



Rail strikers storm Parliament Building in Ottawa.

TORONTO STAR

Government Breaks Canadian Rail Strike

Labor Tops Bow to Anti-Strike Law

TORONTO, September 4—Canada's ten-day-old nationwide rail strike was effectively broken by the Liberal Trudeau government last weekend, despite several thousand workers' surging into the Parliament building in Ottawa to protest the strikebreaking bill. The leadership of all but one of the striking unions promptly accepted the governmental edict, although Parliament-imposed terms were no better than those rejected by the unions weeks earlier. Under the pressure of runaway inflation, the government is testing the ability of the labor bureaucracy and its parliamentary representatives in the New Democratic Party to contain and discipline the ranks of Canadian labor. With the servility of the labor tops amply illustrated by the collapse of the rail strike, a national "incomes policy" (wage control) may not be far off.

History of the Strike

Negotiations began December 31 of last year with the termination of the contract between the eight unions representing the 56,000 non-operating railway workers (non-ops) and Canada's two railway giants, Canadian Pacific and Canadian National (a "crown corporation" fully subsidized by the government), and nine smaller railway companies. The unions, pointing to the sharp rise in the Canadian cost of living and the falling wages of railway workers relative to other transport workers, demanded a 10.8% increase each year for the next two years. In July, the companies accepted the proposal of a government board of conciliation which limited pay increases to a total of only 17.8 percent over two years. The unions refused to accept the government/company offer and began a series of rotating strikes that led to the late-August nationwide walkout.

From the outset negotiations took place in an atmosphere permeated by the threat of government intervention.

Twice in recent memory the federal government has acted directly to break major strikes. In 1966 the Ottawa government ordered striking rail employees back to work and met little resistance from the unions. Only last summer the Ottawa government intervened to break the strike of Canadian dock workers. The pattern of state intervention was so clearly established that when negotiations broke down in July the *Toronto Globe and Mail* could speculate in an editorial (July 26) that perhaps the "strike weapon was a fiction" for Canadian rail workers.

Caught between a militant rank and file and a solid government/company front, the railway union leaders called for rotating strikes by geographical areas. These strikes had the stated purpose of putting appropriate pressure on the railway companies without "upsetting the economy" by a nationwide strike. There was some unsuccessful rank-and-file opposition to the futile tactic of rotating strikes, but for the most part rail workers simmered as they watched government and industry hold back shipments of grain in an attempt to precipitate an immediate food crisis in the event of a national strike.

The militancy boiled over first in the western provinces where workers refused to go back when the rotating strike in their area was over. The western provinces are a center of union unrest and Canadian nationalism. It is also in the western provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia that the New Democratic Party (NDP), a farmer-labor party with close ties to the unions, controls the provincial governments. The NDP provincial prime ministers of course have a vested political interest in maintaining the economy in good order in "their provinces." And on a federal level the NDP has embraced Trudeau's minority Liberal Party government since the federal elections gave the NDP the "balance of power" between the Liberal and Conservative parties. From the early stages of the struggle the NDP parliamentary leaders shamelessly announced that they would support

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As Woodcock-Fraser Prepare Sellout—

For an International, Industry-Wide Auto Strike!

SEPTEMBER 10—As negotiations between the UAW and the Big Three approach the September 14 deadline, the Woodcock bureaucracy is making its class-collaborationist strategy clear for all to see. Fearing a wave of strike militancy that could threaten their position, union officials prepared for the talks with the companies by pursuing a conscious policy of demoralizing the ranks. This has ranged from permitting isolated strikes at Norwood and Lordstown to drag on into oblivion in order to destroy the morale of the workers, to tolerating and even encouraging the victimization of individual militants in several plants across the country (Fremont, Calif. GM; Mahwah, N.J. Ford) and most recently the open strikebreaking by UAW officials at Chrysler's Mack Ave. Stamping Plant. Essentially the same purpose is to be served by such gimmicks as announcing this year's target, Chrysler, several days earlier than usual so as to provide extra time to publicize to the ranks in the bourgeois press evidence of their "hard bargaining."

Despite this ambitious campaign it has proven extremely difficult to build a case for labor peace. This has been a boom year for the auto companies with profits universally at record levels. Chrysler earned more money in the second quarter of this year than in the entire first half of 1972, while its profit of \$198 million for the first six months of 1973 was a record high. Ford and GM have also announced record-breaking after-tax earnings for the first quarter of 1973, of \$361 and \$817 million, respectively.

Meanwhile, auto workers have faced increased speed-up, loss of jobs and erosion of real wages. GM Assembly Division workers in 1973 produced 250,000 more units than in the first nine months of 1972, but with 20,000 fewer workers! At Chrysler's Forge plant, scene of a recent wildcat strike, union members told IIV reporters that 60 percent of the factory had worked

seven days a week for more than six months to meet Chrysler's production schedules.

The smoldering resentment of auto workers erupted in a series of wildcat strikes and sitdowns in the Detroit area, the most important of which occurred in three Chrysler plants in late July and August. These actions threatened to interrupt the carefully planned preparations of the Woodcock bureaucracy. While it was temporarily able to dampen militancy through a mass mobilization of union officials against the action at the Mack Ave. plant, the bureaucracy's extreme fragility and lack of real rank-and-file support was made clear to all.

The UAW Bureaucracy: Agents of the Bosses

The choice of Chrysler as the "target company" only a few days after the Mack Ave. incident was not surprising. Selecting GM would have clearly revealed the immense gap between the bureaucracy's minimal preparations to mobilize the rank and file and its pretensions to the role of hard-headed, "practical" negotiators. Secretary-Treasurer Emil Mazey estimated that the UAW would have a strike fund of only \$50 million by September 14. The 67-day strike in 1970 against the giant GM cost \$160 million. While a successful strike can, of course, be waged without a strike fund, an inadequate strike fund is usually a sign of the unwillingness of a union leadership to wage a militant struggle.

Chrysler, on the other hand, offered several advantages to the union leaders. Its recent financial successes, its smallness and apparent vulnerability, make it a more credible target in the eyes of the rank and file. Moreover, unlike Ford and GM, Chrysler's Canadian division bargains simultaneously with its American and Canadian workers. Thus a joint settlement in Chrysler

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SWP NATIONAL CONVENTION

Split Momentum Mounts in USec

Pressures for a split in the so-called "United Secretariat" have become practically irresistible. Symptomatic of the tense situation in this rotten bloc that poses as the Trotskyist International was the recent National Convention of the Socialist Workers Party, held last month in Oberlin, Ohio. During the convention Livio Maitan, a leader of the European majority of the United Secretariat, objected to the SWP's decision to close internal debate on subjects still under discussion for the upcoming USec world congress. An SWP majority leader retorted ominously: "This is the convention of the Socialist Workers Party. There is no higher body!" To which Maitan replied: "We have beaten you before [i.e., when Pablo, together with Mandel, Maitan and Frank, expelled the SWP in 1953] and we will beat you again!"

Shadow-Boxing and Veiled Threats

The SWP convention occurs in the context of a raging international faction fight in which each side is accusing the other of deviations which it has itself practiced for years, while lining up with bloc partners holding diametrically opposed policies on key issues. (Thus the SWP majority is on a binge of Trotskyist "orthodoxy" and accuses the French section of capitulating before the popular-front Union of the Left in the March 1973 elections, which is quite true. The "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction"—SWP and friends—neglects to mention, however, that its own anti-war and women's liberation work has been carried on through classical popular-front organizations, NPAC and WONAAC, since 1965.)

With this kind of rampant maneuvering, it is not surprising that the convention discussion was highly polemical yet also evasive and devious. The SWP leadership, to cite one example, made a great display of democracy (in contrast to its 1971 convention) by giving the minority Internationalist Tendency equal reporting time with the majority. However, at the same time it managed to restrict the IT to only three delegates—half the number the tendency's size, 88 out of 1,200 party members, should have given it—and elected no minorityites to the National Committee.

The discussion on Latin America centered on the relative merits of the respective Argentine allies of the two sides in the USec dispute. It was conclusively shown that the SWP's group (the PST) is a reformist, electoralist, social-democratic party par excellence, while the European majority's (former) affiliate (the PRT) is a Castroist-Maoist-Kim Il Sungist guerrilla outfit having nothing to do with Trotskyism. In consequence, SWP majority leaders and IT spokesmen prudently chose to concentrate on attacking the mortal sins of the opposing group, hoping thereby to demonstrate the superiority of their own side by default.

The debate on the world movement was couched in horror stories of unprincipled factionalism and veiled threats of organizational retaliation. Jack Barnes, reporting for the SWP majority, discussed a letter from I Ter Barzman revealing the existence of a secret faction run by the European majority. He then announced the formation of an international "Leninist-Trotskyist Faction" by the SWP. In a curious perversion of democratic centralism, the convention then proceeded to vote for the formation of such a faction; approve the SWP majority's



Jack Barnes

MILITANT

positions on the world movement; close internal debate on these subjects; and vote to commit the full resources of the party to the international faction fight. So the poor IT now has to pay pledges to support activities of a faction it opposes without being able even to raise its objections within the SWP! (The subject may be academic, however, since the hard tone of Barnes' report suggests that expulsion of the IT is possible at any time.)

Speaking for the U.S. minority was Livio Maitan, a leader of the international majority, who began on a mild tone cautioning against the formation of an international faction; graduated to accounts of SWP factional atrocities in England and Mexico; and ended by implying reprisals against the pro-SWP minority in the British section if the IT is expelled, and warning the SWP that the Europeans had beaten them once and would do it again. During the reports it became clear that a fight is brewing in the YSA, the SWP's de facto youth group. The SWP leadership wants to stop party minorityites from discussing their views in the youth; Maitan objects because the YSA is a fraternal supporter of the USec, and the Internationalist Tendency even threw in some good words about the need for Leninist youth-party relations—a subject raised more than a decade ago by the Spartacist tendency.

The other high point of the convention was the debate on the political report. The majority presentation gave an idea of what the SWP means by "Leninist party-building" by listing an inventory of the office furniture, printing equipment and business machines in the national offices and expounding on the good purposes to which the mammoth expansion fund would be put (air conditioning and buying the party's headquarters building). The IT responded with a hard-hitting speech by Hedda Garza which came off sounding quite orthodox, and borrowed heavily from Spartacist politics, concentrating solely on opposition to feminism and nationalism. Garza pointed out that WONAAC acted largely as an electoral pressure group. (The SWP's own distinctive contribution to women's liberation, aside from its abandonment some time ago of the demand for free abortion, has been to write the abortion legislation introduced by bourgeois Representative Abzug.) The IT has also called for restricting the full-time paid staff to 10 percent of party members (an incredibly high figure), which reportedly would mean a big reduction of what is already a mini-bureaucracy in a party of only 1,200. (Just think what these reformist empire-builders could do as the bureaucratic caretakers of a few union treasuries.)

