

Other analysts point to the strong organization of the PT, the only modern and democratic political party in Brazil, where politics has for generations rested on a base of authoritarian paternalism.

The big loser in the election was the government-supported Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement, which won most of its victories in the more traditional interior towns.

PT party activists will now be

working to harness the energy of their electoral victories for the presidential campaign of PT leader Luis Inácio da Silva. Seen as a long shot before November 15, da Silva is now emerging as a major challenger in the November 1989 election, Brazil's first free presidential contest in almost 30 years.

The other big winner in the municipal elections was the Democratic Workers Party, which is run by the

charismatic and ambitious populist Leonel Brizola, tagged by some as the front-runner in the presidential race. Brizola's candidate in São Paulo dropped out to support Erundina, and Brizola has already approached da Silva and the PT on forming a coalition for the presidential election. PT leaders, however, riding on the crest of victory, say it is too early to speak of joining forces with Brizola.

—Ken Serbin

India on the move: Mobile crèches

NEW DELHI—Her name is Soni. Building contractors call her "casual labor." As the afternoon sun pushes temperatures at the site of the new Italian Embassy here into the mid-90s, she strains visibly under the weight of the wet concrete she carries in a tin tray balanced precariously on her head.

Soni earns 14 rupees, or about \$1.07, a day. She falls into what government statisticians commonly refer to as the "unorganized" sector of India's labor force—those hired on a day-to-day basis in the agriculture and construction industries. Nearly all Indian working women are day laborers. They enjoy neither the job security nor the social benefits associated with regular employment. "These women," says sociologist Mina Swaminathan, "are among the neediest in India."

At the Italian Embassy construction site an organization known for its pioneering work in aiding India's poorest women, Mobile Crèches, recently opened its newest day-care center. It takes care of children age 12 and under, to help "ease the burden" of Soni and her fellow day laborers.

"The child is the primary focus [of

the center]," says Manju Vaish, who has worked with the organization for the past five years. "But we're also concerned about the mother, who is often a harassed homemaker living in a hovel with none of the basic amenities, like clean drinking water and proper sewage facilities. Our staff is trained to educate women in matters of hygiene, nutrition and other aspects of child care and family management. The working woman in India, especially the poor, has no respite. By caring for her children we hope to ease her burden."

Under Indian law, companies employing at least 20 women are required to provide adequate on-site day-care facilities for children. But Kali Vahra, a Mobile Crèches official says few do. "They build boardrooms instead."

Mobile Crèches was founded in 1969 by Meera Mahadevan, a writer who was so moved by the sight of children playing in the mud while their mothers worked that she put up a tent at one building site in New Delhi. That became her first crèche.

"That tent was her beginning," says Mina Swaminathan, the author of *Who Cares?*, the definitive study of day-care facilities in India. "She had no theories, no money. But she soon found a handful of dedicated volunteers to match her unswerving passion and determination."

The organization grew rapidly, helped by a stream of volunteers and ungenerous but adequate funding from the Indian government, as well as support from national and international charity agencies and individuals. In the past 19 years Mobile Crèches has opened 162 day-care centers throughout India, moving—as its name suggests—from one construction site to the next as needs arise. "Each center," says Vaish, "exists only as long as construction lasts."

Currently the organization runs about 50 mobile day-care centers throughout the country that serve about 4,000 children.

The success of Mobile Crèches has inspired other volunteer organizations in India to provide services roughly modeled after Mahadevan's example. Today some 1,500 agencies operate about 8,000 centers that serve 200,000 children.

"Mobile Crèches has had an impact out of all proportion to its size," says Swaminathan. "It was so radically different, so imaginative and so compelling that it quickly attracted attention throughout India and worldwide."

"We hope to be able to continue to grow," says Vaish.

Adds Soni, cuddling her two-year-old son, "It's given us some hope."

—Gary Yerkey

Sports for sale

Watch kickoffs closely on NBC's National Football League telecasts this Sunday and you will see the only real innovation in the sport this season—the "capital formation." Budweiser gets to frame the actual start of play with an ad that announces: "This kickoff is sponsored by Budweiser, the King of Beers."

The obliteration of the line between the commercial and the sport originated in Anheuser-Busch's semi-advertisements during the 1986 World Cup, where the Budweiser logo framed live-action pictures of soccer matches. Most viewers probably rejoiced in this sponsorship. The alternative in commercially telecast soccer is to break for ads while the action continues, or to televise pre-taped, edited matches. But on the football field, there is no cause for rejoicing.

The sportswriting chorus, so sensitive to "the commercialization of sports," when athletes or unions can be blamed, has made little mention of this latest advance in sport as commodity. Live action, the moment of play, is now corporate-owned.

