

## MASSACRE AT ATTICA

### WHO IS GUILTY?...

The brutal, bloody murderers of Attica are none other than the ruling class of this society. The direct executioners were Rockefeller, State Commissioner of Correction Oswald and their man in the field—Capt. Williams. Nixon immediately proclaimed his public support for this cold-blooded and calculated act.

Rockefeller cut down the Attica prisoners in the manner of his father and grandfather before him—ruthlessly and to protect the system from which his profits spring. From the murder of the Ludlow miners to the present, this family has carried the policies of the armed fist over the entire globe. It is no wonder that during his recent Latin American tour "Rocky" found himself hiding in country after country when workers and students by the hundreds of thousands protested. The Rockefeller name and the Rockefeller practice symbolize, more than any other, the American capitalist class—a class that will stop at nothing to extend and protect its profitable holdings.

The utter falsity of Oswald's excuse for moving in—that the guards were having their throats slashed—became obvious when the medical examiner reported that all the hostages were killed with shotgun blasts—shotguns the prisoners did not have. The attack had been planned for days; the rest was a matter of timing. The phony issue of "saving" the guards is exposed by the nature of the attack—clouds of pepper gas followed by rapid-fire sprays of shotgun fire ripping apart everything within range. No wonder Rockefeller displayed surprise when as many as thirty of the hostages turned up alive!

These despicable racist guards are despised even by the ruling class that cynically uses them. The governor not only served notice on the prisoners that rebellion does not pay, and rebellion linked with revolutionary ideas means certain death, but he had a message for the guards too: Keep the upper hand or else!

The elitest class outlook of the Rockefellers is exemplified by David Rockefeller, Nelson's brother and president of Chase Manhattan Bank, who stated on the day of the massacre: "Nelson is first; he's first in volume," then, laughing, he repeated, "in volume." (*New York Times*, 15 September) David was presiding over the Bank's 115-painting art collection valued at over \$2.5 million. He was referring to Nelson's much larger collection of some 1,500 paintings valued in the hundreds of millions.

One of the collages in the collection is by an American artist, John Day. It is titled "Attica" and according to the *Times* "drew more than its

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Attica Prisoners — Many Killed Later — Meet With Oswald

## TROTSKYISTS FUSE AT SPARTACIST LEAGUE PLENUM

Over eighty people attended the enlarged Third Plenum of the Second Central Committee of the Spartacist League, held in New York City over the Labor Day weekend. Participants and observers from all parts of the country were present, as well as a Spartacist representative recently returned from Europe and fraternal delegates from the Spartacist League of New Zealand. The Plenum consummated the principled unification of the Communist Working Collective of Los Angeles with the SL. Members of the Mass Strike Organizing Committee of Boston, which subsequently dissolved itself into a sympathizing study circle of the SL, also attended.

### Class Struggle Sharpens

This Plenum marks an historic point in the transformation of the Spartacist League, a transformation which occurs at a crucial juncture for the international working class. The gathering took place shortly after Nixon's announcement of his new economic program, which definitively marks the breakdown of the post-World War II configuration of the world capitalist system and the reversion of American imperialism to merely the strongest of several competing units. The intensification of inter-imperialist rivalries poses the threat of a new imperialist war ever more sharply. The Stalinist bureaucracies abet the trend through their cynical nationalist maneuvers, tending to be drawn into the new imperialist alignments taking shape. The full implications of the counter-revolutionary theory of "socialism in one country" confront the working class. Only the destruction by revolution of the imperialist bourgeoisie and political revolution in the deformed workers states can alter this catastrophic drift

toward World War III. The outcome hinges on the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International: the construction of powerful national sections, mass revolutionary parties, of a democratic centralist international. The qualitative transformation of

**INTRODUCING WORKERS VANGUARD**, the Marxist working-class monthly. **WORKERS VANGUARD** is part of the transformation of the Spartacist League into the nucleus of the vanguard party, and of the struggle to reconstruct the Fourth International. **WORKERS VANGUARD** also incorporates the publication *Workers' Action*.

the capacity of the Spartacist League evidenced at this Plenum will have significant impact in the struggle to rebuild the Fourth International destroyed by revisionism.

### Fusion

The Plenum was highlighted by the principled Leninist fusion of the Communist Working Collective and the Spartacist League. The formal decision to fuse came at the end of the first session of the Plenum, a joint open session participated in by the CWC Executive Committee and the SL Central Committee. Discussion and adoption during the session of the two main documents of the Plenum, the "Theses of the CWC" and the "Mem-

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### Communist Working Collective:

## FROM MAOISM TO TROTSKYISM

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# MASSACRE AT ATTICA

share of attention because of the title's coincidental link to the trouble ! at the upstate correctional facility." Rockefeller's millions, extracted from workers everywhere, go toward accumulating vast art treasures. Rockefeller remains first in the volume of misery and death dished out in return.

The class responsible for Attica is responsible for My Lai, for Vietnam, for Hiroshima, for all the other massacres over which it had "no choice"—no choice if American capitalism was to be preserved.

## Prisons and the State

Prisons represent, in concentrated form, the repressive power of the state. Parliaments rest on the prisons; the prisons do not rest upon parliaments. In this sense, a prison rebellion challenges part of the foundation of the capitalists' power and must accordingly be crushed.

The ferocity of the attack is simply a magnification of the daily workings of prison life, as "Soledad Brother" George Jackson's prison letters so eloquently show. The prisons in turn are an extension of the normal functioning of the capitalist system. Every clash between the owners of industry and those who have nothing but their ability to work, every strike, every work stoppage, contains in embryo all the ingredients of Attica.

The Attica state prison is notoriously the worst in New York State. The prison population is approximately 85% black and Puerto Rican, mirroring the composition of prisons throughout the U.S. (with Chicanos rather than Puerto Ricans in the West).

The disproportionate number of black and Spanish-speaking prisoners directly reflects their caste-like segregation at the bottom rungs of society. The increasing decay and stagnation of industry is lumpenizing whole sections of these populations. Torn from or prevented from entering the productive process, larger and larger numbers are forced to turn to crime in order to survive. The prison system, designed to corral these "rejects" of capitalism, concentrates them, which to an extent socializes their condition and provides one of the material prerequisites for their recognition of their oppression as social rather than individual. This circumstance, plus the desperate conditions and the influx of a number of politically militant inmates leads inevitably to sporadic flashes of revolt.

However the severe dehumanization and oppressive conditions, directed against an already largely declassed and demoralized population who are only peripherally related to production, precludes this stratum from playing a sustained revolutionary role in the manner of the working class.

It is for these reasons that the theories of "prisoner vanguardism," "the most oppressed is the most revolutionary," etc., can only obscure the issue and do damage to the revolutionary struggle. The argument that all prisoners are victims of capitalism and therefore all are political prisoners is really moralistic liberalism and contributes to a dangerous idealizing of the prison population and an overestimation of its revolutionary role.

In the Leninist view, the critical revolutionary role can be played not by the unemployed and prison populations alone—however great their oppression and combativeness—but by their class brothers in the industrial working class. The elements squeezed out of productive roles under capitalism must be linked to the working class through a vanguard party based on the class but acting on behalf of all the oppressed. Minority workers in particular, through their links to the unemployed and forcibly lumpenized elements, will be crucial to such unity.

## The Prisoners' Demands

The outstanding feature of the prisoners' demands consisted in their ability to unite a racially divided population. The 28 demands stressed an improvement in the conditions of all prisoners with special demands to end discrimination. By not pitting black and Puerto Rican against white by shouting about "white skin privileges" or framing demands divisively (only 2 of the 28 de-

mands mention "black and brown" needs), the revolt achieved an extraordinary level of solidarity. The demands, if realized, would have benefitted the minority inmates far more than the whites simply because their oppression is greater, just as the call for full employment would clearly benefit minorities "more" since it is they who are unemployed in greater proportion.

