infrastructure. All hopes for any capitalist economic recovery would be permanently dashed.

Given these severe economic restrictions, the ruling class has no choice but to enter arms limitation talks with the Soviet Union. The U.S. economy cannot bear the strain of an unlimited, ceilingless arms race. Thus, the Reagan administration was forced to enter the Geneva talks on limiting medium-range nuclear weapons, despite all of the President's saber-rattling and anti-Soviet demagoguery. For the same reason, Reagan did not dare suspend talks even during the height of his protests and crocodile tears over Soviet interference in Poland.

With its plans for global conquest hemmed in economically, the administration is also being forced into beginning negotiations over strategic nuclear arms such as ICBMs. Appearing on NBC's "Today" show on March 18, Defense Secretary Weinberger admitted that he expects strategic arms control talks to begin "sometime this summer." Secretary of State Haig and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko were to have set a date when they met last January, but the U.S. used the Polish situation as an excuse to back off. Weinberger's remarks were later confirmed by State Department spokesman Dean Fischer who said, "We have entered the final phase of intensive preparations for START negotiations with the Soviet Union." Plans would be "completed in a matter of weeks," he said.

No doubt these assurances from Washington are in response to the growing public support for disarmament, June 12 in particular, and to counter Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev's March 16 announcement of a "moratorium on the development of medium-range nuclear armaments in the European part of the U.S.S.R." Moscow's action, skillfully timed to have maximum impact on the West European and U.S. disarmament movements, put the heat on the Reagan administration. Reagan responded by writing off the Soviet move as a "propaganda gesture."

Nevertheless, Washington's policy is captive to the fundamental economic factors mentioned above. Regardless of anyone's will, the U.S. is driven towards arms talks. For the Soviet Union's part, it too has an economic interest in disarmament.

Bourgeoisie Jumps on Anti-Reagan Bandwagon

Recently, the threat posed by the Reagan deficits has caused the breakup of the capitalist coalition which put Reagan in office. The Business Roundtable, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Manufacturers — three of the country's major business organizations and pillars of the President's election coalition — have criticized Reagan's economic program. All three agree on the need to slow down increases in military spending, to delay the planned 1983 income tax cut, and to "balance" this off with even deeper cuts in government funding for social programs and benefits.

Under fire from even business circles, Reagan is extremely vulnerable. His unprecedented attacks on the workers' standard of living, his naked chauvinism toward third world countries, and his openly racist policies towards minorities have exposed his administration in the people's eyes faster than any previous government. A CBS poll two months ago revealed that among blacks, zero percent believed that the President was working for their interest. The latest New York Times/CBS poll found that Reagan's approval rating among union households had fallen dramatically from 63 percent last April to 43 percent in January. One white worker who had switched parties to vote for Reagan called it "the biggest mistake of my life."

But Capitalist Opposition Still Makes Masses Pay

With the shift in public opinion against Reagan, especially among business, politicians who previously were too gutless to oppose him are now jumping on the anti-Reagan bandwagon. But there is little the

American people can cheer about in this kind of "opposition." Despite their increasingly vocal criticism of the President, these bourgeois politicians have no qualitative differences with his economic program.

For example, Republican Pete Domenici's "alternative" budget now before Congress calls for cuts in the entitlements programs such as Social Security, Federal civilian and military pensions, and Medicaid. According to Domenici, the chairman of the Senate Budget Committee, the government would save \$60 billion over the next three years by delaying or abolishing outright cost-of-living increases in these benefits and by imposing a federal salary freeze. On NBC's "Meet the Press," Domenici called for a "bipartisan" package to show the President "that we're for real on budget cuts." "Once we put that package together, I believe the President will compromise." In exchange for putting even more of an economic burden on the American people, the Senator would have the administration hold increases in the military budget a mere \$20 billion below the projected \$292 billion planned for fiscal year 1985. "I don't want any misconception," Domenici explained. "Defense must grow. It's just how fast." The Senator would also increase tax revenues, through closing present tax loopholes, a move Reagan is already committed to.