For the remainder of the discussion the most striking feature brought to mind was the incredible degeneration

of the once-Trotskyist SWP, as a kaleidoscope of special interest groups paraded past the microphones. Feminists accused the IT of being male chauvinist; nationalists accused it of racism. Homosexuals wanted a transitional program for gay liberation and a declaration that gay love is just as "good" as the heterosexual variety. Next to the international question, gay liberation and anthropology were the main topics of internal debate.

The "Discussion" in the USec

Behind the shadow-boxing and maneuvering is the current factional struggle which has blown apart several national sections (so far: Australia, Canada, Mexico, Spain) and will imminently split the United Secretariat as well. The ostensible issue is guerrilla warfare or, to be more precise, putting guerrilla warfare into practice. But in reality we are witnessing the conflict of the profoundly reformist SWP, which longs to achieve bourgeois respectability as the social-democratic party in the U.S., versus the centrist European leadership of Mandel-Maitan-Frank which is currently tailing radical guerrillaist youth, having earlier tagged along behind the Stalinist bureaucracies for an entire decade.

As far as Castroism and guerrilla war are concerned, it was common agreement on these subjects which provided one of the key bases for the formation of the United Secretariat in the early 1960's. The founding document of this opportunist bloc of rene-

gades from Trotskyism, written by the SWP itself, explicitly endorsed guerrilla warfare:

"Along the road of a revolution beginning with simple democratic demands and ending in the rupture of capitalist property relations, guerrilla warfare conducted by landless peasant and semi-proletarian forces, under a leadership that becomes committed to carrying the revolution through to a conclusion, can play a decisive role in undermining and precipitating the downfall of a colonial and semi-colonial power. This is one of the main lessons to be drawn from experience since the Second World War. It must be consciously incorporated into the strategy of building revolutionary Marxist parties in colonial countries."

—"For Early Reunification of the World Trotskyist Movement," March 1963

Yet for some reason, the SWP's Joe Hansen suddenly discovered in 1969 that guerrilla warfare is not a Leninist strategy. Ten years ago he sang a different tune when the Hansen-Dobbs leadership threw the Revolutionary Tendency out of the SWP for saying precisely that! Here is what the RT (predecessor of the Spartacist League) wrote at the time:

"Experience since the Second World War has demonstrated that peasant-based guerrilla warfare under petty-bourgeois leadership can in itself lead to nothing more than an anti-working-class bureaucratic regime... Colonial revolution can have an unequivocally progressive revolutionary significance only under such leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. For Trotskyists to incorporate into their strat-

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The Red Mole



IN LATIN AMERICA BOTH TROTSKY AND CHE WERE MURDERED. TODAY THEIR FOLLOWERS PAY THEM HOMAGE BY TAKING UP ARMS. DETERMINED TO LIBERATE THE ENTIRE CONTINENT

**Special Latin America Dossier
BENGAL: THE EAST GETS REDDER
MANCHESTER: COUNCIL OF ACTION**

All sections of the "United Secretariat" — from reformist SWP to left wing of centrist European majority (see British IMG's *Red Mole* above) — have supported "guerrilla road to power." The Spartacist tendency was expelled from SWP in 1963 for holding that only the proletariat can create healthy workers states.

egy revisionism on the proletarian leadership in the revolution is a profound negation of Marxism-Leninism."
—"Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International," June 1963

Just what exactly was the famous "turn to guerrilla strategy" at the USec's Ninth Congress which Hansen objects to so vehemently today? The key section of the Latin American resolution stated simply:

"Even in the case of countries where large mobilizations and class conflicts in the cities may occur first, civil war will take manifold forms of armed struggle, in which the principled axis for a whole period will be rural guerrilla warfare...."

Nothing new here. The real "turn at the Ninth Congress" was the turning of the screws which came a few paragraphs later in a section about implementing the guerrilla strategy:

"It is the job of the various national revolutionary Marxist organizations to translate this general orientation into concrete formulas and guidelines.... adopting methods of work corresponding to the necessities of a struggle conducted under conditions of repression and strict clandestinity...."
—"Draft Resolution on Latin America," May 1969

The SWP reacted with genuine horror at this prospect. What would its Democratic Party friends like Rep. Abzug and Sen. Hartke do if they found the SWP's allies kidnapping American businessmen? (Readers of the *Militant* will note the speed with which the SWP published disavowals every time the Argentine USec section hijacked another executive. The famous condolences to the widow Kennedy were evidently only the beginning of the SWP's apologies to the ruling class.)

Maitan, who doubtless has fantasies of his 20-foot high portrait hanging from the balconies of some Latin American capital, went even further, declaring that, "it is necessary to understand and to explain that at the present stage the International will be built around Bolivia". And as Hansen, his hand on his wallet, relates in his latest document, the guerrillaists of the majority actually planned a financial campaign to help open a guerrilla *foco* in Bolivia. They told the reformist, social-democratic SWP to put its money where its mouth was—literally. So in 1969 the "orthodox" Joe Hansen suddenly discovered that guerrilla war is only a tactic, not a strategy. And now in 1973 he opines that perhaps the 1963 reunification document should have had something about the limits of guerrilla warfare in it as well. Live and learn.

Mandel-Maitan-Frank also have a few problems with their past, however. Mandel now maintains that the 1969 resolution overdid the rural guerrilla war theme a little and that the main line is really urban guerrillaism.

Moreover, last December he suddenly discovered that the prize jewel of the European majority, the Revolutionary People's Army (ERP), led by the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), Argentine section of the USec, had developed a militarist deviation. To top this off, it turns out the PRT wasn't for the Fourth International but for a new Castroist-Maoist International to include every petty Stalinist dictator including Enver Hoxha (see "Guevarism vs. Social Democracy in the USec," *WV* No. 23, 22 June 1973). Poor Maitan had been praising the PRT/ERP for the last four years, writing that the last two PRT congresses were elaborating and "making more precise" the decisions of the Ninth USec Congress.

So both sides of the USec fight are hopelessly compromised in the sundry deviations and deviations-upon-deviations of the Argentine guerrillaists. (A comical point at last December's meeting of USec leaders came when Maitan listed all the deviations of the PRT and then pointed to Moreno, the SWP's man in Buenos Aires, accusing him dramatically, "And you are the father of them!" Moreno replied immediately, "And you are the mother!" They were both right.)

The SWP-led minority accuses the majority of abandoning Leninism on the party question, which is true enough. The European majority, in turn, accuses the SWP of opportunist tail-ending, which is equally true. If simply exposing the sins of both sides in this den of revisionists were sufficient to put would-be revolutionaries on the right track, then we could relax contentedly as the Internal bulletins pour out, each with more horrendous revelations than the last. But there is a danger that some sincere militants may reject the rotten betrayers they know best only to embrace the equally rotten misleaders on the opposing side.

The Internationalist Tendency

This may be happening to some extent in the U.S. as the Internationalist Tendency picked up the support of about 80 SWPers many of whom are subjectively more militant than the cynical majority that revels in the popular fronts of NPAC and WONAAC. But it is crucial that minorityites seeking to return to Trotskyism understand that the IT is already deeply compromised and fundamentally unprincipled.

The key leaders of the Internationalist Tendency were earlier members of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency at the 1971 SWP convention. The POT document ascribed all the party's ills to its failure to root itself in the working class. Despite its limitations (e.g., it did not challenge the SWP's popular-front antiwar and women's work), the POT did seek to orient to the working class. Now, however, the IT has signed up for the U.S. franchise of Mandel-Maitan-Frank and Co. whose stock-in-trade is guerrillaism/terrorism in Latin America and orientation to the "new mass vanguard" in Europe. The IT itself admits this "vanguard" is "predominantly student" in composition.

People can, of course, change their minds. But in the case of the Internationalist Tendency, this evolution has been surprisingly rapid and, one must say, rather suspicious. When the IT leaders first came together this year they had the following to say about the international Majority Tendency:

"We reject the positions of the International majority as well.... We believe that the positions of the International majority, which envisage a continent-wide strategy of armed struggle, represent an adaptation to guerrillaism.... The International majority evidenced in its positions a critical error in the consideration of Maoism as bureaucratic centrism.... There is a certain tendency in this direction evident in some of the European sections' positions toward the leadership of the DRV/NLF and the Seven-Point Program."

—"Letter to the Political Committee on the Formation of a Political Tendency," 19 January 1973

But by May the same people, having meanwhile sniffed a split in the air and after a few secret meetings with

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Book Review

Cannon versus Pablo



James P. Cannon

James P. Cannon, *SPEECHES TO THE PARTY*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973, 431 pp., \$3.95.

The publication of James Cannon's speeches and letters from the 1952-1953 SWP faction fight, documents previously available only in old SWP internal bulletins, is an important political event for two reasons. First, these writings highlight Cannon's enormous strengths as a principled defender of the Trotskyist program during trying times, such as the demoralizing McCarthy period. (They also reveal considerable weaknesses evident in his failure to launch in good time an international faction fight against Pabloist liquidationism—which also eased the way for the qualitative degeneration of the SWP ten years later.) Second, the SWP's publication of Cannon's 1952-53 documents (along with its pamphlet on the history of the split with Pablo, the *Militant's* reprinting of Trotsky articles on terrorism, etc.) at this time, as differences over guerrilla warfare threaten to blow apart the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat," is clear preparation for a split between supporters of the centrist European-led majority and the reformist SWP-led minority.

Without attempting a comprehensive assessment of Cannon's role as a leader of world Trotskyism since 1928, we should note that his writings in this collection are a model of evaluating the central issues in a dispute. He accurately diagnosed the existence of a rotten bloc between Clarke's followers in New York who were capitulating to Stalinism, and Cochran's group of trade unionists in Detroit who, reflecting the conservatism and demoralization among older and now comfortably-ensconced veterans of the CIO struggles, simply wanted to get out of revolutionary politics. For today's workerists, who see "roots in the working class" as a guarantee against degeneration, Cannon's speech on "Trade Unionists and Revolutionists" is most reading.

