From the Editors

written by Betty Reid Mandell, Marvin Mandell | January 20, 2010

For more than 150 years socialists have insisted that only workers themselves can make any fundamental change in social relations because only workers organizing themselves in the process of struggle to become a governing class can ensure that the old class society isn't reproduced by a new class of exploiters; the new society created by them would have democratic workers' control over the means of production. Revolutions in such countries as China, Cuba, Vietnam, and N. Korea were not led by the working class (urban or rural), as Regis Debray made clear in his *Revolution in the Revolution* (1967). We shouldn't want the 1959 Cuban Revolution to be a democratic workers' uprising, he wrote, because "No political front which is basically a deliberative body can assume the leadership of a people's war; only a technically capable executive group, centralized . . . can do so; in brief, only a revolutionary general staff." Contrast that to Eugene Debs's "Too long have the workers of the world waited for some Moses to lead them out of bondage. He has not come; he never will come. I would not lead you out if I could, for if you could be led out, you could be led back again. I would have you make up your minds that there is nothing that you cannot do for yourselves."

A special section of this issue is devoted to workers' struggles today. Who are the workers? How are they organized? What are their chances of success? Both John Hammond and Jennifer Shea-Brandynn Holgate stress difficulties in organizing: Hammond, the World Social Forum activists from diverse backgrounds and interests; and Shea-Holgate, isolated caregivers. Andreas Malm and Shora Esmailian discuss the extremely difficult struggle that Iranian workers are having against the religious dictatorship; John Gibler writes about the bloody uprising of Mexican teachers and other workers in poverty-stricken Oaxaca; but Karen Wirsig tells of a victory for Canadian broadcast workers.

Our special section on the elections highlights the dilemma that activists face in trying to mount an opposition to media-favored millionaire candidates — join a third party or the progressive wing of the Democratic Party? Jonathan Tasini challenged Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary and was virtually ignored by the media, as was Howie Hawkins in his Green Party challenge to her.

Also featured in this issue is Stephen R. Shalom's analysis of crises in the Middle East: in Iraq, Iran, Lebanon , and Palestine. The rest of our articles again cover a wide spectrum: from abortion, adoption, and psychotherapy to a discussion of whether the Bush Administration is fascist.

When things look bleak, we are reminded of the words of the Spanish Civil War revolutionary, Buenaventura Durruti: "We carry a new world here in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."

MARVIN AND BETTY

Footnotes