Few sports journalists seem to care. Not even noted is the obvious point that the advertisement makes a mockery of the league's drug program—if that is now possible.

As outrageous as the new ads are, their coming was inevitable. In this century, sport and the sales pitch have never been far apart. From the first billboard fences in the old baseball parks, business has consistently attempted to control some of the space associated with sport. This trend continues with the athletes themselves becoming moving billboards, with their shirts, jackets and shoes endorsing products. Sometimes, as with professional tennis players wearing golden arches on their shirts, the products have nothing to do with the game. In football, athletes are barred from hustling such ads—witness the 1985 controversy over Chicago Bear quarterback Jim McMahon's logo-laden headband, but the league itself can combine commercials and live action.

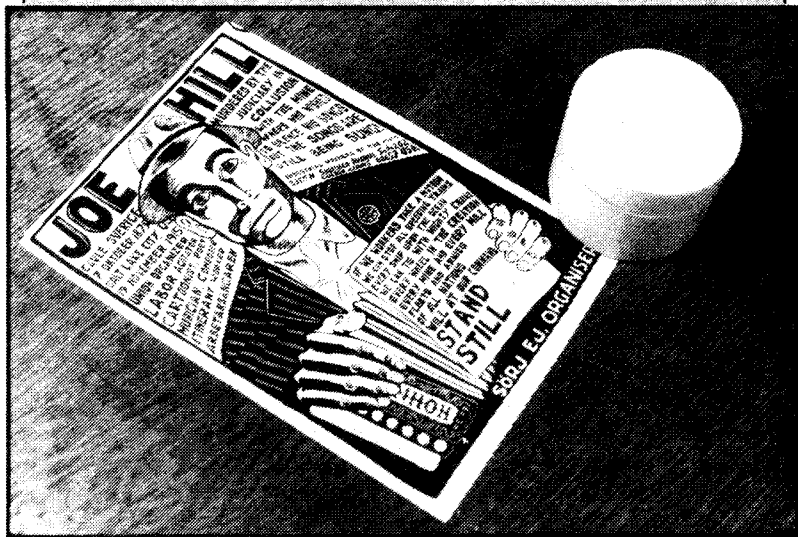
The athlete-as-ad is only one thing that blurs the separation between "game time" and time for commercials. The "TV time-out" is another. As is naming the "Chevrolet most

valuable player" in the last minute of basketball games. Or take the recent United States Tennis Open telecasts that featured announcements of the percentage of first serves players were putting into play. Although this calculation requires only long division, the announcers were careful to observe, "This statistic is brought to you courtesy of UNISYS." The Pentagon's insidious "Be All You Can Be" ads sponsor filmed football footage during breaks in a live game, as do IBM's "You Make the Call" commercials. In the baseball bleachers lavish scoreboards blare commercials. And on radio, sports announcers run corporate-sponsored contests one inning a game: "A home run is worth \$500 to some lucky listener." Living in Mid-Missouri, my eight-year-old believes "Pizza Hut Home Run" is the full and correct term.

We wait for: "This spitball is brought to you by Skoal Chewing Tobacco," or perhaps one Super Bowl team wearing "Tastes Great" jerseys with the opposition wearing uniforms that read "Less Filling." It's mourning in American sports.

—Dave Roediger

tion posits that de Marenches and *In These Times*' "senior U.S. intelligence source" are both active in this anti-Bush network. There is some evidence to support this scenario. *In These Times*' source, in addition to providing useful and verifiable information, praised Lyndon LaRouche's *Executive Intelligence Review* and strongly defended jailed CIA operative Edmund Wilson. As for de Marenches, Woodward reported in *Veil* that at their meeting de Marenches warned Reagan: "Don't trust the CIA. These are not serious people." Woodward interpreted this statement to mean that the CIA lacked "purposefulness."



For now Joe Hill's remains are resting in a white jar at IWW headquarters in Chicago.

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As for Joe Hill's ashes

What should the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) do with Joe Hill's recently discovered ashes? (The ashes, confiscated in 1917 by the Bureau of Investigation, the forerunner to the FBI, turned up this year in the National Archives.) Last month we asked readers to enter their suggestions in an In Short Ashes Contest. There were many worthy entries. And the winners are:

Mike Matejka of Bloomington, Ill.: "In the spirit of solidarity and industrial unionism Joe Hill represented, his ashes should be distributed 'wherever workers organize.' Perhaps a fragment of them should go to South African miners, another little piece to the unions blooming in El Salvador and perhaps another to peasant organizers in the Philippines."

Edna V. Vanek of Chicago: "The ashes should go wherever the IWW archives are. Joe Hill was a labor martyr and his ashes should be treated with the respect and care given to religious martyrs whose remains, in bits and pieces, are enshrined in religious temples. Lacking temples of labor, an archive is the next best place."