For over a year, Cannon struggled for programmatic clarity. His struggle was waged both against the minority—to force it openly to declare its real political positions—and with the abstentionist, "non-factional" elements of the majority (such as Farrell Dobbs) to bring them to see the real political issues at stake. The non-political response of sections of the party cadre is in hindsight a danger sign, but the conservative impulse did not find programmatic generalization until 1963, when the SWP codified its revisionist degeneration and "reunited" with Pabloism. But simply to write off the SWP as at this time already hopelessly degenerated, led by the "Zinovievist" Cannon, (as do the Class Struggle League, Spartacus-BL, the Revolutionary Socialist League and other groups who are united solely in their respective claims to be the first Trotskyists since Trotsky or, in the case of the RSL, the first Trotskyists ever) means closing one's eyes to a few "minor"

achievements. These include the party's internationalist defense of North Korea against the U.S. in the Korean War and the SWP's "Open Letter" of 1953 which led to the formation of the International Committee and prevented Pablo's complete destruction of the world Trotskyist movement.

At the beginning of the Cochran-Clarke fight Cannon's strong sense of party loyalty became a travesty of itself when applied on an international scale. He used the notion of "party loyalty" to the International leadership of Pablo-Germain [Mandel] to paper over and actually conceal from the SWP membership serious political differences, in particular over Pablo's "centuries of deformed workers states." Similarly, Cannon covered for Pablo's organizational abuses by not solidarizing with the French majority against its bureaucratic expulsion by the International Secretariat, which he later admitted had made him profoundly uneasy at the time.

This shortcoming led directly to the major weakness revealed during the struggle—Cannon's failure to carry out an international faction fight against Pabloism. To avoid having to implement Pabloist policies, Cannon posited a federated International. (This deviation came home to roost in the later formation of the "United Secretariat" in which differences over the 1953 split, China and other questions were papered over as each national organization went its merry way.) Cannon's federalist concept of internationalism was reflected in a polemic against (of all things) "Cominternism"! The early Communist International, he wrote, was highly centralized because of the tremendous authority of Lenin and the Russian Revolution, as well as the financial possibility of frequent consultations (since the Soviet party held state power). Under Stalin, this centralism became an instrument for suppressing independent thought. And today "it would be better for the center there to limit itself primarily to the role of ideological leader, and to leave aside organizational interference as much as possible..." (p. 74). Later in the same speech he rejected the idea of taking orders from anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances and referred to the International Secretariat as mere "collaborators." Cannon here fails to distinguish between Lenin's democratic centralism and the bureaucratic centralism of Stalin. Pablo certainly had appetites to be a petty dictator and tactical autonomy for national sections is desirable, but to reply to the devious intrigues of the "Pope of Paris" by rejecting a centralized International is a qualitative overreaction.

The problem was not that Cannon was unaware of the issues in dispute internationally—his criticisms of Pablo's "centuries of deformed workers states," the "war-revolution thesis" and the organizational atrocities of the International leadership

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WORKERS VANGUARD

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Leninist Tendency to Fuse with SL

Emerging from the recent split in the International Socialists was the Leninist Tendency, which resigned following the expulsion of the Revolutionary Tendency (see "IS Explodes," WV No. 26, 3 August). The RT (now the Revolutionary Socialist League) is a contradictory leftward-moving formation that has not yet broken with the fundamental programmatic elements of Shachtmanism, as indicated especially by its refusal to call for unconditional military defense of the USSR against imperialism (the Russian question) and for Leninist norms of democratic centralism (the organizational question). The LT, however, represented during the IS faction fight a clear Trotskyist pole and a sharp break with the Shachtmanite methodology of tailing every twist and turn of petty-bourgeois public opinion (anti-Sovietism in 1939-40, black nationalism in 1968, workerism today).

At its August Central Committee plenum the Spartacist League voted to fuse with the LT, as another step in the process of revolutionary regroupment. In the past two years this tactic has attracted to the SL a whole new layer of cadre from the remnants of the New Left, various Maoist formations and the ex-Trotskyist SWP. The continuing importance of regroupment in the struggle to construct a proletarian vanguard is demonstrated by the recent series of left splits from Pabloist and Shachtmanite organizations, reflecting a growing desire among sections of these revisionist parties to return to orthodox Trotskyism as the class struggle sharpens. Such a situation requires an effort to intersect the contradictory leftward-moving currents through sharp programmatic struggle in order to crystallize a Bolshevik wing. The development of the Leninist Tendency and its relationship to the RT/RSL must be seen in this context.

Origins of the Leninist Tendency

The LT was formed out of a West Coast grouping led by Doug Hayes and Judith Shapiro. Its members were recruited from the IS' "SDS levy"—the members drawn in after 1968 as the Shachtmanite organization threw its doors open to practically anyone save out-and-out Stalinists. Thus Hayes, a former member of the Spartacist tendency, joined the IS in 1971 declaring himself an oppositionist in general agreement with Spartacist politics. Shapiro joined the IS in 1969 after a time as an activist in SDS. She served a term on the IS National Committee and was a leader in its women's liberation work. Her gradual leftward course resulted in the coalescing of an informal tendency in late 1972 which generally adhered to Trotskyist politics.

The outbreak of violent factional warfare in the IS between the hardened Shachtmanites of the right-wing majority led by Joel Geier and a heterogeneous left wing led by Ron Tabor and former IS National Secretary Sy Landy, required the transformation of the Hayes/Shapiro group into a hard Trotskyist tendency with a definite perspective. Thus the Leninist Tendency was formed at the April 1973 IS plenum, with the goal of winning the left wing to the program of revolutionary Trotskyism.

The "Draft Program of the Leninist Tendency" concentrated on the key issues of the vanguard party and Bolshevik trade-union policies. The LT took an unambiguous Trotskyist position, calling for the rebirth of the Fourth International and rejecting all "new mass vanguard" theories which see the proletarian leadership as somehow emerging from a spontaneous process. The LT aptly characterized such spontaneist tailism as "Pabloism from below." On trade-union policies the document stressed the need to go beyond being "the best militants," in order to present a revolutionary alternative to

the bureaucracy and to win militants to the politics of the Trotskyist party. On the controversial question of critical support to oppositionists in the unions, the "Draft Program" limited the use of this tactic to situations in which one side has taken a class-struggle position on a key question which sharply differentiates it from "simple promises of militancy, honesty, democracy" which are the trademark of every fake-militant out of power. When the candidate later betrays the struggle, the consistency of the revolutionaries will stand out clearly.

In addition the tendency program called for working-class struggle against the oppression of blacks, other ethnic minorities and women, rejecting any form of nationalist or feminist polyvanguardism. It also called for unconditional military defense of the Sino-Soviet states against imperialist attack, characterizing them as degenerated or deformed workers states.

The New York IS Zoo

Independently of the West Coast group, two New York ISers began evolving toward Spartacist politics after earlier supporting and later rejecting varieties of left-workerism which masqueraded as "Trotskyism" in the IS circus. One New York LTer, who was a member of the IS for seven years, earlier supported New York IS leader Brian Mackenzie who in 1971 had written some "Theses on the Transitional Program" proclaiming that the Transitional Program was based on objective necessity. Mackenzie himself later admitted in an internal document that the activity of his supporters during the 1971 New York telephone strike amounted to acting as a left pressure group on the CWA bureaucracy—hardly an application of the Transitional Program.

As Mackenzie seemed to be moving to the right in 1972, this comrade came into contact with a supposedly "orthodox Trotskyist" study group in the IS made up of the Communist Tendency (a group of young workerist philistines formerly of the SWP) and some burnt-out cases (Harold Robins, Hugh Fredericks) who abandoned the rest-home atmosphere of Harry Turner's Vanguard Newsletter for the high school-like milieu of the IS. Despite the ex-CT/VNlers' claims to be carrying out a hard, wrecking entry, what actually took place was (as one leading ISer put it) their assimilation as just "one more monster in the swamp."

The ex-CT/VNlers formed a Caucus for a Transitional Program Policy which, like the Landy-Tabor group, refused to take on the IS majority on the key questions of the nature of the Stalinist-ruled states and the role of the vanguard party, instead restricting their polemics to trade-union tactics. In this area they termed the SL emphasis on struggle for the revolutionary program inside the unions "sec'arianism." Similarly, they rejected intervention into the women's liberation movement, showing their opportunist appetites by arguing that white male workers would be turned off by struggle against special oppression of women. Having rejected this workerist perversion of Trotskyism as capitulation to the backward consciousness of the working class today, the two New York comrades became sympathetic to the Leninist Tendency.

For Political Clarity, Against Left-Shachtmanism

Some of the writings of the Revolutionary Tendency (the principal opposition group), and particularly the document on the Transitional Program by Tabor, were clearly to the left of mainstream IS politics and an apparent attempt to break from the Shachtmanite tradition. However, the political character of the RT remained unclear and

its practice unknown. Thus the central efforts of the LT during the brief and aborted factional struggle centered on achieving political clarification in the left wing by exposing the contradictions of the Tabor-Landy RT.

Tabor had called for the formation of trade-union caucuses based on the Transitional Program, but then only to declare,

"Contrary to the approach of the Spartacists and other wooden heads, the method of the transitional program does not consist of raising the entire program everywhere and always, nor in the 'principled' construction of communist caucuses in the unions based on the entire, or 95 percent of, the Transitional Program."

—"On the Transitional Program," undated [1973]

The LT replied, in its document "Party and Program," that while a caucus might center its agitation on one or several points of the Transitional Program at any given time, the caucus itself must be based on a principled class program, that is, the Transitional Program—not bits and pieces of the program, what the workers are "ready for" or, as the Geierites put it, the "next step forward." The task is to build a revolutionary opposition in the unions.

A decisive and revealing event in the evolution of the RT was its call for "critical support" to the U.S. Labor Department's darling, Arnold Miller, in last year's Mine Workers' election. Thus despite its Transitional Program-waving, and although the RT opposed the right-wing majority primarily over trade-union policy, in practice both wings of the IS were committed to tailing whatever was popular. The LT countered:

"...[Tabor] states that critical support is 'only justified when the elements we are supporting are those who will become susceptible to being pressured by the rank and file.' Whocan that possibly exclude? No other criterion is given. We believe, in fact, that Tabor's desire to extend critical support to the MFD [Miners for Democracy] leadership... reveal[s] that he is still tied to the 'step-forward' concept...."

—"Party and Program," April 1973

The LT also challenged the RT to take a position on the Russian question beyond the simple-minded assertion that a deformed workers state theory "leads to Pabloism." Behind that statement is the same old Shachtmanite view that one must favor anything that is a "step forward": i.e., if a "deformed workers state" is a "step forward" with regard to capitalism, then orthodox Trotskyists must advocate the formation of deformed workers states!