The demands of the prisoners would provide, in part, a basis for rehabilitation in contrast to the standard procedure of punishment designed to reduce the prisoner to a subhuman stratum. The underlying premise of the demands is to provide conditions such that the dignity and independence of the prisoners will be preserved and developed—to approximate the minimum standards in daily life (minimum wage, union rights, industrial accident compensation, facilities for Spanish-speaking inmates, an end to abuse by guards or discrimination in parole hearings, the right of political association and access to ideas, etc.). That the prisoners applied this principle is shown by the humane treatment of the hostages, who ate better and slept on mattresses while the inmates nearly starved. In exemplary fashion, the prisoners refused to degrade their captives to the level of animals as they themselves had been degraded.



JERRY WURF

But is it conceivable that the capitalists will grant significant reforms at a time when they are stepping up their assault on the working class outside prison walls? Will they upgrade prison life while they are imposing a wage freeze, lifting rent control, cutting welfare expenditures and generally downgrading working-class life? The negotiations and acceptance of the prisoners' demands were simply a hypocritical stall to make the necessary military preparations. The "Committee of Observers"—only some of whom were sporadically allowed inside the prison at all—was also used to lull the inmates. The two demands which were refused—amnesty and replacement of the warden—were crucial to any real improvement in the lot of the prisoners.

## Wohlforth-Wurf

The prisoners' own reform demands, which if realized would substantially improve prison conditions, contrast sharply with the demands voiced on 22 September by labor bureaucrat Jerry Wurf, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). As reported in the New York Daily News, Wurf threatened a slowdown by the prison guards his union represents. Complaining of "World War II vintage equipment," Wurf demanded more and better riot equipment—helmets, tear gas and masks, to be borrowed from police departments if necessary, and hiring of more guards. Yet he had the effrontery to maintain, "We're not at war with the inmates; the state of New York is at war with them." What forces does the state of New York employ to make war on the inmates if not the cops and guards Wurf is happy to represent?

We noted in Workers' Action #8 that AFSCME represents approximately 10,000 cops and prison guards. Nounion can represent both workers and the sworn servants of the capitalist class, the police and prison guards. As we pointed out then, the professional class traitors like Wurf are not alone in obscuring the crucial distinction between workers and cops. The self-styled "Marxists" of Wohlforth's Workers League could not contain their gutless opportunist appetites during the New York police strike: Wohlforth stressed then that cops after all do work for wages (so does J. Edgar Hoover) and called on New York labor to strike in support of the cops! What now prevents Wohlforth from supporting Wurf's demands on behalf of the Attica guards? Could it be that right now no self-professed "communist"—even Wohlforth—dares support those guards in any way, and Wohlforth must therefore shelve his "theory" of the working-

class character of cops?

The prison "reforms" most likely to be accomplished are not the proposals of the inmates, nor even Wurf's, but those of the state Correction Department. According to Harold D. Butler, top "troubleshooter" for the Department, the state is considering a special maximum-security facility for "militant and aggressive inmates." Butler conceded that about 95% of the inmates of the proposed new prison would be black. State Senator John R. Dunne worried that this "might be a facility which could be characterized as a black concentration camp." It could indeed!

The prison system cannot be reformed; it must be abolished. While it is correct to struggle for demands which meet the immediate needs of the prisoners, it is essential that we raise the banner of Smash the Prisons! We must point out that the main bulk of the reforms proposed can only be realized when bourgeois property relations are overthrown. To abolish the prisons, we must abolish the bourgeois state of which they are part, and the class in whose interests that state is administered.

Rockefeller is keenly aware of the danger that a revolutionary impulse poses to his social order. The Attica rebellion reflected the growing restlessness and struggle taking place outside its walls. To preserve the capitalist system, every prison rebellion must be crushed—but this one had to be crushed with a vengeance because the rebels clearly had begun to view their struggle in political and even revolutionary terms. Rockefeller's concern over "outside forces," "revolutionary elements" and his focus on the prisoners' demand to be transported to a "non-imperialist country" betray his real fears.

In true revisionist fashion, the Socialist Workers Party and Communist Party tried to play down the significance of and widespread sympathy for revolutionary ideas—in order to appeal to the liberals.

The SWP ends its article on Attica (Militant, 24 September) with a call to "win broad public support for the just demands of prisoners throughout the country." The SWP proposes to achieve this by calling for a "broad, national committee to investigate every aspect of this tragic event and bring the facts before the American people." To make this call in the aftermath of a series of "broad, national committees to investigate" some atrocity—all of which whitewashed the incidents in favor of the ruling class—is truly bankrupt. The SWP even reported uncritically the activity of the "Committee of Observers." Perhaps the SWP will suggest seeking out Hartke and Reuther, whom they recently promoted to leaders of the anti-war movement, as perfectly suited to serve on such a committee.

The CP, though far cruder, is just as frightened by the Attica events. The CP likened Rockefeller's alleged statement about "revolutionary uprisings" to the "vision of a diseased brain. It is James V. Forrestal all over again, leaping to his death, crying insanely: 'The Reds are coming!'" (Daily World, 18 September) Caught between the workers and the capitalists, these organizations must always play down the revolutionary side of a struggle in order to find some formula to appeal to liberals by reconciling the irreconcilable conflict of the classes.

The Panther press has been guilty of the same adaptation to liberalism. The 18 September Black Panther denounces the killing of the prisoners and guards in the same terms, by implication solidifying with both groups. In order to appeal to the sympathies of the widest possible audience, the Panthers are deliberately obscuring the vital distinction between a section of the oppressed and the racist tools the ruling class uses to oppress them. It is important that the hostages were killed by Rockefeller's assault forces and not by the prisoners—important because the impulse toward terrorism in a struggle already lost only paves the way for further victimization of the rebels. But it is a far cry from this observation to the Panthers' attempt to present a common front with the interests and fears of prison guards!

## Reformism and Adventurism

The ever cynical Workers League commits the opposite, adventurist, error. According to the WL Bulletin, "the revolution has begun." Nixon and the capitalist class "brought the war against the working class home." Further, the "rebellion also expressed the power of the American working class. It took almost a whole day [try 15 minutes—ed.] for the heavily armed troops to crush

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Lynn, Mass. —On 11 Sept. approximately thirty members and sympathizers of the Spartacist League and Revolutionary Communist Youth participated in a demonstration of 250 people against the wage freeze and in support of wildcatting GE workers in Lynn, Mass. Marching under our own banners as a contingent, we intervened with our own slogans, leaflets, and literature in support of the demonstration. The demonstration was called by the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), University Action Group (UAG), SDS, and several other organizations closely allied with PLP. During the course of the march PL marshals began to harass our literature-sales and distribution teams, trying to prevent them from selling or distributing literature to bystanders. Cane-wielding PL marshals began entering our contingent, tearing literature out of the hands of our smallest comrades and pushing them to the ground. When comrades were finally forced to take defensive measures, those doing so were brutally assaulted, some beaten with canes. Only by pulling our contingent closely together and separating ourselves slightly from the main body of the march were we able to deter further attacks.

Although this was the first attack of this sort by PL on the SL in the Boston area, our comrades in New York, Austin, and San Francisco have previously encountered similar PL attacks. The explanation for them is simple. PL finds itself politically bankrupt and unable to cope with sharp Trotskyist criticism from the SL. Time after time PL has arrived at bad and partial paraphrases of the positions worked out years earlier by the SL. Any close examination of its present politics exposes PL as lacking a political basis for existence. Attempts to conjure up one by a frenzied activism grow increasingly unsuccessful as PL flounders from issue to issue, trying in Weatherman fashion to substitute militancy for Marxism. Incapable of formulating a political line to anchor itself organizationally, PL tries to draw organizational lines in blood in typical Stalinist fashion.

On Monday, 13 Sept., ten SL members including three who are also members of UAG, attended a UAG regional meeting at Harvard University to raise the issue of the attack and to clarify UAG's position on the incident. Members and friends of PL vigorously tried to keep the question off the agenda. Failing that, they managed to force it to the last place on the agenda in hopes that most people would leave before its late discussion. But most people remained to hear us raise our points.

The initial presentation was made by an SLer who is a member of UAG and had been struck on the head with a cane during the march. She described the attack, naming the chief instigator, a PL member, and denounced PL for this Stalinist provocation. She stated that we would take steps to defend ourselves against future attacks, and made a motion that UAG repudiate PL's gangster attack on the SL and other left groups, referring particularly to attacks on members of UAG and the Mass Strike.