So much for the bourgeois "opposition" to Reagan — a \$60 billion cut in funds for human needs is to be exchanged for a \$20 billion cut in funds for mass destruction and imperialist aggression. The Republicans are not the only ones finding this '80s-style capitalist arithmetic appealing. Democrat and former Vice-President Walter Mondale is on record as favoring only a \$10 billion cut in military spending hikes. Democratic Presidential hopefuls like Mondale and Senator Edward Kennedy have yet to present their positions on further cuts in social spending. But there is every indication that the Democratic opposition in Congress will cave in before the Reagan onslaught just as they did in last year's budget fight.

A compromise where the people lose even more is inevitable. On March 16, Henry Kaufman warned the House Budget Committee that if a budget stalemate between Congress and the President drags on into the fall, he could "not rule out a 1930s-style depression." Kaufman is a respected Wall St. economist and managing director of Salomon Brothers.

A pattern is being set for the next two years. Having put Reagan into office in 1980, the bourgeoisie and their political representatives are positioning themselves to lead the anti-Reagan backlash. By thus coopting the spontaneous popular movement against the government, the ruling class hopes to confine the backlash within the bounds of the present system and make the masses pay for the crisis even more.

Danger in Bilateral Arms Freeze Framework

The larger economic and political situation presents the June 12 motion and the disarmament movement generally with a unique opportunity.



Peace walkers march through Chicago's predominantly black West Side on March 13, 1982, on their way from San Francisco to New York City. "I hope they get what they're after," said a man selling socks and watches on the street. "Reagan is running us into the ground, and if carrying balloons is what it takes, I'm all for it."



One Vermont town meeting. In 159 of 180 town hall meetings in the state that considered resolutions calling for an immediate freeze on nuclear armaments, the resolutions passed.

Because the ruling class is economically restricted from waging an uncapped arms race, the disarmament movement has a wider field of action politically, and the prospects for growth are bright. At the same time, there is a danger. Because they must go for an arms ceiling, the bourgeoisie has room to maneuver for leadership in the disarmament movement. Although the ruling class cannot support true disarmament in any real sense, it can use the facade of support to twist the people's genuine desire for peace to serve capitalism. This is the significance of the cooptation of the June 12 leadership.

The bourgeoisie's theoretical weapon in coopting the movement is the "bilateral" disarmament framework. Bilateralism has governed the U.S. position towards arms talks with the Soviet Union ever since negotiations first began. Under the guise of bilateral disarmament, the monopoly capitalists have been able to stall real disarmament for years by ducking around the difficulty of "verifying" whether the other side implements arms cuts. The ruling class always sidesteps the question of U.S. disarmament by insisting that arms reductions must be either "mutual" or not at all.

For example, take the March 10 Congressional resolution calling for an arms freeze. The resolution was sponsored by Democratic Senator Edward Kennedy and Republican Senator Mark Hatfield, and endorsed by 17 Senators and 122 Representatives. It called for "both" the U.S. and the Soviet Union to "pursue a complete halt to the nuclear weapons race," and "to decide when and how to achieve a mutual and verifiable freeze" on testing, production and further deployment of nuclear arms (our emphasis). The resolution also called for a move towards "mutual and verifiable" reduction in weapons stockpiles.

This resolution amounts to nothing but a bone thrown to the rising disarmament movement, designed to pacify and win votes in the coming elections. First, it is "non-binding," meaning that no member of Congress is under any obligation to act on the resolution. More important, the resolution contains nothing new in substance. The same hollow rhetoric has been used by almost every administration since arms talks first began, and the American people are no closer today than then to seeing real disarmament.

As could be expected, the Kennedy/Hatfield resolution has been endorsed by such bourgeois notables as George Kennan, diplomat and Soviet authority; William Colby, former CIA director; and Thomas Watson, Jr., former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union and ex-chairman of IBM.

The trap in the bilateral framework lies in how to verify progress. Clearly, the idea of U.S. officials having ready access to inspect Soviet military facilities and production plants and vice versa is unacceptable to both governments. Neither can the Soviet nor the American people be asked to place their trust in either government's inclination to police itself, especially not with the U.S.' track record. Thus, the net result of the bilateral framework is a continuing arms spiral, with

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both superpowers constantly forced to escalate in retaliation to moves by the other.