In its last document while still part of the IS, "On Democratic Centralism and Factional Struggle," the Leninist Tendency rejected the view expressed by Landy in a LT/RT debate that Lenin was wrong in asserting that socialist consciousness is brought to the working class from the outside. To adhere to the traditional Leninist concept, as presented in *What Is To Be Done?*, said Landy, was substitutionism eventually leading to support for Stalinism. The LT

pointed out that despite all the fine platitudes about "freedom of criticism, unity in action," Menshevik groups such as the IS would only stand for so much criticism from embarrassing minorities before simply expelling them. In another document it suggested that the RT was "about to receive an all-too-fatal demonstration of this."

Repeatedly during the IS faction fight, the LT pointed out that the RT was artificially heating-up the atmosphere in order to provoke its own expulsion. The RT replied by accusing the Leninist Tendency of conciliating the majority.

After the expulsion of the RT, the LT promptly resigned from the IS, not wishing to legitimize in any way the profoundly reformist, anti-communist Geierite organization. It then applied for membership in the RSL, arguing that "our program is the logical extension of the direction in which you have moved" (letter to the RSL, 17 July). The LT reaffirmed its earlier characterization of the RT/RSL as an incomplete break with Shachtmanism, listed its differences on the Russian question, the organizational question, the relation of party to class, the question of critical support in the unions and raised the crucial importance of taking a position on the 1968 NYC teachers' strike. It also frankly put forward its perspective of winning the RSL to fusion with the Spartacist League. Landy in typical fashion rejected the LT application summarily without indicating programmatic differences which would have made this course unprincipled.

Fusion with the SL

It has become increasingly clear that the RT/RSL is an effort to respond to the manifest popularity of orthodox Leninism among numbers of advanced workers and radical intellectuals without, however, accepting the essence of Bolshevism. While Landy-Tabor clearly wish to break with Shachtman's name and adopt certain of Trotsky's theoretical positions in the abstract, they have not broken with the fundamentals of Shachtmanism on the key programmatic questions and in practice. The RSL does not yet have a definitive position on the "Russian question" or the relation of class and party, but it is certain that it will not give unconditional military support to Stalinist-ruled states against imperialism and very likely it will adhere to some form of Menshevik theory of the party. Its position on the Mine Workers' election demonstrates that on the main issue of the split-trade-union policy—the RSL stands closer to IS Shachtmanism than to Trotskyism.

The Leninist Tendency, in contrast, believes that Trotskyism is not just a three-syllable term, but an evolved synthesis of program and practice. It is therefore fusing with the Spartacist League, the unique embodiment of Trotskyism in the United States. Forward to the Rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

PROGRAM FOR POWER—

Auto Workers and the Transitional Program

Speaker:

CHRIS KNOX

Labor Editor, Workers Vanguard

SL Central Committee

SUNDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER/7:30 PM

SL FORUM-DETROIT

Trinity Methodist Church
13100 Woodward
For information: 862-4920

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Stalin School of Falsification Revisited



Mao's "Anti-Imperialist United Front": toasting Chiang Kai-shek in 1945.

6/ THE THIRD CHINESE REVOLUTION

(Editor's Note: The recent wave of virulent anti-Trotskyism being spread by various Maoist groups relies on the standard Stalinist weapons of lies and distortion, and above all on ignorance about the true history of the communist movement. The present series, replying to the articles on "Trotsky's Heritage" in the New Left/Maoist Guardian, serves as an introduction to this history and a brief summary of the principal political issues separating Trotskyism from Stalinism.)

The core of the Guardian series on "Trotsky's Heritage" is a simple assertion: "History has proved Mao correct." The Chinese revolution, according to Davidson, is the model for backward and colonial countries. The great beacon of Mao-Tse-tung-Thought shows the way. Is this so?

Let us take first the myth of Mao the great proletarian leader who has always struggled for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as opposed to traitors like Liu Shao-chi who tried to hold him back. In an earlier article Davidson wrote that in 1927 "the Comintern advocated a policy put into practice independently by Mao and ignored or opposed by both Chen Tu-hsiu [head of the Chinese Communist Party at this time] and Chang Kuo-tao." Nothing could be further from the truth. In the first place, Chen unfortunately only carried out orders from Moscow even when he sharply disagreed; he did not have the proletarian spirit to refuse to obey these orders even when they literally sent thousands of Chinese comrades to their graves.

Second, it is to Mao's credit that he refused to carry out instructions from the Communist International during the 1926-27 Northern Expedition of General Chiang Kai-shek, when Moscow wanted to hold down mass struggles at all costs. On 26 October 1926 Stalin had sent a telegram ordering the peasant movement to be restrained lest it alienate the Kuomintang generals who, after all, were often landlords themselves. Mao was given the task of carrying out this restraining order in the key province of Hunan by the Central Committee of the party. He immediately returned to his home province and proceeded to do just the opposite, rousing tens of thousands of peasants to form peasant associations and seize and redistribute land belonging to the gentry.

This vast wave of peasant unrest enormously aided the rapid northward march of the KMT armies. It also made the generals "uneasy," as can be easily imagined.

Mao's policies in this period were not always more militant than the CP leadership's, however. In the fall of 1924 he was removed from the Politburo of the party because of too-close ties to right-wing Kuomintang circles. But Mao's most general pattern of "protest" against a policy he disagreed with was to simply go off to the hills and carry out the policies he believed correct. When a Comintern telegram on 31 March 1927 ordered the Shanghai party and trade unions to hide their guns with Chiang's armies at the gates, the inevitable result was a massacre of tens of thousands of militants. Chen protested and carried out the suicidal orders; Mao never protested.

During 1930 Mao again came into conflict with the party leadership, over land reform policy in the "peasant soviet" areas. Wang Ming, then CP head, accused Mao of having a "rich-peasant line" because he simply called for equal redistribution of land, not confiscating all the land of the rich peasants, but simply giving them equal shares. It would be more accurate to call it a middle-peasant line, for the rich peasants (kulaks in Russia) generally oppose violent upheavals in favor of gradual solutions which allow them greater opportunity to accumulate land and capital. It is the middle peasants who have the most to gain from a radical elimination of the feudal landlord class, and historically it has been middle peasants who have put forward such schemes for "black distribution" of the land. These were the leaders of the Russian peasant revolt of summer and autumn of 1917.

Most important, however, this is the

most radical land-reform line that can be taken without totally disrupting the village. Guerrilla warfare depends on support from the general peasant population, not just the poorest of the poor, for isolated, poorly-equipped guerrillas are extremely vulnerable to betrayal. And faced with modern weapons the only weapon of the peasants is overwhelming numbers, which again presumes unity. It is no accident that all guerrilla movements opt for a middle- or rich-peasant policy rather than taking the class struggle into the village; and one more reason why revolutionary Marxists insist that the proletariat is the only consistently revolutionary class, and oppose guerrillaism.

Period of the "Anti-Japanese United Front"

But Mao was not simply an astute guerrilla leader. Gradually he came to a quite clear understanding of the essence of Stalinism—capitulation to the bourgeoisie while maintaining bureaucratic control over the workers and poor peasants. Thus, when he finally achieved predominance in the CP Central Committee it was as the most energetic proponent of a second "united front" with the Kuomintang, following the Long March. This corresponded to the shift in line at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International and the popular-front period.

Shortly thereafter, on 1 August 1935, the CCP issued an appeal to all patriotic classes to join the Communists to fight against Japan. In line with the new popular-front policy, Mao issued new guidelines for moderating agrarian policy in order to win support from the rich and middle peasants. The Politburo statement of 25 December 1935 read:

"The Soviet People's Republic will change its policy toward rich peasants; rich peasant land, except for that portion of it in feudal exploitation, regardless of whether it is under self-cultivation or whether tilled by hired labor, will not be confiscated. When land is being equally distributed in a village, rich peasants will have the right to receive the same share of land as poor and middle peasants."

Now here was a real rich-peasant policy. Six months later it was amplified by a Central Committee statement: "Lands of all anti-Japanese soldiers and those involved in anti-Japanese enterprises must not be confiscated." This permitted even large landlords to retain their land through the simple device of enlisting a son in the Red Army.

This land policy had its equivalent at the political level as well. The "Workers and Peasants Soviet Government" became the "Soviet People's Republic," which proclaimed:

"It [the 'people's republic'] is willing to have the broad petty-bourgeoisie class unite with the masses in its territory. All petty-bourgeois revolutionary class elements will be given the right to vote and be elected in the Soviet."

In the meantime, in the fall of 1936 orders were issued to ban the use of the name "Communist Party" at the sub-district level, replacing it with that of the "Anti-Japanese National Salvation Association."

Having indicated its willingness to capitulate, the CCP sent a telegram to the KMT on 10 February 1937 proposing a united front. (In recent years the Maoists have made much of "the great helmsman's" writings against those who placed sole emphasis on the united front and not enough on the party. Considering the terms of this "patriotic united front," it was an outright betrayal of the masses to enter this front

at all, even though all Trotskyists unequivocally supported China against Japan up to the point where this struggle for national independence was subsumed by World War II.) In response to the CCP proposal the Kuomintang adopted a "Resolution for Complete Eradication of the Red Menace" which agreed to reconciliation if the Red Army and Soviet government were abolished, all Communist propaganda ended and calls for class struggle dropped. The CCP accepted, although the actual integration of the Communist base areas into Kuomintang rule as well as the absorption of the Communist army remained solely on paper.

With the onset of World War II Mao's class collaboration became even more blatant, if that is possible. He renamed Stalin's "bloc of four classes" with the slogan "new democracy," which was defined as the "dictatorship of all revolutionary classes over the counter-revolutionaries and traitors." Davidson dishes up a sweetened version of new democracy, according to which this intermediate stage would last only until the end of the civil war, after which "the revolution would immediately and uninterruptedly pass over to its second stage of socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Guardian, 25 April 1973). Mao never said anything of the kind. Rather:

"The progress of the Chinese revolution must be divided into two stages: (1) the democratic revolution; (2) the socialist revolution. . . . As to the first stage or the first step in this colonial and semi-colonial revolution—according to its social nature, it is fundamentally still a bourgeois-democratic revolution in which the objective requirement is still basically to clear away the obstacles in the way of capitalist development. . . .

"The Chinese revolution can only be achieved in two steps: the first being that of new democracy; the second, that of socialism. Moreover, the period of the first step will be a considerably long one and can never be accomplished overnight."

—"On New Democracy," January 1940

In another document from this period, Mao made the point even more explicit:

"Why do we call the present stage of the revolution a 'bourgeois-democratic revolution'? Because the target of the revolution is not the bourgeoisie in general, but Imperialist and feudal oppression; the program of the revolution is not to abolish private property but to protect private property in general; the results of this revolution will clear the way for the development of capitalism. . . . So the policy of 'land to the tiller' is a bourgeois-democratic policy, not a proletarian and socialist one. . . .