PL first replied that the attacks were the



Spartacist Banner At  
Lynn, Mass. March



PL Supporters "Debate" SL

# PL ATTACKS TROTSKYISTS

spontaneous work of workers and black welfare mothers outraged by the "anti-communist, anti-working-class" literature of the SL. Later PL admitted and defended the attacks, making it clear that they would continue and intensify their policy toward SL if it continued to criticize PL.

## Stalinism

The SL responded by pointing out that gangsterism has historically been the last refuge of reformists and Stalinists made desperate by their exposure by revolutionists. They stressed the counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism and offered a number of historical examples: the defeat of the Spanish Revolution and the subsequent victory of Franco's dictatorship which paved the way for World War II, the failures of the German CP in the 30's with the rise of fascism, the countless murders of Bolsheviks in the CPSU by the GPU.

In countering PL's accusation that discussing Stalinism among the working class breeds anti-communism, SL members pointed out that the na-

ture of Stalinism must be confronted head on, that it is among the first questions that workers thinking about socialism demand an answer to. SL members said that what the working class needs is precisely a free flow of communist ideas which are necessary to building a revolutionary leadership, and not the paternalism of PL which at every moment seeks to prevent the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, i.e. Trotskyism, from reaching the working class. It was further added that according to the logic of PL, if the SL is sectarian and anti-communist for discussing the Stalinist character of PL among the working class, then PL's admitted sectarian attitude toward the working class for the past 4 or 5 years (PL Magazine—Nov. 1971, "Fight Sectarianism, Build Party Unity With the Masses") could only mean that they are guilty of having been anti-communist! In summation PL was advised to study the role of third period Stalinism in Germany, and to confront the fact that it is precisely the conceptions that PL holds today that were responsible for the catastrophic defeat of the powerful German CP by the fascists. PL's concept of "left-center coalitions"—uniting solely on democratic demands—and their failure to distinguish between the bourgeois class and bourgeois agents within the working class ultimately leads to the tactic of popular fronts from below. This was clearly demonstrated by their comment that "we PL would ally with anyone who is serious about smashing the wage freeze, including a group of McCarthy supporters."

Although the original proposal, which called for UAG to repudiate PL's attacks against other groups on the left, was organizationally defeated by crude appeals to party loyalty, the PL cadre experienced a crushing political defeat. They could respond to the SL's points only by recounting trivial folk tales supposed to prove their affinity for workers.

PL's crude impressionism and anti-theory bias is a continuing and self-reinforcing tie to its Stalinist roots. With this methodology hanging like a millstone around its neck, PL cannot learn the lessons of its own experiences. The Panthers' "United Front Against Fascism" Conference exclusions, the drive to force pro-working-class tendencies out of the old SDS, the NPAC Conference—surely these events should have taught PL that violence and suppression of opponent tendencies within the radical movement serve only to maintain the dominance of the reformists and the hustlers. Would-be revolutionaries must learn that all attempts to paternalistically "protect" the working class from exposure to competing tendencies and their ideas end in confusion and defeat. Failure to absorb this crucial lesson means that PL is condemned to perpetually destroy its best sides—its opposition to class collaboration, its repudiation of nationalism, its subjectively serious commitment to the interests of the working class—and deepen its oscillation between arid sectarianism and gutless opportunism. ■

## ATTICA ...

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the heroic resistance fighters in Attica. " Exactly one year ago the WL argued that "From the prisons, to the factories, to the schools the working class is taking up the battle against this decaying and bankrupt system," in an article entitled "Revolutionary Wave Sweeps Prisons."

The revolution has not begun (or to put it another way, it began long ago). The reason the Workers League adopts this phrase at this time is to seek to leech off the favorable sentiment for George Jackson, who used the phrase in one of his prison letters. This tactic is reminiscent of the WL position that 1970 was the year Huey Newton turned to dialectics because of some remarks he made in a speech. The WL dropped this rapidly when it began to look as if 1971 would be the year Huey Newton turned to overt reformism.

Now we are not sticklers for style. And certainly a rhetorical phrase or flourish here and there is acceptable. We can even accept a lecture on "dialectics" although we find it difficult to understand how one week the *Bulletin* can say: "Yes, the revolution has begun. That is the meaning of Nixon's economic policies" and the following week state "The revolution has begun. It cannot be avoided. This is the lesson of Attica." But what is unacceptable is the cynical echoing of Weatherman rhetoric, or the twisting of Jackson's meaning, or adaptation to the very real adventurist tendencies in the militant black movement. Such bombast is frivolous. It is playing at revolution. It is setting people up!

Jackson's critique of the CP is similar to the debate between Huey Newton and William Patterson of the CP. The debate falsely counterposes

the strategy of "picking up the gun" and "revolutionary suicide" against the "peaceful transition" strategy of class collaboration. Insofar as Jackson and Newton break with pacifism and reformism we support them, but insofar as they adapt to anarchism or terrorism they pose the real danger of fruitless confrontationism which disorients the militants in the face of their real revolutionary tasks and can lead to the literal annihilation of the most dedicated and courageous. It is cheap for the WL opportunists to project false unity with Newton or Jackson by blasting the obvious reformism of the CP. The real danger of the WL cry, "the revolution has begun," is that if taken seriously it must lead to the two symmetrical mistakes which have torn the Panthers apart: on the one hand adventurism; on the other, a desperate search for allies, since at present the conscious revolutionary forces are pitifully weak. In the case of the Workers League, it will lead them into the arms of the labor bureaucrats.

We support the most militant struggle against the state. We only seek to give that struggle the strategic perspectives that will lead to the workers conquering state power. The quasi-anarchist, quasi-Maoist strategies of urban "people's war" as the road to power are an obstacle to winning the working class to the revolutionary strategy. One of the tragic costs of these tactics is that many of the finest potential leaders of the struggle are cut down before they have a chance to develop.

The heroic Attica martyrs and George Jackson will long be remembered for their courageous stand against overwhelming odds. It is not the crimes (real or alleged) for which the prisoners were jailed, but the stand they took—rising far above capitalist-imposed ignorance, poverty, brutality and frame-up—for justice and against oppression, that the world's working people will remember.



# Communist Working Collective: FROM MAOISM

"The development of the proletariat proceeds everywhere amidst internal struggles and France, which is now forming a workers' party for the first time, is no exception. We in Germany have got beyond the first phase of the internal struggle, other phases still lie before us. Unity is quite a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand higher than unity. And when, like Marx and myself, one has fought harder all one's life long against the alleged Socialists than against anyone else (for we only regarded the bourgeoisie as a class and hardly ever involved ourselves in conflicts with individual bourgeois), one cannot greatly grieve that the inevitable struggle has broken out."

—From a letter of Engels to his friend Sorge living in America, January 18, 1871.

The theoretical development of the Communist Working Collective (CWC) grew out of the experience of two comrades in the Maoist Bay Area Revolutionary Union. Their criticisms of the RU became the main ideas around which the CWC was founded and represented the beginning of our differentiation from mainstream Maoism. Our criticisms of the RU centered around the "Strategical United Front Against Imperialism," which called for unity with sections of the bourgeoisie, saw the proletarian party arising out of this united front, and subordinated communist work to uncritical support of various petty-bourgeois struggles, especially national struggles.

In reaction to the tailism of the RU and the RYM(SDS), the two comrades supported and drew close to the California Communist League. The CCL (now the CL), which originated in the Communist Party and the Provisional Organizing Committee, is a small sectarian Stalinist group who see themselves as a pre-party formation, publish a newspaper, and require a working-class job for all members. We were soon repelled by the conscious anti-intellectualism and workerism which veiled a crude economism and was then passed off as theory. We saw that theory must take precedence over practice in the period of pre-party formations. The main void in the American movement was the absence of a revolutionary program, and dogmatic adaptations of various formulations of Stalin's Third International would not fill it. We became convinced that this program could not be developed within the bureaucratic confines of the CCL. We were critical of the deification of Stalin and could not accept the analysis that the restoration of capitalism in the USSR began with the last heartbeat of J. V. Stalin. We believed that Stalin had made a number of important errors, such as the mass purges of the 1930's. But we thought that Mao Tse-Tung, through the "Cultural Revolution," had rectified these errors with the discovery that classes and class struggle continue during socialism. We counterposed Mao to Stalin and came into direct conflict with the CCL who equated any criticism of Stalin as an attack on the dictatorship of the proletariat ("d of p").