Unconditional U.S. Disarmament Break Arms Spiral

There is only one way out of this vicious arms spiral. The American people must demand *unconditional disarmament now!* At a March 5 disarmament forum in New York City, the Reverend Dwain Epps of the National Council of Churches, pointed out that one is always expected to point the finger at the other country. But, he said, "I will speak about our responsibility as United States citizens to cope with the problems that our government has created." "The U.S. is not alone in the problem, and yet, each of us, citizens of our particular countries, have our responsibilities where we are, in taking control of and demanding of our government a response to that which we would like to see happen in our own countries."

Obviously, all peace-loving people favor total world disarmament. But the concrete question for us is how do we do our part towards this end. It is the American people's duty to see to it that the U.S. government disarms. This is especially true since we live in an imperialist country whose government has for years tarnished the American people's good name through oppressing and exploiting other peoples all over the world. Our tax money pays the bill for nuclear weapons, and we are in the best position to verify where the government is seriously disarming. *Moreover, the American people are neither willing nor capable of supporting such a parasitic drain on our economic resources any longer — our economic survival is at stake.* This is the sober reality of today's permanent recession that's more like a depression than any recession.

Others have already taken this bold and heroic step. In Britain, unilateral British disarmament is one of the principles of unity of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. During the past year, the group's membership has soared from 3,000 to 30,000, and it is still growing at the rate of several thousand each month. In West Germany, the "alternative" movement has also called for unilateral West German disarmament.

It is not up to us to decide whether or not the Soviet Union also disarms in the process. Ultimately that responsibility lies with the Soviet people. The demand for unconditional U.S. disarmament is not based on a blind or naive "trust" in the other side. Soviet interference in Afghanistan, Eritrea and Poland shows that even a socialist country can make grievous errors when a revisionist line is in command. Rather, the unconditional disarmament demand is rooted in solid economic necessity.

El Salvador

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build and maintain a 500-member paramilitary force under U.S. supervision in Central America. While American troops would not be directly involved, two to three Spanish-speaking CIA agents would act as liaison for the group, supplying intelligence and pointing out targets. The purpose of the unit would be to destabilize the Nicaraguan economy by attacking dams and power stations. Less than a week later, two bridges in Nicaraguan territory near the border with Honduras were blown up.

At a March 19 press conference, the State Department announced that the U.S. had increased the number of military advisors stationed in Honduras from 14 last September to 100 since the beginning of this year. Officially, there are only 55 such "advisors" currently in El Salvador. The State Department said the increase was due to the Nicaraguan military buildup. Honduras, which borders both El Salvador and Nicaragua, has the largest armed forces in the region and the best-equipped air force. Furthermore, the U.S. is requesting the expansion of air bases in Honduras, and has plans to send Special Forces personnel (Green Berets) to train Honduran border patrols.

The U.S. role in training such "border patrols" is especially suspicious given the recent bombings and attempts to coerce Miskito Indians who live on the Nicaraguan side of the Nicaraguan/Honduran border into fighting the Sandinist government. The

As we said before, disarmament is also in the Soviet Union's economic interest. Brezhnev alluded to this in his March 16 statement. "To maintain our country's defense capability at the due level," he said, "requires diverting considerable resources to the detriment of our plans of peaceful construction." Regardless of the intentions of the Soviet leadership, the pressure by the Soviet people to speed up the growth of the Soviet economy and raise the level of the standard of living will keep in check whatever wild ambitions of conquest that any revisionist may have.

Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Capitalism, regardless of who is President, is driven by blind economic necessity to try to conquer new markets and sources of raw materials. Hence, the bourgeoisie must have a standing military force designed for aggression and not just for self-defense. To insure this capability, capitalism must continually nurture death merchants like Rockwell, General Electric and Northrup.

But under socialism — where private ownership of the means of production, the factories, mines and mills, has been replaced by public ownership by the working class — man is not at the mercy of spontaneous, anarchistic economic forces. There is no inherent economic necessity to exploit and oppress other nations through force of arms. Under socialism, leadership has a wide array of options to choose from, and individual leadership can have an enormous impact, for good or bad. For the Soviet people, disarmament is not a matter of survival. Because of the superiority of the socialist planned economy, where the state in the workers' name controls the major industries and financial institutions, the Soviet Union has been able to allocate a constant amount of its national resources to defense year after year, and at the same time maintain a steady improvement in the masses' standard of living. *For the Soviet people, disarmament means greater and faster economic prosperity,* because there are no arms merchant parasites to feed and no inherent economic necessity to launch wars of aggression.