"Under the New Democratic system of government a policy of readjusting the relations between capital and labor will be adopted. On the one hand, the interests of workers will be protected. An eight- to ten-hour-day system. . . and the rights of labor unions. On the other hand, reasonable profits of state, private, and cooperative enterprises will be guaranteed. . . . We welcome foreign investments if such are beneficial to China's economy. . . .

—"On Coalition Government," April 1945

So much for Brother Davidson's "uninterrupted passing over" into socialism. And as for the meaning of this "new democracy" in social and economic terms we only have to look at the land policy enforced during the "anti-Japanese united front" which contained such "progressive" measures as the following:

"Recognize that most of the landlords are anti-Japanese, that some of the enlightened gentry also favor democratic reforms. Accordingly, the policy

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Trotskyist Work in the Trade Unions

by Chris Knox

STALINISM AND SOCIAL-PATRIOTISM

CONCLUSION

With the onset of World War II and the wave of jingoism which swept away their trade-unionist allies of the pre-war period, the Trotskyists were forced to retreat. They adopted a "policy of caution" in the unions, which meant virtual inaction, especially at first. Although the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) was driven from its main base in the Minneapolis Teamsters through a combination of government persecution and attack by the Teamsters bureaucracy and the Stalinists, in general the "policy of caution" had the desired effect of protecting the trade-union cadre from victimization.

However, the "policy of caution" had another side to it. With the rupture of their alliances with the "progressive" trade unionists, the Trotskyists had not dropped their reliance on blocs around immediate issues in the unions. They merely recognized that with both the Stalinists and "progressives" lined up for the war, Roosevelt and the no-strike pledge, there was no section of the trade-union bureaucracy with which they could make a principled bloc. Thus their inaction was in part a recognition that any action along the lines to which they were accustomed in the trade unions would be opportunist, i.e., would necessarily entail unprincipled blocs and alliances. Any action not involving blocs and alliances with some section of the trade-union bureaucracy was virtually inconceivable.

At first, the rupture of the earlier alliances and enforced inactivity had a healthy effect, exposing the limitations of such alliances and enforcing the recognition that in trade-union work as in all other spheres of party-building, only principled political agreement assures permanence:

"There is only one thing that binds men together in times of great stress. That is agreement on great principles. . . .

"All those comrades who think we have something, big or little, in the trade union movement should get out a magnifying glass in the next period and look at what we really have. You will find that what we have is our party fractions and the circle of sympathizers around them. That is what you can rely on. . . . The rule will be that the general run of pure and simple trade unionists, the nonpolitical activists, the latent patriots—they will betray us at the most decisive moment. What we will have in the unions in the hour of test will be what we build in the form of firm fractions of convinced Bolsheviks."

—James P. Cannon, "The Stalinists and the United Front," *Socialist Appeal*, 19 October 1940

As the war dragged on, however, opportunities for activity mounted as the workers chafed under the restrictions imposed upon them by their leaders in the name of the imperialist conflict. Rank-and-file rebellion, in the form of unauthorized strikes, broke out in a mounting wave starting in 1942. These led to mounting opposition to the solid, pro-war bureaucratic phalanx. For the most part, the SWP went very slow on participation in these struggles. It wasn't until 1945 that a formal change of policy was made, although exceptions to the rule began earlier.

While seeking to preserve their precious trade-union cadre through a policy of inaction within the unions, the Trotskyists concentrated on public propaganda and agitational campaigns aimed at the unions largely from the outside, through the party press. The campaign against the war centered

largely on the defense case of the Minneapolis 18—the 18 Trotskyists and leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters who were railroaded to jail under the Smith Act.

Minneapolis Defense Case

The 18 were the first victims of the Smith Act of 1940, which was the first law since the Alien and Sedition Act of 1798 to make the mere advocacy of views a crime. Initiated in 1941 directly by Roosevelt (ostensibly at the request of Teamsters President Tobin), the case was an important part of the drive by the bourgeoisie, working hand-in-hand with its agents, the labor bureaucrats, to "purify" and discipline the work force for subordination to the imperialist war. The legal persecution consummated Tobin's attempts to get rid of the Trotskyists in Minneapolis, which had coincided with the lining up of the bureaucracy for the war.

However, because of its clear and open contradiction with the stated principles of bourgeois democracy, and thus with the stated goals of the war, the Smith Act prosecution of the Trotskyists caused a rupture within the bureaucracy and became a point of opposition to the government throughout the labor movement. Publishing the testimony of the chief defendant, James P. Cannon, and the closing argument of the defense attorney, Albert Goldman, as pamphlets (*Socialism On Trial* and *In Defense of Socialism*), the SWP exploited the case heavily as a basic defense of socialist ideas and principled opposition to the imperialist war. Though they failed to prevent the destruction of the militant Minneapolis Teamsters local under the combined hammer blows of Tobin and Roosevelt, the Trotskyists' propaganda campaign around the case had a significant impact and aided party recruiting.

The vicious treachery of the Stalinists was underlined and exposed to many by their refusal to defend the Trotskyists against this persecution by the class enemy. Despite the fact that the CP was still opposed to the entry of the U.S. into the war at the time (during the Hitler-Stalin Pact period, 1939-41), it leapt at once onto the prosecutor's bandwagon.

"The Communist Party has always exposed, fought against and today joins the fight to exterminate the Trotskyite Fifth Column from the life of our nation."

—*Daily Worker*, 16 August 1941

More than any other force on the left, it was Stalinism, through such fundamental betrayals of class principles as this, which poisoned class consciousness and undermined the fighting ability of the proletariat. Later, during the cold-war witchhunt, when the CP was the victim of the same Smith Act and bureaucratic purge, the militant workers were so disgusted with its role that they were mobilized by anti-communist bureaucrats who smashed virtually every last vestige of class-conscious opposition in the labor movement. Despite its strong position within the CIO bureaucracy in 1941, the CP was unable to prevent the CIO and many of its affiliates from denouncing the Minneapolis prosecution; in 1949, however, the CP's betrayal of the Minneapolis defendants was held up to it by opportunists in the CIO as an excuse for not defending it against the witchhunt. The Trotskyists defended the CP in 1949, but the CP refused their help,

wrecking its own defense committees in order to keep Trotskyists out.

Defense Policy Criticized

While the conduct of the Trotskyists' defense in the Minneapolis trial was a good *defensive* exposition of the ideas of socialism, it was clearly deficient in not taking an *offensive* thrust, in failing to turn the tables on the system and to put it on trial. The Spanish Trotskyist Grandizo Munis raised this criticism, among others, of the SWP leaders' defense policy. Although he failed to take sufficiently into account the need for defensive formulations to protect the party's legality, Munis correctly complained of a lack of political offensive in Cannon's testimony.

"It was there, replying to the political accusations—struggle against the war, advocacy of violence, overthrow of the government by force—where it is necessary to have raised the tone and turned the tables, accuse the government and the bourgeoisie of a reactionary conspiracy; of permanent violence against the majority of the population, physical, economic, moral, educative violence; of launching the population into a slaughter also by means of violence in order to defend the Sixty Families."

—*"A Criticism of the Minneapolis Trial"*

In his reply, Cannon correctly condemned Munis for demanding ultra-left adventurist "calls to action" instead of propaganda, but he failed to adequately answer the charge of political passivity and of a weak, defensive stance. His reply ("Political Principles and Propaganda Methods") overemphasized the need to patiently explain revolutionary politics to a backward working class, lacking in political consciousness. After the war, when the shackles of war discipline were removed from the working class, this error was inverted in an overemphasis of the momentary upsurge in class struggle.

Lewis and the Miners: 1943

Most of the opportunities for intervention in the unions during the war consisted in leading rank-and-file struggles against a monolithic, pro-war bureaucracy. The exception to this pattern was Lewis and the UMW. Having broken with Roosevelt before the war because of what he felt to be insufficient favors and attention, Lewis authorized miners' strikes in 1943 which broke the facade of the no-strike pledge. This galvanized the opposition of the rest of the bureaucracy, which feared a general outpouring of strike struggles. Not only the rabidly patriotic, pro-war CP, but other bureaucrats as well, heaped scorn on the miners, calling them "fascist."

While the SWP was correct in its orientation toward united-front support to Lewis against the government and the bulk of the trade-union bureaucracy, the tone of this support failed to take into account the fact that Lewis was a reformist trade unionist, completely pro-capitalist, who therefore had to betray the eager following he was gathering by authorizing strikes during the war. He did this, performing what was perhaps his greatest service for capitalism, by heading off the rising tide of sentiment for a labor party. Focusing opposition to Roosevelt on himself, Lewis misled and demoralized masses of workers throughout the country by advocating a vote for the Republican,

Wendell Wilkie, in the 1944 elections. Instead of warning of Lewis' real role, the *Militant* appears not only supportive but genuinely uncritical during the 1943 strikes.

"[Lewis] despite his inconsistencies and failure to draw the proper conclusions . . . has emerged again as the outstanding leader of the union movement, towering above the Greens and Murrays as though they were pygmies, and has won the support of the miners and the ranks of other unions."

—*Militant*, 8 May 1943

Though written from the outside, and therefore unable to intervene directly, the articles on the 1943 miners' strikes by Art Preis nevertheless reveal an unwarranted infatuation with Lewis which was evoked by the SWP's over-concentration on blocs with left bureaucrats, to the detriment of the struggle for revolutionary leadership.

The struggle against the no-strike pledge reached its highest pitch in the United Auto Workers, which had a militant rank and file and a tradition of democratic intra-union struggle not because of the absence of bureaucracy, but because of the failure of any one bureaucratic tendency to dominate. Despite their fundamental agreement on the war and no-strike pledge, the counterposed tendencies continued to squabble among themselves as part of their endless competition for office. The wing around Reuther tried to appear to the left by opposing the excesses of the Stalinists such as the latter's proposal for a system of war-time incentive pay to induce speed-up, but in reality was no better on the basic issue of the war.

Auto Workers Fight the No-Strike Pledge

The struggle reached a peak at the 1944 UAW convention. Debate around the issue raged through five days of the convention. The highly political delegates were on their toes, ready for bureaucratic tricks. On the first day, they defeated by an overwhelming margin a proposal to elect new officers early in the convention and insisted that this be the last point: after positions on the issues were clear. The Reuther tendency dropped to its lowest authority during the war because of its role in saving the day for the no-strike pledge, through proposing that the pledge be retained until the issue could be decided by a membership referendum.