A similar struggle was also developing in the CCL's youth group, the Young Communist League. After breaking with the CCL both groups fused to form the CWC.

## Analysis

The CWC began by analyzing the programs of the Bolsheviks, the CPUSA, Weatherman, RYM II, and the Progressive Labor Party. Our basic criteria were the primacy of the class struggle, propagating socialism in practice, recognizing the need for a Leninist vanguard party, and publishing a theoretical communist newspaper capable of serving as a collective organizer. Within these programmatic principles, we made numerous criticisms, but could not advance toward a

program.

Applying Mao Tse-Tung Thought to the U.S. was complicated by its inherent ambiguities. Groups as divergent as Weatherman and PL could claim that they were the expression of Maoism in America. Two platitudinous statements on the black struggle are the sum total of Mao's guidance to the U.S. movement. The clearest Chinese statement was a public letter to the CPUSA in response to their support of the Soviet Union against the Chinese. The CPC called upon the U.S. communists to "carry on and enrich the revolutionary tradition of William Z. Foster... form the broadest united front against imperialism... carry through to final victory the great cause of the people of all countries for world peace, national liberation, democracy, and socialism." This was precisely the RU's strategical united front. We rationalized that this was not the current Chinese position, that it was written in 1963 when the CPC was controlled by Liu. In short, we tried to paint the RU as right deviationists from Mao's Thought.

Our position on the Chinese international strategy was filled with contradictions. We accepted the two-stage revolution theory in the colonial countries but disagreed with the same two-stage theory when applied to world revolution. We were dubious of Lin Piao's strategy of triumphant colonial revolutions surrounding the imperialist countries, "the countryside surrounding the cities." This strategy, based on united front (really popular front) national liberation struggles, relegated the proletariat to a supporting role. A correct strategy, we thought, should be the reverse: only a working class revolution in the imperialist countries could completely overthrow international capital. In Long Live Peoples War, Lin Piao's only reference to the proletariat of the West was: "Since WWII, the proletarian revolutionary movement has for various reasons been temporarily held back in the North American and West European capitalist countries."

We were disturbed by the lack of analysis by Lin Piao of the history of the western proletariat but we were ignorant of the theoretical and historical experience of the working class since the Russian revolution except through Stalin's falsified histories. Not understanding the actual basis of Maoism we tried to separate Mao from the strategic united front against imperialism, from Stalinism, and from the defeats of the Third International. In short, we tried to separate Maoism from Mao; as a result, after four months we were no closer to a program than when we formed.

## Permanent Revolution

The turning point of the CWC was a debate over the nature of the Chinese state in 1949. Most of the group concluded that "New Democracy" was a fundamental revision of Marx and Lenin on the class nature of the state. Our view, though incomplete, logically would lead straight to Trotsky's Permanent Revolution. After this discussion and a split over whether critical analysis of Mao should continue, we were able to begin our task of independently re-establishing the theoretical and historical continuity of the communist movement.

How could a joint dictatorship ("New Democracy") exist? Marx and Lenin defined the state as special bodies of armed men enforcing the rule of a single class upon the rest of society. In the modern world, either the proletariat or the bourgeoisie controlled the state apparatus. There could be no third state, no "New Democracy." Mao called for a coalition government of the proletariat, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie, "national bourgeoisie," and even, for a time, the so-called comprador bourgeoisie (with Chiang, thus making a bloc of five classes!)—leaving the question of who controls the state apparatus unresolved. For the first time we understood the reason for Mao's uncritical support of the Indonesian CP immediately prior to its physical elimina-

tion, and the lack of any subsequent self-criticism by the CPC or Mao.

In the course of this investigation we learned that current Chinese editions of Mao's writings differed radically from the originals. This policy of outright falsification alone destroyed Maoism's scientific pretensions.

The debate over New Democracy was actually no debate at all. The two comrades supporting New Democracy said simply: "Your analysis is Trotskyist" and "unless it is in Mao, it is not true." (In which edition? one might ask!) Mao taught that intellectuals should go to the masses and learn from them, so when Mao was criticized, our dogmatists who had been pushing for programmatic investigation and study of dialectical materialism, flip-flopped and demanded that we propagate Maoism to factory workers as our primary arena and at every step present our theoretical achievements to them for final judgement. The overwhelming majority of the CWC determined to proceed with our analysis. Three comrades, clutching Red Books to their breasts, fled from our threatening ideas. They eventually buried themselves in a small dogmatic sectlet, parroting invincible Maothought.

The CWC then divided into subcommittees to accomplish two basic tasks: to write a draft program and to examine anew the history of the Communist International. The latter committee immediately launched into a thorough reading of Trotsky who had played a prominent role in the CI's early history. It was here that we first realized that Trotsky's analysis paralleled our own. But it was Trotsky! Suddenly we felt the full weight of the emotional spectre of the splitter/wrecker agent Trotsky looming before us. On the most significant question of the Chinese revolution we were "Trotskyites!"

It became immediately necessary to reorganize the work, abandon the committee system and bring the entire collective into this basic study. Fortunately, the other comrades who had put together a threadbare draft program recognized that fundamentals take precedence even over program. We began the Stalin-Trotsky study with some of us already embryonic Trotskyists.

What is the relationship between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism? This question, important above all to nations which have not achieved their bourgeois revolutions, was resolved by study of the experience of the Russian Revolution.

The Menshevik view tied the proletariat to the leadership of the liberal bourgeoisie which the victory of the bourgeois revolution would put in power. The proletariat under the more favorable conditions of the bourgeois republic could then begin its struggle for power. Permanent Revolution advocated by Trotsky maintained that, "the complete victory of the democratic revolution in Russia is conceivable only in the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, leaning on the peasantry." Upon seizing power the dictatorship of the proletariat would immediately be faced with both democratic and socialist tasks. The peasantry was not an independent force but must either follow the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. The seizure of power by the Russian proletariat would spark revolution in the West, protecting Russia from bourgeois restoration and providing immense resources for backward Russia's social development.

History proved Trotsky's position correct and Lenin adopted this strategy in April, 1917 (April Theses). This strategy remains the only correct strategy for revolution in the colonies.

After the Russian Revolution Stalin and later Mao revived the Menshevik two-stage revolution which subordinated the proletariat to the liberal or national bourgeoisie. Because of ties to imperialism and landholding, the national bourgeoisie cannot carry out the bourgeois revolution. The two-stage strategy means subordination of the workers and peasants to imperialism and the



# TO TROTSKYISM

landowners, leading the workers into the inevitable reaction and slaughter. Just as Stalin's support of the Kuomintang led to the Shanghai massacre and destruction of the Chinese Revolution in 1927 so Mao's New Democracy led the Indonesian party to massacre in 1965. Such are the fruits of New Democracy.

The actual history of the Chinese revolution repudiates New Democracy. The Chinese Communist Party seized state power in 1949 and established a deformed workers' state characterized by nationalized property and a bureaucracy ruling over the working class. All the talk of "The Dictatorship of Four (or five) Classes" aside, the CPC (including the Red Army) and nobody else controlled the state. Its reformism led it to talk of sharing the power, something it could not actually do in China without being overthrown by a bourgeois counter-revolution. Those who took the CPC's words literally—like the PKI of Indonesia—were crushed.

Only a victory of the working class and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat can break imperialism, carry through the agrarian revolution and enable the working class to rule in their own right.

## What is Socialism?

An essential task of ours was a re-establishment of the basic axioms of Marxism-Leninism. Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin all believed that communism would replace capitalism only after a transitional period during which the proletariat enforces its dictatorship over all the other classes.

