

Editorial

'Arbeit macht frei'

Arbeit macht frei ("Work makes you free") was the slogan hung over the entrance to Auschwitz and other Nazi concentration camps. Here Jews and gypsies, the victims of Hitler's racial policies, were worked to death along with "guest workers" from countries occupied by the Nazis. After the end of World War II, the Nuremberg trials established the principle of accountability for these and other such crimes against humanity.

Now, 50 years after the defeat of Adolf Hitler, we are witnessing the reemergence of the very same Nazi ideology—packaged now as the so-called Conservative Revolution. Newt Gingrich and his followers are openly claiming that their plans to force slave labor on prison inmates, and almost equally barbarous conditions on the unemployed, are a form of liberation.

The United States already has the highest per-capita prison population in the world—of which a disproportionate number are black. Throw more people onto the street without any means of gainful employment, and they will be forced into the untenable alternatives of starvation or crime. Arrested and thrown into prison, if Gingrich has his way, they will become a cheap-labor pool to be worked on the chain gangs of the 1990s. How different is this, really, from the slave-labor camps in which the hapless victims of Hitler were worked to death?

Most vulnerable of all to Gingrich's so-called reforms, will be the children from minority families who already have no hope for the future. One might say, with no exaggeration, that blacks today are Gingrich's substitute for the Jews who were the victims of Nazi brutality. The next step will be to herd these deprived young people off the streets into work camps, where they will be forced to perform slave labor.

The issue between President Clinton and the new American Newtzi Party, is not about balancing the budget—even though that appears to be the subject under discussion. It is about the future of the United States. Is it to remain a republic, or become a fascist state?

The idea that there is an equivalence between a

national government and a family household trying to pay its bills, would be nothing short of lunacy, were it not such a patently cynical fraud promoted by a group of fascists with an entirely different agenda.

Are rich speculators, who are presently driving the U.S. economy into an economic and financial crisis far worse than the Great Depression of the 1930s, to be rewarded with a capital-gains tax-cut bonanza, while decent people are thrown out of work and onto the streets, left to scramble for their existence, as more and more jobs are lost? Are the poor, the elderly, and the young to be declared useless eaters, whose lives are to be forfeit? These are the real subjects at issue in the present so-called budget debate.

The attempt by the Gingrich faction to force President Clinton to concede to a trade-off between what is presently a bare-subsistence level of support to the needy, in favor of benefits to the rich, is more cynical, more *openly* barbaric than any Nazi scheme of the past. Should the President refuse this rotten bargain, then, threaten the American SS troops of the new Newtzi party, we shall simply close down the federal government.

Should Gingrich and his crowd succeed in forcing President Clinton to back down, in order to let the government begin to function again, such a concession to such fascist demands will be countable perhaps in millions of lives of innocent people lost.

Even the dumbest congressman, or the stupidest Gingrich supporter, knows exactly what the consequences will inevitably be of denying medical care to the poor, of eliminating hospital beds and reducing food stamps and school lunch programs, of denying the elderly supplementary benefits to allow them to heat their homes in winter and use air-conditioning in summer.

What they propose is genocide, and their method is verging on treason. Nor can *any* American claim not to understand the implications of the proposed budget cuts which the new Newtzis are demanding. They cannot be allowed to succeed.