The convention was marked by the appearance of the Rank and File Caucus, an oppositional grouping organized primarily by local leaders in Detroit. It was based on four points: end the no-strike pledge, labor leaders off the government War Labor Board, for an independent labor party and smash the "Little Steel" formula (i.e., break the freeze on wage raises). This caucus was the best grouping of its kind to emerge during the war. A similar local leadership oppositional grouping in the rubber workers' union was criticized by the SWP for its contradictory position: while opposing the no-strike pledge and War Labor Board, it nevertheless favored the war itself (*Militant*, 26 August 1944).

The SWP's work around the UAW RFC was also a high point in Trotskyist trade-union work. Though representing only a partial break from trade-union reformism by secondary bureaucrats, the RFC was qualitatively to the left of the bureaucracy as a whole. Its

program represented a break with the key points upon which the imperialist bourgeoisie relied in its dependence on the trade unions to keep the workers tied to the imperialist aims of the state. The SWP was correct to enter and build this caucus, since pursuance of its program was bound to enhance revolutionary leadership.

The SWP's support, however, was not ingratiating or uncritical as was its early support to Lewis. As the caucus was forming before the convention, the SWP spoke to it in the following terms, seeking to maximize political clarity:

"This group, in the process of development and crystallization, is an extremely hopeful sign, although it still contains tendencies opposed to a fully-

the masses with a "ready-made" program, but only by working within the existing caucus formations. Since the RFC was led primarily by politically independent secondary UAW leaders, "existing caucus formations" could only mean a policy of entering the major bureaucratic power groupings, which is exactly what the SWP did on its return to activity after the war. Despite the comparative impotence of the trade-union bureaucracy and different nature of the tasks in the early thirties, the Minneapolis experience was cited as an example in defense of a policy that emphasized blocking with sections of the bureaucracy and avoiding the presentation of a program independent of, and counterposed to, the bureaucracy in the unions.



UAW leaders in 1945: (from left) Frankenstein, Addes, Thomas, Reuther. SWP trade-union policy concentrated on blocs with bureaucrats, rather than building revolutionary pole, first backing Reuther, then Thomas-Addes.

rounded, effective program and some who are still reluctant to sever completely their ties with all the present international leaders and power cliques.

"There is a tendency which thinks that all the auto workers' problems will be solved simply by elimination of the no-strike pledge. They fail to take into account the fundamental problem: that the basic issues confronting the workers today can and will be solved, in the final analysis, only by political means."

—*Militant*, 2 September 1944

The article went on to advocate a labor party based on the trade unions with a "fundamental program against the financial parasites and monopolists." The caucus adopted the demand for a labor party. It led the fight against the no-strike pledge at the convention and made an impressive showing, although it failed to secure a majority in a direct vote against the pledge.

Despite encouraging developments such as this, the SWP did not formalize a general return to activity in the unions until 1945, when it made a belated turn to a perspective of "organizing left-wing forces" around opposition to the no-strike pledge, War Labor Board, and for a labor party. In 1944, a small oppositional grouping was formed in the SWP by Goldman and Morrow based on Stalinophobia and a perspective of reunification with the Shachtmanite Workers Party, which had split off in 1940. On its way out of the SWP, this grouping was able to make factional hay out of the "policy of caution." Referring to the SWP's inactivity, a member of this faction asked pointedly, "When workers do move on a mass scale, why should they follow anyone who did not previously supply some type of leadership?" (A. Winters, "Review of Our Trade Union Policy," *Internal Bulletin* Vol. VI, No. 9, 1944).

Replying to the Goldman-Morrow group, the SWP majority specifically ruled out caucuses such as the RFC as a general model, claiming that the left wing could not be built by presenting

This was the perspective followed by the SWP in the post-war period. In the brief but extensive post-war strike wave—the most massive strike wave in U.S. labor history—the SWP emphasized its enthusiasm for the intense economic struggles and underplayed its alternatives to the bureaucracy. Against the Goldman-Morrowites, the majority explicitly defended a policy of avoiding criticism of UAW leadership policy at the beginning of the 1946 GM strike in order to maintain a common front with the bureaucracy against the company. For a small revolutionary force of only 2,000 (this figure represented rapid growth at the end of the war period) to take such an attitude toward the vast trade-union bureaucracy simply served to weaken the forces which could have built revolutionary leadership by struggling against the inevitable bureaucratic betrayals.

The relative pessimism of 1941 as

to the backwardness of the working class gave way in the post-war period to the optimism of "Theses on the American Revolution," the political resolution of the 1946 SWP convention. The "Theses" ruled out a new stabilization of capitalism and saw an unbroken development of the SWP into the vanguard party standing at the head of the revolutionary proletariat. The "Theses" underestimated not only the ability of capitalism to restabilize itself but also the relative strength of the trade-union bureaucracy and of Stalinism. Despite degeneration and decline, the CP still had 10,000 members at the end of the war.

This revolutionary optimism was not matched in the trade unions by the open preparation of revolutionary leadership through "third group" caucuses, however, but by an orientation first toward the more progressive bureaucratic reformists who were leading strike struggles or breaking with their previous allies, the discredited Stalinists. Later, as the cold war set in, the SWP broke with its allies and oriented more toward the Stalinists. As in the late thirties, these orientations tended to be based not on maximum political clarity but on the trade-union issues of the moment. Unlike the late thirties, however, the situation changed rapidly into a general purge of reds and hardening of a conservative bureaucracy, with which no blocs were possible. Furthermore the united fronts of the post-war period tended to take the form of critical support for one faction over another in union elections. Besides having a demoralizing effect on the ranks of the SWP's trade-union cadre, the Trotskyists' failure to present a hard, distinctive revolutionary alternative in the unions in this period thus contributed to the formation of



Leaders of SWP and Local 544 imprisoned in 1941 Minneapolis Smith Act trial. Standing, from left: Dobbs, DeBaer, Palmquist, Hamel, Hansen, Coover, Cooper. Sitting, from left: Goldman, Morrow, Goldman, Cannon, Dunne, Skoglund, Carlson.

the new bureaucratic line-up and thereby to the eventual cold-war defeats.

Critical Support for Reuther: 1946

Again the UAW is the most important example, since in 1946 in that union the SWP had perhaps its best case for a policy of blocs. After the war, Reuther began a drive for domination of the union with a show of militancy. He led a 113-day strike against General Motors on the basis of the three-point program: open the books to public inspection, negotiations in public and wage increases without price increases. Though he made his basic support of capitalism and the "right" to profits clear, he was able to mobilize militant sentiment with this program, strike a left posture at the 1946 convention and win the presidency of the union from the Stalinist-backed R.J. Thomas.

Reuther, however, made no effort

to fight for and deepen the "GM strike program" at the convention. Though he won most of his votes on the basis of this militant strike program, his real program was opposition to the CP. This appealed to militants also, of course, since the CP had been completely discredited by its thoroughly right-wing role during the war (which it had incredibly attempted to extend into the post-war period—the so-called permanent no-strike pledge—on the basis of the Soviet bureaucracy's hopes for post-war peaceful coexistence with its capitalist allies). However, Reuther's caucus also attracted conservative anti-communists such as the American Catholic Trade Unionists (ACTU). The *Militant* exposed Reuther's basic conservatism even on trade-union issues by pointing out that he had devised the "one-at-a-time" strategy (isolating strikes against one company at a time); that he had endorsed the introduction of the "company security" clause into the Ford contract and had capitulated to Truman's "fact-finding" panel in the GM strike against the will of the elected negotiating body (23 March 1946). It also pointed out that his written program was no better than the Stalinist-backed Thomas-Addes caucus program "except for language and phraseology" (30 March 1946). Nevertheless, the Trotskyists critically supported his campaign for president because of the fact that the militant workers were voting for him on the basis of the GM strike program.

With skillful demagoguery, Reuther had successfully coopted the militant wing of the union, including the earlier Rank and File Caucus (which had dissolved into the Reuther caucus). An approach to this militant wing which would have driven a wedge between the militants and Reuther was needed. In 1944, the SWP had argued that the time was not ripe for the independent drive of the RFC—despite the fact that these "unknowns," only running one candidate and without any serious effort, had secured 20 percent of the vote for president at the 1944 convention (*Fourth International*, October 1944). Yet the SWP had not hesitated to raise programmatic demands on the RFC as it was forming, in order to make its break with the bureaucracy complete. In 1946, however, despite criticisms of Reuther, in the last analysis the SWP supported him simply on the basis of his popularity and without having made any programmatic demands whatsoever on him (such as that he break with the conservative anti-communists as a condition for support).

Critical Support for Thomas-Addes: 1947

An independent stance might have left the SWP supporters isolated at the 1946 convention, but the establishment of such a principled pole would have helped recruit militants by the time of the next convention in 1947. Instead, the SWP simply tailed the militants—or thought it tailed the militants—once again. In the interval between the two conventions, Reuther consolidated his position on the basis of anti-communism—including support for Truman's foreign policy—and bureaucratic reformism. At the 1947 convention, the SWP switched its support to the Thomas-Addes caucus, on the grounds that the militants were already fed up with Reuther and an attempt had to be made to halt the latter's drive toward one-man dictatorial rule. For this bloc, there wasn't even the pretense of a programmatic basis. Despite the shift of Reuther to the right and the phony "left" noises of Thomas-Addes and the Stalinists, however, Reuther's complete slate was swept into office largely because of the discredited character of the previous leadership. Only

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THE THIRD CHINESE REVOLUTION

of the Party is only to help the peasant in reducing feudal exploitation but not to liquidate feudal exploitation entirely....

"...peasants should be advised to pay rent and interest as well as to protect the civil, political, land and economic rights of the landlord."

—"Decision of the Central Committee on Land Policy in the Anti-Japanese Base Areas," January 1942

As to this mythical and completely anti-Marxist concept of a joint revolutionary dictatorship of all revolutionary classes, Mao had something very specific in mind, namely a real coalition government with the fearless anti-imperialist patriot Chiang Kai-shek, under which the KMT would control a majority of the government and the vast majority of the military units. This arrangement was worked out, and agreed to by the CCP, at a "Political Consultative Conference" in January 1946. The government would be made up of 40 persons entirely chosen by Chiang, half from the Kuomintang and half from other parties (including the CCP). The Nationalist armies would be restricted to 90 divisions and the Communist forces to 18 divisions respectively. It was only because of the hostility to any compromise with the Communists on the part of certain sectors of the KMT, particularly the military, that this agreement was never implemented.