Socialism according to Marx and Lenin means the lower phase of communism. It is a society characterized by common property ownership, very high productivity of labor, the absence of class-based social antagonisms, the replacement of the standing army by a universal people's militia, material incentives limited to equal pay for equal work, full emancipation of women, disappearance of the age-old distinction between town and country, etc. In short, it is only the beginning, but definitely the beginning, of man's ascent from the "kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom."

It was obvious that the socialism which Marx and Lenin envisioned would be a world society, necessarily embracing the industrialized countries of Europe, the United States and Japan.

Now we understood why Stalin was forced to deny one year after the great purges that there was any longer any class struggle in the Soviet Union. To proclaim socialism in the Soviet Union he had to deny the glaring non-socialist features of the Soviet Union. The Chinese "discovery" that classes still exist under socialism is equivalent to discovering that their socialism is not socialism.

Any analysis of the Third International must come to grips with the Stalin-Trotsky debate on socialism in a single country. All would-be revolutionaries are forced, willy-nilly, to a position on this single vital question. Thorough study of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky revealed the true nature of the debate.

## International Revolution or Notional Reformism

The theory of socialism in a single country requires a denial of the fundamental characteristics of modern capitalist economy and cuts the heart out of Marxism. In *The German Ideology* and elsewhere Marx states very clearly that one of capitalism's greatest achievements is the creation of a proletariat who is a world historical, universal man based on the international division of labor and the supra-national character of modern productive forces. The motive force of history is the ever developing productive forces. For a new historical society to evolve this new society must unfetter the world productive forces.

es. Denying this is tantamount to denying Marxism—precisely what Stalinism-Maoism does.

Because of uneven development the proletariat in the colonial countries may be first able to seize power. Their seizure of power does not abolish their dependence on the international division of labor. As the former colony develops it becomes more dependent on the world economy. Lenin spoke of "a test which is being prepared by the Russian and international market, to which we are subordinate, with which we are bound up, from which we cannot break away." The only hope for the dictatorship of the proletariat in the backward country is clearly set forth by Lenin on the 5th anniversary of Soviet rule. "Even before the revolution and likewise after it, our thought was: immediately, or at any rate very quickly, a revolution will begin in the other countries, in the capitalistically more developed countries... or in the contrary case we will have to perish... The dates have shifted, the pattern of events has formed itself in many respects unexpectedly, but the fundamental orientation remains unchanged."

Once we grasped the essence of socialism in one country, i.e., national reformism, all the other pieces of the puzzle of the temporary postponement of revolution in the advanced countries fell into place.

To mask socialism in a single country in Leninist phrases Stalin had to turn Lenin inside out. All the subsequent lies and falsifications of history were designed to reconcile the revolutionary internationalism of Marx and Lenin with the counter-revolutionary national reformism of Stalin and Mao. Here is the thread which runs through the popular front, social fascism, support of the liberal bourgeoisie against the proletariat, peaceful co-existence, and the absence of a communist international.

National reformism represents the world outlook not of the proletariat but of the bureaucracy on the backs of the proletariat. The principal historical cause for the degeneration of the Soviet regime was Russian backwardness and universal want confronted with hostile capitalist encirclement, setting the basis for fulfillment of Marx's predictions that so long as want was merely made general, "all the old crap" would rise up again, i.e., the development of a privileged bureaucracy. International revolution, which unfetters the world productive forces, is contrary to the interests of the bureaucracy for it would eliminate the basis on which it rests. The position of the Stalinist bureaucracies is analogous to the labor bureaucracy under capitalism. Although their social base is the proletariat they occupy privileged positions, maintained by collaboration with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

According to Stalin only intervention by the capitalist countries can prevent the building of socialism in a single country. He advanced the tactic of the "neutralizing of the world bourgeoisie" by the world proletariat to ensure the building of socialism unopposed. The world would attain socialism through the Directorate of State Planning for the USSR, through peaceful economic competition. The world proletarian movement is turned into border guards for "socialist countries." The Communist International first degenerates into a pressure group on the world bourgeoisie and then is dissolved to give concrete assurances to the bourgeoisie that the bureaucracy has no plans for their overthrow.

The fundamental identity between Maoism and Stalinism was the reason why the Chinese would neither summarize the Third International or call for a new International. The anti-imperialist united front—a bloc between the Chinese bureaucracy and sections of the world bourgeoisie—is a concrete betrayal of the workers and peasants. The Chinese bureaucracy hopes to transform its alliance with tinpot national bourgeoisies of colonial countries into a grand alliance with the imperialist bourgeoisie, e.g., from Sihanouk to

Nixon. Membership in Peking's anti-imperialist front consists of everybody from the Pakistani military regime of Yahya Khan to imperialist Japan. Mao calls for a "patriotic united front of all strata of the Japanese people" within one of the most developed imperialist nations in the world. Why? Because the victory of the working class in Japan, the Industrial powerhouse of Asia, would immediately precipitate the political overthrow of the Chinese bureaucracy by the Chinese working class. Here stands Mao, stripped of his red veil, fighting for the interests of the bureaucracy.

## Avakian on the Run

In a real sense our collective struggle had been one of defeating the revisionism in the communist movement exemplified by the RU. For a full year we had probed Maoism for something to refute the RU united front strategy. Nothing was forthcoming. Only by basing ourselves on Lenin and Trotsky did we finally come up with a concise, revolutionary refutation of the RU's class collaboration policy of the popular front and understanding of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies. In July we had a chance to intervene in a panel debate on Chinese foreign policy between Maoists Bob Avakian (RU) and Frank Pestana and former SWPer Milt Zaslow (Liberation Union), and a lecture on the RU united front strategy by Avakian.

The night of the panel on China's foreign policy fell ironically on the day after Nixon announced his visit to China, putting the defenders of Mao in an extremely shameful position. Far more important, though, was that the lines were drawn this time not between the "left" and right Maoists as so often in Los Angeles, but between Stalinism and Trotskyism. Between our leaflet, Zaslow's devastating critique, and comments from the floor, the debate was a complete and unconditional rout of Stalinism and Maoism. Barely a Stalinist dared to speak from the floor as time and again Avakian and Pestana completely contradicted themselves in their attempts to defend the indefensible Chinese betrayals. In such a position, Maoist debate was replaced with the Stalinist stand-by: slandering the personal integrity of Trotsky. In all, they got creamed.

To top it off Avakian personally attacked a CWC member (a former RUer) for "corrupting the youth" and threatened him with violence if he appeared the following night. The CWCer, replying with the slogan "Long Live Socrates!" proceeded to form a defense front and returned the next night in force.

The collective proprietors of the hall in collaboration with Avakian avoided another "terrible" night by limiting questions to 30 seconds and prohibiting discussion and debate.

The year's effort had transformed an insignificant internal struggle within Stalinism into a component part of the historic and worldwide battle of Marxism-Leninism against its detractors, thereby helping to prepare the way for the socialist revolution.

By the time of the RU confrontation we had concluded the greater portion of our examination of Trotskyist groupings. We had long been critical of the SWP's rampant revisionism even when we were still Maoists. In fact, one of the main obstacles to taking Trotskyism seriously was the

continued on page 8

**Editor's Note:** This article originally contained lengthy excerpts from the CWC-Wohlforth correspondence. In the light of Wohlforth's article, "Spartacist and Political Principle" in the 20 September issue of the *Bulletin*, in which he quotes the first two letters in full and not a word of the CWC reply, we have decided to print the CWC reply of 18 May in full on page 6.



# WORKERS LEAGUE SUPPRESSES LETTER

## WOHLFORTH: What are you afraid of?

In his article "Spartacist and Political Principle" appearing in the 20 September *Bulletin* Wohlforth quotes the full text of Marvin Treiger's letter of 21 April, and his own letter to Treiger of 27 April, in which he declares both discussions with the Spartacist League and joint actions with Maoists to be incompatible with any cooperative relationship with the Workers League. That's all he quotes. He merely states, "Needless to say we soon heard from them rejecting our approach and thus the announcement of their fusion with Spartacist does not come to us quite as a shock. The fusion is based on a common hostility to principled politics." He further asserts, referring presumably to the CWC's unquoted reply, that "Treiger could see nothing wrong with standing together on a 'class line' with Maoists who support the butchery of the Bengali people. Thus his 'class line' did not extend beyond the borders of the United States." We print here in full the letter by which Wohlforth "soon heard from them," not one sentence of which Wohlforth dared to print!