What stands out in the disarmament issue is the fundamentally superior choices the people have under socialism as opposed to capitalism. In the Soviet Union, for example, the people can choose between either slower growth in both defense and social spending or disarmament and faster growth in social spending. In this country, the only choice the bourgeoisie would give the people is between either huge increases in military spending and cuts in social programs and benefits or slower growth in the military and even deeper cuts in funds for human needs. The bottom line for the people under socialism is infinitely better.

class is over the question of *when* to try to turn things around. The more advanced members of the bourgeoisie want the so-called "moderate" Duarte government to win so that the U.S. can prolong the myth of economic and social reform in El Salvador and build up the U.S. military at a slower rate. The Reaganites want to draw the line now.

But unlike the question of nuclear disarmament, where Reagan has to cop to the position of the bourgeoisie as a whole, in El Salvador, the administration has the backing of the biggest monopoly capitalist of all — Rockefeller. The Rockefeller interests in Latin America are well known. This is why Haig, with Rockefeller's blessing, has been one of the prime instigators behind the administration's hard-line policy in El Salvador.

If the U.S. is able to successfully crush the liberation movement in El Salvador, invasions of Nicaragua and Cuba are almost certain. This is the bloody, insatiable nature of imperialism, which must conquer new markets and sources of raw materials to survive. Since Reagan is not likely to seek a second term, and therefore can ignore public opinion, he is the perfect instrument for the bourgeoisie to act as their hatchman in both foreign and domestic policy.

The ruling class has no choice but to violate the overwhelming demand of the American people that the U.S. get out of El Salvador. But through this experience the majority of Americans will learn why capitalism must be overthrown and replaced by socialism. Unless the capitalist dictatorship is replaced by workers' rule, the American people will continue to face the threat of one, two, three and more Vietnams. □

Who Really Stands for Disarmament and Meeting Human Needs?

Only by demanding unconditional U.S. disarmament can the disarmament movement expose where the government really stands on the disarmament issue. Whether one upholds unconditional disarmament or not is rapidly becoming the dividing line between those who stand for genuine disarmament and peace and those who would only cover up the government's stalling, between those who really stand for funding human needs and those who would willingly sacrifice human needs for token cuts in the military.

These are the issues involved in the fight for leadership over June 12. Some in the so-called official rally committee are representatives of the bourgeoisie straight-up, while others are blinded by their reformist outlook, fearing the bourgeoisie and hating the mass movement. Rumor has it that politicians like Edward Kennedy and Walter Mondale are being considered as speakers for the June 12 rally. If true, this would explain much. Ruling class politicians like Kennedy wouldn't dare speak at a demonstration with real grass-roots organizers and revolutionaries in the leadership.

Since they can't stop June 12, the bourgeoisie must try to coopt it. A broad, popular movement with progressive leadership that uncompromisingly demands genuine disarmament and funds for human needs is a threat to the monopoly capitalists' rule. They know that demands like these cannot be implemented while capitalism exists. Unable to allow such demands, the bourgeoisie's dictatorship would be exposed, and the American people would learn through their own experience why capitalist rule must be overthrown and replaced by workers' rule, socialism. Unconditional disarmament is a demand whose time has come. "It is an old maxim that in politics one often has to learn from the enemy," Lenin summed up. "And at revolutionary moments the enemy always forces correct conclusions upon us in a particularly instructive and speedy manner." (*New Tasks, New Forces*)

But the ruling class won't find June 12 so easy to coopt. Already, a broad array of progressive, anti-war, and minority groups representing the excluded majority in the national coalition are meeting to plan strategy. The general sentiment is to move forward on June 12 regardless of the bourgeoisie's scheme. This also reflects the feelings of grass-roots organizers building for June 12 all over the country.

As Lenin said in the same work, "The more the democratic propaganda and agitation conducted independently of us works to our advantage, the greater becomes the importance of an organized Social-Democratic leadership to safeguard the independence of the working class from the bourgeois democrats." (*New Tasks, New Forces*) The June 12 motion is on. We won't allow it to be manipulated into supporting one bourgeois politician or another, each as likely to slit the people's throat as Reagan. □

Greensboro

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committed by Greensboro Police. Yet in December, 1980, the Justice Department claimed that it had "no jurisdiction, even to investigate civil rights violations in the case," according to Pitts.