Thus over a twenty-year period, from the late 1920's to the late 1940's, Mao repeatedly sought to conciliate the Chinese bourgeoisie and even, at times, feudal elements while espousing doctrines which are classic expressions of the Menshevik theory of two-stage revolution. That there was no Indonesia-type disaster, with the liquidation of the party and murder of hundreds of thousands of militants, was due solely to the fact that the KMT government was so corrupt that Chiang could not afford to risk a coalition government. But the bourgeoisie was not always so weak. In the aftermath of the Shanghai massacre Chiang had been able to stabilize Kuomintang rule, and during the period 1927-36 he was able to systematically wipe out most of the Communist base areas.

New Democracy or Permanent Revolution?

This leads to a second aspect of the Chinese revolution, namely who was proven right by history? Davidson quotes Trotsky's observation that Stalin's attempt to resurrect the policy of a "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry," which Lenin explicitly abandoned in April 1917 (see part I of this series), was completely inappropriate to China:

"The formula of the democratic dictatorship has hopelessly outlived its usefulness.... The third Chinese revolution, despite the great backwardness of China, or more correctly, because of this great backwardness as compared with Russia, will not have a 'democratic' period, not even such a six-month period as the October Revolution had (November 1917 to July 1918); but it will be compelled from the very outset to effect the most decisive shake-up and abolition of bourgeois property in city and village."

—*Third International After Lenin*, 1928

Davidson claims that Mao's theory of new democracy was proven correct as against this prediction by Trotsky. Let's look at the facts: First, despite Mao's repeated attempts, he was never able to achieve a coalition government with Chiang. Second, when the Communists were sweeping through China at the end of the civil war, the bulk of the Chinese bourgeoisie fled to Taiwan with Chiang, eliminating the crucial bourgeois element of "new democracy."

Most important of all were the changes in the property relations which followed the establishment of the "People's Republic of China" in October 1949. It is important to note that not until 10 October 1947 did Mao even raise the slogan for the overthrow of the KMT regime. It was the occupation of the Yen-an base area by Kuomintang troops and Mao's realization that no compromise was possible and a coalition government of the "new democratic type" was a pipe dream, that finally forced the CCP to strike out for state power—in violation of Stalin's explicit orders. At the same time the Communist Party decided to overthrow Chiang it took a logical corollary step, namely announcing an agrarian reform scheme similar to the "rich-peasant policy" Mao had followed in 1930, but far more radical than the timid rent reduction (and Red Army-enforced rent collection) of the period 1942-47.

Furthermore, following the proclamation of the Chinese People's Republic in October 1949, the CCP set up a "coalition regime" in which, despite the presence of a few "democratic" petty-bourgeois politicians, government power was clearly in the Communists' hands. Most important, the state power was based on the unquestioned military dominance of the Red Army. The bulk of the bourgeoisie had fled to Taiwan.

With the help of Soviet aid, the Communists set about building up a state sector of heavy industry, while arranging for the continuation of private ownership of some industrial concerns under state control and supervision. Finally, this policy was further tightened with the Chinese entry into the Korean War, which led to a series of measures against domestic capitalists, beginning in early 1952.

So please, Brother Davidson, will you inform us where the extended democratic stage was? This whole evolution is a dramatic proof of the utterly fantastic utopianism which Mao's theories amounted to. Over and over the CCP declared its desire to set up a democratic bourgeois regime, but the property relations that resulted were those of a workers state.

Can Peasants Establish a Workers State?

It has been estimated that in 1949 workers constituted no more than five percent of the membership of the Chinese Communist Party; it was by then overwhelmingly a party of peasants and petty-bourgeois intellectuals. Yet Trotsky held that only the working class, under revolutionary leadership, could set up the dictatorship of the proletariat. How then do we explain the "third Chinese revolution"? First

we must be clear that this was not the pattern foreseen by Trotsky. Marxism has shown that in the sharp class polarization which occurs in every revolutionary period, the peasantry will be divided between elements following the bourgeoisie and those following the proletariat; that the peasantry alone does not have the social power to overthrow the determined resistance of the capitalist exploiters, nor the united class interests necessary to establish socialist property forms. However, the Chinese revolution of 1949 was accomplished by a predominantly peasant party and army under the leadership of a petty-bourgeois military bureaucracy. But though this was different from the Trotskyists' expectations, it did not contradict the essential Marxist program calling for the working class to establish its own class rule, supported by the peasantry, even in backward countries as the only means to solve the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution.

The most fundamental reason for the success of the peasant-based Chinese Communists was the absence of the proletariat struggling in its own right for power. The Chinese working class was demoralized and decimated by the continuous defeats suffered during the second Chinese revolution (1925-27). And the CCP's subsequent policy was the deliberate discouraging of proletarian action. The second fundamental point is that the result of the 1949 military victory of the CCP was not at all a healthy workers state such as that created by the Russian Revolution of 1917, but a bureaucratically deformed workers state, in which the proletariat does not hold political power. Rather the state power is and has been since 1949 in the hands of a tight Stalinist bureaucratic-military caste composed of the upper layers of the CCP, the People's Liberation Army and the state bureaucracy. As demonstrated by the repeated failure of the economic policies of the Chinese regime (notably the "Great Leap Forward") and the inability to create democratic forms of workers' rule (even in the period of the demagogic "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution"), the only way that the road to socialism—the complete abolition of classes—can be opened in China is through a political revolution to throw out this military-bureaucratic caste.

(In addition, in the late 1940's the Chiang regime was so hopelessly corrupt that it virtually toppled by itself. Mukden, Peking and Canton all surrendered without a shot at the end of the civil war. Moreover, the U.S. ruling class had become so discouraged with the KMT government that it essentially withdrew its material backing in the 1948-49 period. Finally, the Communist army which had been starved for weapons was suddenly supplied with large quantities of modern Japanese arms following the Russian occupation of Manchuria. It is essential that these special circumstances be understood. To put it another way, had the Chinese proletariat been struggling under its own banners, the banners of the Fourth International, and had the

bourgeois regime not simply disintegrated, the victory of Mao's peasant armies would have been impossible.)

Today alter the mystification of the "Cultural Revolution" has worn off and the bureaucracy has reasserted direct control over the Chinese government, it is much easier to understand that China, like the USSR, the Eastern European countries, Cuba, North Vietnam, etc., is a deformed workers state. Yet only the orthodox Trotskyists have held this position from the very early stages of the Mao regime. The resolution of the 1955 SWP Convention on the Chinese revolution stated:

"Throughout the revolution Mao & Co. continued to impose arbitrary restrictions and limits upon its course. The agrarian reform was carried out 'in stages' and was completed only when the assault of American imperialism stimulated the opposition of the landlords during and after Korea.... The Chinese Stalinists were able to ride into power because the Chinese working class had been demoralized by the continuous defeats it suffered during and after the second Chinese revolution, and by the deliberate policy of the CCP, which subordinated the cities, above all, the proletariat, to the military struggle in the countryside and thereby blocked the emergence of the workers as an independent political force. The CCP thus appeared in the eyes of the masses as the only organization with political cadres and knowledge, backed, moreover, by military force."

—"The Third Chinese Revolution and its Aftermath," October 1955

What is needed is a party which has the courage to tell this truth to the masses, even at times when this may be unpopular, and which understands the dynamic of permanent revolution so that it can defend these gains from imperialist attack and carry the struggle forward to socialism. The Maoists with their reactionary dreams of "united fronts" with the "progressive bourgeoisie" and mindless enthusiasm over the so-called "Cultural Revolution," which solved nothing, have proven themselves incapable of this task. It falls to the partisans of the Fourth International, the true heirs of the tradition of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

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...USec

Mandel-Maitan-Frank, declare 100 percent support for the European majority and endorse Mandel's document "In Defense of Leninism" which lays out his defense of guerrillism ("Declaration of Internationalist Tendency," 27 May 1973).

Nor is that all. The IT and the International Majority Tendency have diametrically opposed lines on a key aspect of the SWP's domestic work—its line on black nationalism. The IT argues:

"Behind this party leadership's new vocabulary, there is an adaptation in practice to the petty bourgeois ideologies of nationalism and feminism.... Marxists have always characterized nationalism as a bourgeois ideology.... 'The party's uncritical endorsement of Black nationalism has led to a tail-ending attitude toward different 'solutions' put forward by Black nationalist leaders: Black power, Black control of the Black communities, and Pan Africanism...."

—"The Building of a Revolutionary Party in Capitalist America," July 1973

And here we have the European majority on the same subject:

"One of the greatest political achievements of the SWP in the last 15 years has been the correct understanding of the peculiar way in which the national question—the question of the oppression of the Black and Chicano people—poses itself inside the United States.... Black (and Chicano) nationalism in the United States are objectively progressive forces which revolutionary Marxists had to support, stimulate and help organize...."

—"In Defence of Leninism," December 1972

Not only does the IT not polemicize against Mandel's view, but by its tendency declaration IT members are actually supposed to support both views simultaneously! Given the other inconsistencies of this rotten bloc, it would not be surprising if some actually do.

The Struggle Against Pabloism

The Spartacist League, as the

standard-bearer of orthodox Trotskyism, has played a prominent if often unacknowledged role in these discussions. Thus when the Internationalist Tendency wishes to attack the SWP for adaptation to petty-bourgeois nationalism and feminism, or when the SWP wants to attack the International Majority Tendency for adaptation to guerrillism, it is from the arsenal of Spartacist politics that they draw, albeit in a partial way. Marxism is a consistent world view, and it is because of their departure from Marxism that both wings are forced to adopt an eclectic methodology and inconsistent positions. On occasion the lapse into orthodoxy is so contradictory to the rest of the author's positions that it seems an accident. For example, when Mandel wanted to rebuke the PRT for its enthusiasm over the Stalinists Mao, Kim and Hoxha, he wrote:

"There is no other road to the direct rule of workers and poor peasants than the establishment of Soviet power, of power based on elected committees of workers and poor peasants. The fact that capitalism was overthrown in China through a revolution led by Mao means that from its very inception the revolution was bureaucratically deformed in that country, that the working class has never directly exercised power there."

—"In Defence of Leninism," December 1972

But, Comrade Mandel, what of your French comrades who claim the Vietnamese have found such a road? And if the Chinese revolution was deformed from its very inception, then what of the Cuban revolution? Where are the soviet power, the committees elected by the workers and poor peasants? But the position that the Cuban revolution was bureaucratically deformed from its inception is the position uniquely held by the Spartacist tendency.