May 18, 1971

Dear Comrade Wohlforth,

We are writing you in reply to the letter we recently received and which, we assume, was discussed by the Political Committee (PC) of the Workers League (WL). We were taken aback by the approach you and the PC took towards our organization. There was hardly a single point you made with which we agreed or felt was historically accurate. Take for example your evaluation of Comrade Treiger's methodological approach in his cover letter and in what we will refer to as a "Letter to a Maoist." Your position that since there was no discussion of the Fourth International in Treiger's main letter and since, at least in our opinion, we have "... definitely consolidated around Trotskyism and ... intend to begin investigation into the Fourth International in a more developed way," we "... separate out 'Stalinism' and 'Trotskyism' from the actual development of the Third International and the Fourth International," and therefore "... go over to the idealist outlook of Deutscher who abstracts Trotsky the 'hero' and his 'ideas' out of and opposed to Trotsky's actual struggle to construct the Fourth International." From this, we gather, you implied our methodological approach will lead us to oppose the Fourth International. Nothing could be more wrong! What your position shows is that you completely misunderstand the nature of Treiger's "Letter to a Maoist." Let us explain. True, there was no formal discussion of the Fourth International in "Letter to a Maoist," whose main purpose was to confront a Maoist organization in San Francisco with the basic truths of Marxism which were distorted for so long by the Stalinists. However, to draw the conclusion you did means to completely miss the spirit if not the letter of Treiger's document. The entire document is a restatement of the Marxist position of proletarian internationalism, analyzes the bankruptcy of the Maoist international "strategy" and poses the question of why the CCP has never attempted to build a new International to all Maoist organizations. It further shows that the failure of the Chinese to develop a new International is an excellent exposure of their departure from internationalism. This stand of ours can only mean that we see an international party of the working class as absolutely indispensable without which there can be no proletarian revolution. Moreover, "Letter to a Maoist" in stating: "The ideas embodied in the Transitional Program [which was developed during the first four congresses of the Third International—G.R.] find their historic continuation in the 1934 program of the Fourth International," clearly indicates that we saw the program of the Fourth International as the theoretical continuation of Leninism. We purposely avoided the question of the Fourth International as it stands today because of our insufficient research at that time. The statement "... we intend to begin an investigation into the Fourth International in a more developed way" only means that there is still much ground to cover before we are soundly familiar with Trotskyist strategy and tactics and with the state of the present International. Nothing else can be read into this position.

### April 24

Concerning the action on April 24th. We were dismayed by your attempting to avoid the question of our differences on the nature of the rally by implying that we called for our own demonstration. What else could this statement of yours mean? "This is why it is completely wrong for

you to call for a demonstration on April 24th which does not mention either the labor party or the fight for the general strike." And once again. "You say the Maoist October League and the Maoist Long March declined having joint action with you and we assume also us on April 24th." [my italics—G.R.] At no time did we call for a demonstration independent of the WL demonstration. If so, where was this rally of ours? Where did it take place? The *Bulletin* report of the San Francisco events by Jeff Sebastian stated the following: "... the Workers League and supporters broke from the march, and... proceeded to the park where an independent meeting was held and addressed by Workers League spokesmen and by representatives of the Communist Workers [sic] Collective in Los Angeles." The *Bulletin* completely contradicted this fantastic notion of yours. Our position was calling for "All out support of the Workers League call for a United Front rally of the working class against the war." The error we made was that we misunderstood the nature of the WL's proposed action. This was mainly due to our misreading of the April 5th *Bulletin* editorial. Instead of realizing that it was supposed to be a rally of the WL and its supporters, we thought (also because of the loose usage of "joint action" on the part of some comrades of the WL) what was intended was a call for a united front working class action against the war. On this point we were totally wrong. However, this does not mean you can simply pass over our differences on the form the rally should take by falsely implying we called our own rally. That just will not do!

With regard to our not mentioning "... either the labor party or the fight for the general strike." We didn't have a consolidated collective position at that time (nor, incidentally, do we now) on these specific demands of the Transitional Program. The reason for this is we have not yet evaluated the history of the labor party demand in light of the present U.S. conditions. Thus we don't know whether it is correct to call for a labor party in opposition to a workers party or vice versa. Same is true for the general strike call. Under what conditions, circumstances, etc., does one call for a general strike? This is why we didn't take a position on these demands. However, in no way did our abstention on these questions prevent us from supporting the rally at which these slogans were raised.

### Sectarian

We further object to your position that we cannot have joint discussions or joint actions with the WL while maintaining relations of any sort with Spartacist. Our group is now in the process of thoroughly investigating the present anti-Pabloite Trotskyist organizations and are not about to conclude that Spartacist "... is completely hostile to the Fourth International and bears no relationship whatsoever to Trotskyism" just on your word. We may conclude your analysis of their organization is correct, however, we feel, this conclusion must be made on the basis of our own independent investigation. Nevertheless Spartacist has shown a healthy attitude toward encouraging and aiding our investigation (which is more than we can say about your approach). That is why we will continue holding discussions with them. For these reasons, we sincerely hope the PC of the WL reconsiders its present organizational position towards our group. If however, the PC decides to keep its present policy, we will still continue to investigate the WL in spite of any roadblock you may throw up in our way.

Further, We oppose the sectarian position you

expressed toward the Maoists and other working class tendencies. "In any event we will not have joint actions with Maoists. Maoism today means bodies of revolutionaries lining the streets of Dacca and floating down the rivers of Ceylon. We do not understand how you can say you have 'consolidated around Trotskyism' while at the same time you seek joint actions with the supporters of the butchers of the Bengalis and even with the Liberation Union..." First of all you make a methodological error in seeing these organizations as finished party formations rather than groupings going through tremendous change. The October League and the Long March are based in Los Angeles and have between fifteen to twenty members each. The "semi-Trotskyist" Liberation Union is also a strictly local organization made up of Maoists and "Trotskyists" and has no more than thirty to forty members. Because of the crisis of world capitalism and the capitulation of the Chinese Stalinists to Imperialism, many of these groups (as we did) are in fact looking to Trotskyism to lead them out of the Stalinist swamp. Your position would objectively hinder this development. Secondly, refusing to hold joint actions with Maoists on the basis that they support the foreign policy of the Chinese government is absolutely ludicrous. The Stalinists, Pabloites, Social Democrats, and trade unionists all currently support either the existing Stalinist states or some kind of reactionary capitalist government. Furthermore, all of them have at one time or another either objectively or subjectively supported the annihilation of revolutionary struggles and are thus responsible for the deaths of thousands of revolutionaries. However, does this mean that you categorically refuse to engage in joint actions with any of these types of organizations? We feel the logic of your position must lead to either a sectarian liquidation of the united front reminiscent of Third Period Stalinism or to a series of opportunist zig-zags—now condemning joint action, now pragmatically entering into it.

### Method

From your position on our relations with Spartacist and from your approach to joint action with other working class tendencies, we can make the following evaluation of what seems to be your tactical approach. The WL has no intention of engaging in action with any tendency that does not objectively recognize it as the leading Leninist party. How else can your approach toward our organization be explained? What purpose could your "proposal" at the end of the letter possibly serve than to make us immediately acknowledge the leading role of the WL in the U.S. revolution? What other explanation can there be for your bombastic declaration in the April 5th *Bulletin* editorial "... either McGovern-Hartke or the Workers League..."? Here is a manifestation in practice of the sectarian danger of which we spoke. There is nothing wrong in principle in calling your own rally. But when you do so vaguely speaking of joint action, not building a united front and then counterposing your organization and your few supporters to everyone else, then we can only conclude that this represents nothing but an extreme example of "left-wing" childishness. Such an approach if persisted in can only hinder the development of the WL into a mass Bolshevik-Leninist party.