Further, Pitts pointed to the motion for a protective order filed by the Justice Department in January to prevent depositions being taken from Klansmen/Greensboro police informant Edward Dawson and Nazi Raeford Caudle in the civil rights suit discovery process as proof of Justice Department's previous activity designed to cover up in the case. According to the Institute for Southern Studies Report, "The Third of November," Dawson recruited for, organized and led the Klan/Nazi motor caravan that attacked the demonstrators with the knowledge of members of the Greensboro police. Nazi Raeford Caudle admittedly owned many of the guns used in the attack and the car that carried them, and was present with Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agent Bernard Butkovich in Nazi planning meetings prior to the shootings. Neither testified in the 1980 state trial in which four Klansmen and two Nazis were acquitted by an all-white jury of all charges in the incident.

"Our clients have worked since November 3rd for the facts to come out and justice to be done. They have asserted their willingness to assist with an good-faith attempt to obtain justice and prosecute all those responsible. We will be watching the grand jury very closely. Public pressure and scrutiny is the only way to insure a meaningful inquiry and pursuit of justice," warned Pitts. □

Tony To, Central Committee member of the Communist Workers Party

Momentum for the United Nations' Special Session on Disarmament this June is snowballing fast. The centerpiece of activities around the special session will be a June 12 march and rally in New York City. The day promises to be one of the largest showings in the American people's spring offensive against the government's foreign and domestic policies.

Unprecedented Groundswell for Disarmament

There has been a groundswell of popular support for nuclear disarmament in recent months. Town meetings throughout the Northeast have debated the question. Resolutions calling for a nuclear arms freeze passed in 159 of 180 towns and cities in Vermont, in 28 of 34 cities in New Hampshire, in five Massachusetts towns, seven in Maine, and three in Connecticut. In California, a half-million signatures have been collected on a petition to put the issue on the ballot in November. Another half-million Americans have signed similar petitions in Michigan, New Jersey and Delaware.

In Amarillo, Texas, housewives organized protests against a local arms factory where many of their husbands are employed. The "Pantex" plant assembles components shipped from all over the country into nuclear weapons. The neutron bomb would be built there should the government decide to deploy it. Bishop Leroy Mathiesen has urged Catholics working in the plant to consider more peaceful employment.

In Seattle, Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen declared that he would withhold half of his federal income tax this year in protest against the arms race. Nationally, 20 major religious denominations have condemned the continued arms buildup. Recent polls indicate that 75 percent of the American people favor some form of freeze on nuclear weapons development.

In addition, arms freeze resolutions have been endorsed by the full state legislatures of Oregon, Massachusetts and Connecticut, and by one legislative chamber in New York, Vermont, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Kansas.

This outpouring of mass sentiment represents a clear mandate that the American people are against war and opposed to Reagan's military budget. There is not doubt that large numbers of Americans will turn out on June 12 as almost every group from the left to the center of the nation's political scene is involved in the mobilization effort. However, recent developments in the national coalition for the demonstration threaten to narrow the aims of this grass-roots movement and distort its true demands.

Bourgeoisie Maneuvers to Coopt June 12

Within the last two weeks, a handful of organizations in the national coalition have arbitrarily dissolved the broad, democratic coordinating committee which had been the overall June 12 leadership. These groups arrogantly declared themselves the "official" June 12 rally committee and have even gone as far as to legally incorporate themselves.

The new body is made up of some 13 groups, including the Riverside Church, the International Association of Machinists, SANE, Pax Christi, 1199 National Hospital and Healthcare Workers Union, Friends of the Earth, Nuclear Freeze Campaign, CALC, District 65, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Conspicuously missing from the incorporated body is the Mobilization for Survival, one of the main initiators of the disarmament action.

When the call for June 12 was first issued in the latter part of last year, the coordinating committee was to be composed of every national organization who 1) had organized a large event, 2) would commit themselves to the UN Special Session, and 3) were willing to devote either staff or other contributions to the effort. The two main slogans for the day centered around opposition to nuclear destruction and funds for human needs.

Bust the Capitalist Hold — Unconditional Disarmament Now!