Lechman Weichselbaum of Brooklyn, N.Y.: "They built a tomb for Lenin. How about something—though of course on a much more modest scale—for our own Joe Hill?"

Donny Barth of Chicago: "I think one should create a memorial in which to display his remains. Adjacent to this memorial would be a multimedia interactive system where people could get information about Joe Hill's life and the IWW. People could leave their impressions, thoughts and comments on this computer system and read others' comments. The system would be connected to other points around the world so that various 'workers of the world' could exchange ideas. A very costly idea, I know, but with great potential."

Jeff Creque of Bolinas, Calif.: "It seems a windy hill somewhere in Western mining country would be an appropriate spot to cast Joe Hill's ashes to the wind. The image of fading flowers coming to life suggests that a recovering strip mine site might be appropriate. The hill should be designated a national monument, and renamed 'Joe Hill.'"

Stan Campbell of Rockford, Ill.: "Raffle the ashes off in a nationwide contest with the proceeds going to strike funds of democratic unions."

Gregory Johnson of Woods Hole, Mass.: "Joe Hill's ashes should be scattered from a helicopter over the presidential inauguration of George Bush."

Abbie Hoffman of Solebury, Pa.: "I hope no one takes this in a ghoulish way, but have the IWW pick a dozen potential 'Joe Hills.' Each would swallow a teaspoonful of ashes. In their wills they too would ask to be cremated and the process repeated."

By Daniel Lazare

NEW YORK

THE DEEPENING GLOOM OVER THE U.S. deficit is not only an economic crisis but a constitutional crisis—constitutional with a small “c” because it touches on the governance of the entire Western Alliance as well as the U.S.

On one hand, there are the parliamentary democracies of Western Europe, Canada and Japan, which generally manage to dispose of their affairs with a modicum of briskness and efficiency. Confronted with a proposal for a sweeping U.S. free-trade agreement,

UNBALANCED ECONOMY

Canadian voters debated for a mere 50 days, then settled the issue, at least for the time being, with a single trip to the polls (see story on page 11). Margaret Thatcher may have stripped Britain of much of its industrial base and saddled the country with a negative balance of payments, but at least the specific enterprise she heads, the British government, is safely in the black this year with a projected \$18-billion surplus.

Then, on the other hand, there is the U.S., a government so deeply in the red that it has all but given up trying to dig itself out. In contrast to Canada, the U.S. has just come through a grueling 12-month election in which the deficit was either ignored or papered over with a lot of nonsense about a “flexible freeze” (Bush) or the enhanced revenue collections that would supposedly come from a beefed-up IRS (Dukakis).

For the foreigners who have loaned the U.S. well over \$1 trillion since 1981, the results were deeply unsettling because it looks as if the American system is more interested in candidates’ sexual mores or whether they begin each morning with a Pledge of Allegiance than in the more pressing issue—from their point of view—of how to pay the country’s debts.

Dumping for dollars: Consequently, by October, just as the presidential campaign was switching into high gear, the dollar was beginning its descent. Each time Bush told voters to “read my lips: no new taxes,” it sank a little lower. By November 9, when it became evident that power in Washington would be hopelessly divided between a Republican White House and a Democratic Congress, it was ready to fall through the floor.

“Business cheers the Bush victory,” the *New York Times* assured its readers on November 10. Foreigners heave a “sigh of relief” over the election of a free-trade Republican, reported the *Wall Street Journal*. Yet at the same time, the people who really count—America’s creditors—were signaling their panic by dumping dollars, unloading U.S. stocks and boosting interest rates.

What’s going on? Why does it seem to be morning in America when the dusk is settling abroad? Some of the reasons are well-known—the global economic slump, the increasing burdens of empire as the U.S. redoubles its efforts to police the world, etc. But at least one is not.

This is the problem of the U.S. Constitu-



How the Founding Fathers got us into this deficit mess

tion. Heretical as it may sound in the afterglow of the bicentennial, America is saddled with one of the worst government structures in the world. In moments of stress, it doesn’t provide for the smooth and fluid exercise of power, as government should. Instead, it tends to freeze up and enter a kind of rigor mortis at all the wrong moments. Rather than allowing people to concentrate on the task at hand, it fairly ensures that they will fritter their energies away on a lot of side issues. The Constitution not only prevents the coming together of a left-wing majority—as the oligarchical James Madison assured supporters it would in *Federalist Paper No. 10*—but mitigates against the formation of any coherent majority program at all.

In the past, presidents confronted by a recalcitrant Congress have managed to break the deadlock by assuming near-dictatorial, extra-constitutional powers (e.g.,

In moments of stress, the Constitution doesn’t provide for the smooth and fluid exercise of power.