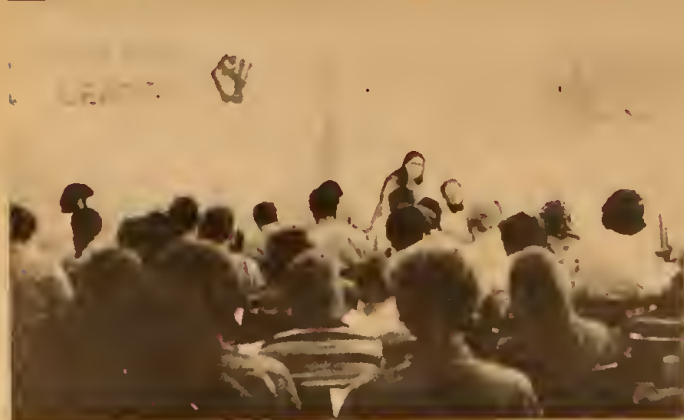
Finally, we must make it absolutely clear to you that we will not capitulate to your pressure tactics. In no way will we be forced into a position of holding discussions with only the WL on your "principled party grounds." For us to take such a step would mean that we concluded that the International Committee of the Fourth International and the WL were the continuators of Trotskyism in our time. The next step could only be discussions on organizational merger after which fusion would take place. Needless to say, so far there is no basis for us to reach such a conclusion.

In concluding, we hope for the above stated reasons you consider re-evaluating your methodological approach toward us and towards other working class tendencies in general. Hope to hear from you soon.

With communist greetings,

George Rep  
for the Communist Working  
Collective





SPARTACIST LEAGUE CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM - LABOR DAY WEEKEND, 1971

Continued from Page 1

# SPARTACIST LEAGUE PLENUM....

orandum to the CC on the Transformation of the SL" evidenced a deep political unity between the two organizations. Following the ratification of the decisions of the joint session in caucus and the vote to fuse, members of the CWC Executive Committee were coopted to the SL Central Committee and Political Bureau. The newly fused organization closed the session with the singing of the Internationale.

This deep unification represents the first such fusion to occur in the Trotskyist movement in the U.S. in over three decades. Coming from Maoism to Trotskyism, and approaching the question of Trotskyism in its broadest international, theoretical and programmatic implications, the CWC rejected as qualitatively unfit the revisionist SWP of the United Secretariat and Wohlforth's Workers League of the so-called International Committee. The CWC-SL unification is a striking vindication of the Leninist regroupment perspective of the SL. Flatly counterposed to the sectarian position that the vanguard party can be built by linear recruitment of individuals in isolation from the pressure of class struggle and its polarizing impact on revisionist and centrist formations, and likewise in direct opposition to the methodology of the rotten bloc which is sectarianism's mirror image, the SL's Leninist regroupment perspective indicates the way forward toward the achievement of the vanguard party and the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

During the first session, the Plenum adopted a jointly agreed upon resolution regulating the relations of the SL with its newly formed youth section, the Revolutionary Communist Youth (RCY). The founding conference of the RCY (in its earlier stage organized as the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus) which immediately preceded the SL Plenum represents living evidence of the transformation of the SL from a propaganda group to the nucleus of the vanguard party. The RCY is a Trotskyist youth organization. Its relations with the SL are fully Leninist, following the guidelines worked out by the first four Congresses of the Third International, which codified the relation of the youth league to the party as "organizationally independent but politically subordinate."

This concept of a living communist youth group, in which the youth comrades, party and non-party alike, play a real if subordinate role in all discussion and decision-making in our movement as a whole is to be contrasted with the Marcy-Healy technique of creating a front group of young epigones. This technique reflects the methodology of third period Stalinism and leads to the creation of youth groups in which the party members act as a fraction of the party. The RCY is also to be contrasted to the youth groups of more mature revisionist trends where the youth leadership simply consists of the most ambitious lackeys of the party tops. The RCY is a disciplined part of the Trotskyist movement as a whole in carrying out the decisions it helps arrive at. In this spirit, the Plenum coopted to the SL Central Committee and Political Bureau three members of the RCY National Committee selected by the RCY to function as its representatives to the party. The RCY represents the future of Trotskyism in the U.S.

## International

The Plenum considered other broad areas of work indicative of the growing importance of the Spartacist League both nationally and internationally. Comrades heard reports on the Trotskyist movement in Europe and Australasia, as well as an evaluation of the various tendencies in the international movement. Special emphasis was laid on the crisis of the United Secretariat, which under the pressure of rising international class struggle which has exposed its revisionist theories as bankrupt, has experienced sharp factional conflicts between its major sections and a number of splits to the left within several national sections. It was noted that the International Committee, an unprincipled bloc between the British SLL and the French OCI together with their respective satellites, teeters on the edge of an open split. It was pointed out that the upsurge in class struggle has been viewed by the revisionists as merely the arising of a new arena—the workers—on a par with other "constituencies" and to be tail-ended accordingly through accommodation to its sellout leadership; the methodology remains unchanged. Steps were taken to advance the SL perspective of rebuilding the Fourth International through political struggle leading to a process of splits and fusions.

## Fractions

Commissions on Spartacist League work in the trade unions and among women presented reports. The difficult tasks of building communist fractions in the trade union movement were discussed. It was noted that there are few reformist buffers in the U.S. working class standing between the primitive labor lieutenants of capital and the mass of the workers. Nixon's new economic program gives the bureaucrats little room to maneuver, and the question of labor as an independent political force will be sharply posed in the next period. The women's liberation commission reported on the special tasks encountered in struggling in the women's liberation movement as a socialist, working-class, anti-feminist contingent. Perspectives were adopted to guide work in these arenas in the coming period. Most important was the election of a National Trade Union

Director to guide the work of the SL in continuing to implant itself in the working class,

## Vanguard Nucleus

The organic fusion with the CWC, the founding of the RCY, the growth of our activity in the labor unions, renewed opportunities to win black cadres to Trotskyism and our intervention in the women's liberation movement which reciprocally strengthen our ability to implement our international perspectives—all point to a level of functioning characteristic of the nucleus of a vanguard party. Yet our forces, while greatly augmented in the last year, remain those of a sub-propaganda group. To achieve the wrenching transformation to a vanguard nucleus, to utilize fully our increased strength, to face squarely the historic tasks posed, the Plenum adopted a perspective to qualitatively expand the capacity of the SL as a revolutionary Trotskyist organization. Beginning with this October issue, a new Marxist working-class monthly newspaper, Workers Vanguard (incorporating Workers' Action) will be published by the Spartacist League. In conjunction with our increased ability to intervene in the youth arena through the RCY, an augmented program of industrialization, to implant Trotskyist cadre into the class and to create communist fractions in the labor movement, becomes increasingly vital. This goes hand in hand with a drive to penetrate the most oppressed layers of the American working class, especially the doubly oppressed black population. No organization lacking a significant black component of its cadre can hope to become the vanguard party of the U.S. working class. Stress will also be laid on the geographic extension of the SL.

Only unflinching revolutionary honesty and steadfast determination flowing from deep Marxist political and programmatic clarity can lead to the successful transformation of the Spartacist League. Our optimism in undertaking this course is the revolutionary optimism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Our confidence is a confidence in the program and principles of Marxism-Leninism, in Trotskyism.

FORWARD TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

FORWARD TO THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION! ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# CWA WILDCAT

Striking members of CWA local 1101 in New York City interviewed by *Workers Vanguard* reporters expressed deep dissatisfaction with the terms of the contract and indignation over CWA international President Beirne's back-to-work order. The incensed ranks have forced local president Ricky Carnivale to make a show of militancy by continuing the strike. But the conduct of the strike by Carnivale and the local strike committee virtually guarantees a slow strangulation of the strike.

The local bureaucracy has studiously avoided the type of united labor action which could make the wildcat more than an isolated holding action. Instead of appealing to other workers in the phone company and other industries to strike in support of 1101, Carnivale and the rest have limited their tactics to relatively safe—and relatively useless

—appeals to "the public" as consumers, such as Dennis L. Serrette's proposal for a consumer boycott of the phone company. Meanwhile, the local 1150 Executive Board has ordered its membership back to work, crossing the 1101 picket lines.