June 12 Won't Be Coopted



By dismantling the original June 12 organizational structure, the so-called "official" body has set itself up at the expense of nearly 100 groups and organizations that made up the coordinating committee. The maneuver came as a surprise to many in the national coalition. But in fact, it is the culmination of a struggle that has been brewing since January.

On January 29-30, an important meeting was held by all the groups involved in building the demonstration. At the meeting, an attempt was made to make the effort more relevant to minorities. Two proposals reached the floor: that the national coalition demand an end to U.S. intervention in El Salvador, and that the coalition condemn the increasing racist attacks against minorities, particularly the Reagan policies. After heated debate, both proposals were defeated. Groups such as the Riverside Church and Greenpeace opposed the demands as overall coalition slogans.

In a compromise, Communist Workers Party member Ron Ashford moved that the coalition's slogan against nuclear arms be amended to include a paragraph opposing U.S. intervention in El Salvador. This was accepted, and a similar compromise was worked out to include a paragraph against racism under the coalition's second main slogan for human needs. The national coalition also agreed to establish an executive committee to supervise the day-to-day work of the coalition. One-third of this committee and all other major committees were to be made up of minorities.

However, immediately after the January meeting, numerous attempts were made to undo what had been agreed upon. Several groups threatened to bolt the coalition if the decisions were implemented. Finally,

In the past year, Americans have tried various ways to protest nuclear power, like the massive occupation of Diablo Canyon in California.

the struggle came to a head with the recent back-door power grab. The new rally committee has set up another six-to-seven-member executive committee responsible for the day-to-day mobilization. Staff members will be drawn from the Riverside Church, 1199, Greenpeace, the Nuclear Freeze Campaign, the Mobilization for Survival and others. All remaining groups in the national coalition have been invited to "endorse" June 12.

While this maneuver may seem to some as just another sectarian power struggle, there is much more at stake. *It represents no less than an attempt by the bourgeoisie to coopt June 12 and the disarmament movement generally. To understand the real substance of the struggle, the June 12 motion must be put in the context of the larger economic and political situation.*

The Economic Constraints on a Ceilingless Arms Race

We are in the midst of a permanent recession, an economic crisis more like a depression than any recession. Depression-level unemployment in many parts of the country and the Reagan budget cuts have stripped the workers' purchasing power. Reagan's tax cuts for the rich and his headlong commitment to build up the

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Stop the Con-cession Game!

VOTE NO ON CONCESSIONS!

As Workers Viewpoint goes to press, news broke of a tentative agreement between the negotiating committee of the United Auto Workers and General Motors for a concession contract. Licking at the chops for a share in the booty after the Ford contract, GM entered its second round of negotiations with the UAW stating it wanted more concessions from Doug Fraser and Co. than even Ford got. While details are sketchy, the GM agreement has chilling similarities to the sellout Ford agreement ratified just two weeks ago. Fraser is on his second public relations tour, trying to pawn this sellout off as "protection"

against future auto layoffs.

With the extent of the takebacks and given the fact that GM is the largest employer of autoworkers in the country, the concessions amount to a whopping \$2-3 billion dollars out of the wages and benefits of the workers. This is even more ridiculous considering GM made a \$300 million profit in 1981.

With the Ford agreement posed as the model concession contract, the hype about the GM contract guaranteeing jobs is a lie. GM promises so-called "lifetime" employment at four plants. This provision pits workers in one plant

against another. Already at Ford, local presidents are stepping over each other to become part of the "chosen few." In fact, the Ford contract provides no guarantees for the jobs of the majority of autoworkers still employed, much less a guarantee for the income of those laid off.

The Ford contract's language explicitly accepts: "Closings would be permitted for volume-related reasons attributable to market conditions or other reasons beyond the control of the company, or internal company consolidations or operations within the units

represented by UAW."

In the Ford contract, the *only* restrictions on plant closings is a 24-month ban on plants closed due to outsourcing. But there is no ban on outsourcing overall.

GM says it will keep open four plants it "intended" to close. But three of these four plant closings were announced after the first round of UAW/GM talks broke down due to rank and file opposition to concessions. GM used the closing of the Fremont and Southgate plants as an obvious scare tactic to hold over the membership during the present negotiation/ratification process.

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