Lincoln in 1861) and daring anyone to stop them. But since the problem now is a recalcitrant president, that solution, even if desirable, does not present itself. Consequently, the deadlock between a president pledged to no new taxes and a Democratic Congress determined to make him eat his words promises to continue to at least 1991 and possibly beyond.

A few knowledgeable foreigners have long been aware of this flaw in the U.S. system but have either kept it to themselves or have had trouble making themselves heard. One of the few to break through was a former

British member of Parliament and a minister in the Macmillan and Douglas-Home governments named Peter Smithers, who, in a penetrating essay in the *Wall Street Journal* in December 1987, expressed astonishment that, in the event of a deadlock, “the president has no power to dissolve Congress so the electors may choose between him and them.” A prime minister can put the question before the voters, yet in the U.S., with its artificial distinction between the executive and the legislative, there is no way out until the next regularly scheduled election. Even then, due to inveterate ticket-splitting and the decline of the parties, the logjam may actually continue.

“The decision-making mechanism in the U.S. is, in the literal sense of the word, incoherent,” Smithers wrote. The balance of powers leads inevitably to “a conflict of wills and a dangerous paralysis of government,” the upshot being that “the world’s richest country, custodian of the reserve currency, is willing to devalue that currency as an alternative to balancing [its] budget.”

Seedy policy: The seeds of the latest constitutional breakdown were planted in 1981 when Congress approved President Reagan’s \$100 billion tax cut and a substantial increase in military and related spending. Euro-rightists were skeptical of the former but approving of the latter, and so they went along. Despite pursuing traditional, Herbert Hoover-style, deflationary remedies at home, Thatcher supported the supply-side revolution in the U.S. because, as keeper of the reserve currency, the U.S. seemed to enjoy certain prerogatives that Britain did not.

By borrowing, it could inflate credit in a world economy badly in need of a lift. It would not collapse as Mitterrand’s government nearly did in 1981, but would hold up under the load. Lending to the U.S. would not only be good business but good politics—an expression of faith in Reagan & Co.

The more debt the U.S. government took on and the more the dollar rose, the more Reagan seemed to swell with pride.

Others fretted however, which is why congressional Democrats, aware that the strong dollar was undermining agriculture and manufacturing, began pressing for a tax increase and clamoring for a balanced budget. In 1984, Walter Mondale, in defiance of the common wisdom, ran on a platform of higher taxes. The common wisdom held and Mondale lost, whereupon the Democrats shifted tactics.

No longer would they allow themselves to be painted as the party of higher taxes. If the Republicans wanted more revenue, they would have to go before the voters themselves. Gramm-Rudman was simply a bipartisan exercise in closing all the exits but two: reduced spending or increased revenue. If the GOP couldn’t accomplish the former—and the deadlock over social versus military spending made it unlikely that they could—they would have to opt for the latter. The Republicans had gotten the country into this mess, and Democrats were damned if they were going to bail them out.

Thus, by 1988, taxes were a topic that most presidential candidates chose to skirt, Republicans out of supply-side zeal, Democrats to avoid a repeat of 1984. In a left-liberal variation of the supply-side theme, presidential candidate Paul Simon announced that he had found a way to boost social spending without raising revenue, but few people were convinced, and his candidacy died. Bruce Babbitt came out foursquare for consumption taxes, which was brave but also regressive, and his candidacy fizzled as well. Jesse Jackson called for taxing the wealthy, but since it was so far outside the bipartisan consensus in Washington, it was widely deemed unrealistic. Dukakis ruled out any tax increase other than as a last resort, while promising to strengthen the IRS by hiring thousands more tax inspectors. Since this was the mildly soak-the-rich, technocratic solution least offensive to most Democrats, Dukakis got the nomination—and lost the election.

By contrast, Bush got off to an early start promising not just to hold the line on taxes but to reduce them by cutting the rate on capital gains. The message caught on, and with each new “read my lips,” his political fortunes rose. Simultaneously, U.S. fortunes fell, and the mood in international financial circles was turning grim. On October 17 the *Financial Times* wrote in an editorial that the U.S. was overextended, Reagan was “enfeebled” and the yawning deficit was “hogging” capital that would be better invested in the Third World.

“[U.S.] problems may well be small when compared to those of its rival [the Soviet Union],” the *Financial Times* said, “but so, it appears, is the likelihood that a president will be elected with the capacity or, indeed, the mandate to tackle them.” In an editorial headlined “Oh dear,” the *Economist* refused to endorse either candidate, an implicit recognition that whoever won, the rest of the world would lose.

Since then, the deluge: As a *Financial Times* reporter noted recently, “France’s stock market has appeared to be much more worried by the election of a right-wing president than by the re-election of the socialist Mr. Francois Mitterrand on its home turf.” In

Continued on page 22