At a local rally held on 17 Sept., one bureaucrat even appealed to nearby cops as friends of the strike: "The men in blue understand our situation; these workingmen are working without a contract."

A recent *New York Times* editorial, sensing that the strike is simply being allowed to drift towards disintegration, demanded that the phone workers surrender or be smashed. The answer must be a resolute struggle to broaden the strike and bring the company to its knees. ■

## ARAB STUDENTS' CONFERENCE

A representative of the Spartacist League attended the national Convention of the Organization of Arab Students held in Houston, Texas, August 26-29. The following is a condensation of the message of solidarity he presented to the Convention on behalf of the SL.

"This conference takes place after very serious setbacks in the Near East—the almost complete physical liquidation of the Palestine resistance movement by Hussein's army, the aborted coups in Egypt, Morocco and the Sudan, the right-wing coup in Syria, the shift to the right of all Arab governments including the most demagogic and 'radical.'"

"The Spartacist League calls for the unconditional military defense of the Palestine resistance movement against Arab reaction, freedom for all imprisoned Arab revolutionaries like Tayseer Al-Zobari of the DPFLP, and complete independence and full democratic rights for all revolutionary and workers' organizations.

## FROM MAOISM TO TROTSKYISM

*Continued from Page 5*

politics of the SWP. We noted their similarities to the CPUSA, sharpened up our historical understanding of the particular twists their opportunism took (Pabloism, Cuba, etc.) and then turned to those groups which appeared to be applying Trotsky's ideas in a serious manner.

We spent considerable time examining the "Russian Question," that is, the class nature of the Soviet State. In the course of this inquiry we studied both wings of the International Socialists (state capitalist and bureaucratic collectivist) and found both wanting. We concluded that Trotsky's analysis of the deformed workers state as an obstacle on the road to socialism, as the first phase of the restoration of capitalism but not itself that restoration, remains the most sensible ordering of the facts. We should note in passing that while we did not consider the IS practice in party building to be Leninist, we found the individual members and the local Los Angeles leadership to have a democratic and scientific spirit in our all-too-few discussions with them.

### Wohlforth Exposed

Our investigation of organizations considering themselves Trotskyist led us to study the politics of the Workers League and the Spartacist League. Our contact with the Workers League soon revealed to us the spurious character of that organization and its dependence upon the blind loyalty of its membership to it and its international ~~SL~~ in place of Trotskyist politics. In a letter of April 27 Tim Wohlforth declared that the Spartacist League "is completely hostile to the Fourth international and bears no relationship whatever with Trotskyism" and that "you cannot have joint discussions or joint actions with us while at the same time maintaining relations of any sort with Spartacist." We replied on May 18 that we could reach such a conclusion only "on the basis of our own independent investigation." We noted that "Spartacist has shown a healthy attitude toward encouraging and aiding our investigation (which is more than we can say about your approach)" and reaffirmed our intention to continue our investigation of the SL and WL "in spite of any roadblock you may throw up in our way."

If Wohlforth had had his way, we would not only have proclaimed the WL to be the Leninist vanguard before we had even studied the question, but further we would have been prevented from our attempts to influence the Maoists in the direction of Trotskyism. Referring to recent Chinese atrocities in Ceylon and Pakistan, Wohlforth declared, "In any event we will not have joint ac-

"The working class must lead the struggle. The creation of a revolutionary party of the proletariat is the most immediate task facing Arab revolutionaries. The Palestinian struggle is no exception to the Permanent Revolution. The democratic resolution of the Palestinian situation can be accomplished only by the revolutionary party that includes both militant Israeli workers and Palestinian Arabs in its ranks. Only such a party can break Israeli workers from the chauvinist Mapam-Histadrut misleadership. And only such a party, leading to a multi-national proletarian dictatorship in Israel and the Arab countries, can resolve the oppression of the Palestinians, the South Sudanese, the Kurds and other national minorities.

"Such a party must be a part of a democratic centralist revolutionary international built by the struggle for political clarification and the program of proletarian revolution.

"The fundamental axis of our difference with the Arab revolutionary groups is over the relationship between national liberation and proletarian revolution. Those groups which see these struggles as separate believe that the Arab capitalist classes and the Arab regimes—the enemies of proletarian revolution—can be won to fight for national liberation. The DPFLP projects as the strategy for proletarian revolution the Maoist doctrine of 'people's war' and 'people's fronts.' These formulations are inseparable from the complementary Maoist doctrine of the two-stage revolution and the bloc of four classes. Put into practice, such doctrines lead straight to political disaster.

"In this era of world imperialism, the Arab national bourgeoisies are as dependent on imperialism for their survival as imperialism is dependent upon them for the continued subjugation and plunder of the Arab countries. This lesson is written in the blood of Arab liberation fighters.

"We must give no confidence to the left-talking nationalist-militarist Arab regimes. It is our task to replace the so-called "revolutionary councils" of the colonels by revolutionary councils of the workers and peasants. ■

tions with Maoists." We replied that he obviously assumed that Maoist groupings were finished formations, and ignored the tremendous flux such organizations were undergoing in the wake of the intensifying crisis of world imperialism and the ever clearer capitulations of Chinese Stalinism to imperialism. Such sectarianism, we wrote, could permanently bar these comrades from the road to Trotskyism. We characterized Wohlforth's position as leading to "either a sectarian liquidation of the united front reminiscent of Third Period Stalinism or to a series of opportunist zig-

## Revolutionary Communist Youth Founded

The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus held its first national conference over Labor Day weekend in New York City, transforming itself into the Revolutionary Communist Youth, the youth section of the Spartacist League. Over 80 members and supporters from all parts of the country attended.

The RMC originated in the 1969 SDS split, critically supporting the Progressive Labor-WSA forces as a pro-proletarian wing against the New Left anarcho-Maoists, and was formally established as a left oppositional caucus in SDS in early 1970. Its main focus was opposition to the campus-parochial, social-work approach then projected by PL as the strategy for SDS. The RMC also participated actively in work-stoppage committees during the Kent-Cambodia crisis, raising the need to transform the student strike into a general strike. A key aspect of RMC's work has been defense of all left groups against state persecution and opposition to gangsterism within the left movement. The RMC intervened at the NPAC conference last July to expose the SWP's attempted bloc with the liberal bourgeoisie. It is the intersection of the RMC's past political struggles with the upsurge of the international class struggle that has made the founding of the RCY possible.

The tasks of the RCY require absolute clarity on the relation of youth to the revolutionary movement. "Youth" in itself is neither revolutionary

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nor a class. Hitler, Trotsky, Mao and Nixon were all young once. The currently popular notion of the "Red University" and all forms of youth vanguardism reflect a conscious adaptation to the theory that youth (students) are inherently revolutionary. But the petty bourgeoisie is not an independent class and thus cannot pursue its own class politics, but is forced to choose between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Students, as the most volatile section of the petty bourgeoisie, will play an active role in all radical movements, whether of the left or right. The radical intelligentsia—primarily campus-based in America—can play an essential and valuable role in the building of the vanguard party, once broken from its class origins and committed to the fundamental class interests of the proletariat. It is to this struggle that the RCY is dedicated—to develop young radicals into lifetime communist militants, professional revolutionaries.

The struggle of all the oppressed must be linked to the proletarian vanguard party, the driving force of revolution. Cut off from the party—which embodies the historical experience of the revolutionary proletarian movement—the youth is crippled, doomed to founder in a classless swamp. Thus the youth organization must be a section of the party, politically subordinate to it. But in order to permit the freest and fullest development of the young communists, the youth organization must be organizationally independent. As a part of the common revolutionary movement, the youth will maintain common discipline in action, and will play a real if subordinate part in determining the common movement's policies. ■

zags—now condemning joint action, now pragmatically entering into it."

The arrogance, sectarianism, misrepresentation and political tomfoolery exemplified by the WL in our contact with them only underscored the decisive character of our break with Stalinism. In this sense the WL hastened our decision to fuse with the organization which, through open and comradely discussions sustained over a period of months, we found ourselves in political solidarity. Our fusion with the Spartacist League took place at the Labor Day Plenum in New York.