"There is no other road" to solve the crisis of proletarian leadership than by assimilating the lessons of the struggle against Pabloist liquidationism over the past two decades. All the old questions—the "new world reality," the reliance on petty-bourgeois forces to accomplish the task only the proletariat can solve, the objectivism, the rejection of the Transitional Program, the capitulation to Stalinism—all these questions are raised anew in the current dispute. If the history of the past

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Cannon versus Pablo

make that clear. Rather, he did not feel it necessary to wage an international factional struggle for a common line in a democratic-centralist International. He did not react energetically when the revisionist theories were first expressed (1949), nor even when Pablo began to draw the organizational conclusions by expelling the Bleibtreu-Lambert leadership of the French section (1952). Only when it became clear that Pabloism meant liquidationism for the SWP did Cannon see the need for an International fight. This is in sharp contrast with his approach to the Cochran-Clarke fight within the American party, where he aggressively tried to force the "fence-sitters" to take sides. Internationally he was a fence-sitter almost until his own party was directly threatened, and then had little recourse left but a public open letter, which was soon followed by Pablo's expulsion of the SWP and its friends.

When Cannon finally did break with Pablo, he declared war, giving the lie to the SWP's current fairy-tale version of the split. In a recent SWP educational pamphlet, Les Evans writes that the SWP "never said that this [Pabloism] was a theoretical revision of Trotskyism or that his [Pablo's] projection was totally impossible. What we argued was that this schema was not the most likely one" ("Toward a History of the Fourth International, Part I," p.11). Or again: "The party... did not read the 'Pabloites' out of the Trotskyist movement" (p. 16). What the SWP had to say at the time was quite different:

"We thought the differences between Pablo and the French section were tactical and this led us to side with Pablo....

"But at bottom the differences were

programmatic in character. The fact is that the French comrades of the majority saw what was happening more clearly than we did. The Eighth Congress of their party declared that 'a grave danger menaces the future and even the existence of the Fourth International.... Revisionist conceptions, born of cowardice and petty-bourgeois impressionism have appeared within the leadership.... the installation of a system of personal rule, basing itself and its anti-democratic methods on revisionism of the Trotskyist program and abandonment of the Marxist method.' (La Vérité, September 18, 1952.)"

—"A Letter to Trotskyists Throughout the World," November 1953

In the present collection, Cannon takes an equally sharp tack:

"We are finished and done with Pablo and Pabloism forever, not only here but on the international field.... We are at war with this new revisionism. 'The essence of Pabloist revisionism is the overthrow of that part of Trotskyism which is today its most vital part—the conception of the crisis of mankind as the crisis of the leadership of the labor movement summed up in the question of the party' (p. 181).

As the recent SWP convention reveals, Hansen and company are gearing up for a replay of the 1952-53 scenario. This book, the comparisons of the Internationalist Tendency with Cochran-Clarke, the discovery of a secret faction ("Barzman letter"), etc., strike a familiar refrain. Would-be Trotskyists in the USec who are seriously interested in drawing a scientific balance of the 1951-53 struggle against Pabloism and discovering the lessons for today would do well to make serious study of Cannon's *Speeches to the Party* along with "Genesis of Pabloism" (Spartacist No. 21, Fall 1972). ■

ten years of the USec means anything it is that these questions cannot be ignored or compromised. In the United States only the Spartacist League has sought to draw these lessons and integrate them into the revolutionary Trotskyist program. It is this—the determined defense and extension of the

Marxist-Leninist program—that has sustained the SL in periods of adversity and is the key to leading the working class to victory. The rotten blocs and repeated revisions of the revolutionary program that are the mainstay of Pabloism may bring temporary success; in the end they can spell only disaster. ■

Subscription Drive

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It has been nearly a year and a half since our last public subscription drive. The intervening months have witnessed not only the transformation of *Workers Vanguard* into a bi-weekly and the stabilization of the former *RCY Newsletter* as the bi-monthly *Young Spartacus*, but the doubling of the membership of the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth as well. This transformation has led to a marked increase in the relative political weight of the SL/RCY, enabling it to more actively and effectively intervene in the workers movement.

At the same time, *WV* is both a reflection of and an agent in the transformation of the SL. Its ability to serve as an organ of active political struggle depends, however, on achieving a stable base of readers who follow *Workers Vanguard* regularly. This is reflected primarily in the subscription base, which must keep pace with our capacity to produce and sell the paper. What we wrote in May 1972 remains true today: "We want a press that is no mere showpiece, but is itself an intervention with real people to shift the axis of real struggles, transforming the consciousness of the militants involved. Thus not only the financing of our press expansion, but also the quality of the coverage itself, depends heavily upon our ability to get into the hands of more readers..."

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... Rail Strike

legislation to break the strike.

While the NDP piously voted against the final bill, it did so only for show and was as involved as the other parties in the parliamentary haggling over the precise terms of the scab law, finally voting for a Conservative Party amendment. In their desire for bourgeois respectability, the NDP leaders refused to oppose strikebreaking legislation on principle. This was noticed by Transport Minister Marchand who pointed out: "If the NDP had really taken a socialist attitude they would have been opposed to any kind of settlement legislated by this House, regardless of public opinion" (*Militant*, 14 September). At least the bourgeoisie knows what a socialist policy is even though NDP and union leaders can't seem to figure it out!

The non-ops in the western provinces were joined by the more strategically located Ontario unions and the wildcat was generalized into a nationwide strike by August 24. In response, the Liberal government put on the mask of "public interest," wept for those inevitable honeymooners stranded on Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and by the struck ferry service and called Parliament into emergency session.

The Trudeau government introduced a back-to-work bill only one week after the strike began. This bill not only provided for breaking the strike of the non-ops, but rendered invalid the strike vote being conducted by shopcraft unions. It set wages for all three branches of the rail workers' unions—operating employees, non-ops and shopcraft—at levels the unions had

refused seven weeks before. This was not an offer that the union bureaucracy could sell to the angry membership, and the ranks exploded with militant protests across Canada.

Rank-and-File Militancy

The most important demonstration took place on Thursday, August 30, when about 2,000 rail workers and supporters gathered at Parliament Building in Ottawa. About 200 workers forced their way through police lines into the Hall of Honor in the center block of Parliament Building pummeling a Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman, smashing windows and chanting, "We want Trudeau," and "Hell No, We Won't Go." Many of these workers were French Canadian. Into this tense situation rushed David Lewis, leader of the NDP, armed with bullhorn and prudential advice: "Act the way railway workers have always acted." It was reported that Lewis was able to lead about half the workers out of the building. When he returned to face the remaining workers with more from the same menu of reformist betrayal, he was shouted down with militant chants.

Meanwhile, the union bureaucrats maneuvered to contain the anger and divert attention from the strikebreaking legislation to questions of wages only. So Richard Smith, chief negotiator for the unions, faced with the workers in the Parliament Building, said in a statement carefully worded to gain the confidence of the militants:

"We reject the legislation as it stands and we will not comply with its directive to us to order our members back to work. To do so would betray the 56,000 workers whose interest we were elected to protect. We will not send them back to work for the meagre wage increases proposed in the bill."

—*The Toronto Star*, 31 August

But just two days later, after the bill

had been passed with a meagre four-percent increase, this same Richard Smith faced news cameras and whined that there were only two choices: "to defy or to comply, and we have decided that to comply is the course of wisdom." This well-known "course of wisdom" has been rejected, at least for the time being, by British Columbia members of the largest non-op union, the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers (CBRT). The government appears to be taking a wait-and-see approach, confident that the isolated West Coast CBRT can't hold out.

While the workers stormed Parliament and labor bureaucrats were making defiant noises, Labor Minister John Munro strolled by and told the *Toronto Star* that he "held a fundamental conviction that the strikers will obey the legislation and return to work." And why should he not hold such a "fundamental conviction"? In the absence of a class-struggle leadership in the unions, the struggle could not transcend the limits of militant reformism which in this case means capitulation to the determined company/government opposition.

In Toronto the "opposition" to the bureaucracy is a loosely organized group called the Rank and File Committee which tends toward syndicalism and trade-union reformism. This group put out a leaflet titled "Stay Out! For Our Original Demands" that in no way distinguishes it programmatically from the union bureaucracy. Its tone is simply militant determination: "This time we can't let the government break our strike and push us further into poverty." What is needed to win is not simply more militancy or higher wage demands, but rather a class-struggle opposition to the labor bureaucracy, one which raises a program representing the objective needs of the entire working

class both economically and politically.

In such situations as the Canadian rail strike it is necessary for the workers to have a clear idea of the role of the bourgeois state before the intervention of the state apparatus. Yet the various Canadian "socialist" groups were most noticeable for their abstention from political struggle. For example, in Toronto, at the height of worker militancy on Wednesday, August 29, a demonstration of about 2,500 marched from city hall to the railway yards. No left organization did so much as pass out a leaflet! At that time it was critical to point out and argue for the principle of the independence of the working-class movement from the capitalist state. Instead, trade-union militancy pure and simple won the day, wagging behind it the uncritical tail of the Canadian Left.

In a period when the ruling class depends more and more openly on the bourgeois state apparatus to break strikes, set wages and generally limit the independent activity of the working class, it is particularly crucial for revolutionists to counterpose the Marxist analysis of the state as an instrument of class rule. Sometimes the action of the capitalist state is transparently clear as it was in the Canadian rail strike or as it was in the U.S. during the postal workers' strike in 1969. Sometimes it is less direct when, for instance, an out-bureaucrat uses the courts or U.S. Labor Department to "reform" a union. Only the Spartacist League has correctly opposed on principle all forms of state intervention in the unions.

Railway Unions Break the Strike Ban—For a General Strike Against the Scab Law! Down with the Class-Collaborationist NDP and Union Bureaucrats—Toward a Workers Government! ■

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Stalinism and Social-Patriotism

alter this debacle did the SWP put together an independent caucus. If such a course had been unrealistic before, after the 1947 convention it was more hopeless than ever. By that time, however, there was no other choice.

The SWP's course in other unions was similar. In the National Maritime Union, for instance, the SWP supported Curran when he broke from his former Stalinist allies on the basis of democracy and militancy, even though he was already lining up for Truman's foreign policy and letting the Stalinists get to the left of him on militancy. Later, the SWP had to support the Stalinists against his vicious, bureaucratic expulsions.

Cold War and Cochran-Clarke

In 1953 the SWP was racked by a faction fight and split which in part reflected the penetration into the party of the kind of trade-union "politics" it had been pursuing in the unions. What had looked like a hopeful situation in the immediate post-war period had turned rapidly into its opposite. The betrayals and self-defeating policies of the Stalinists had combined with reformist trade-unionist illusions to allow not only the consolidation of a monolithic, conservative trade-union bureaucracy, but the successful purge of reds from the unions and the nurturing of right-wing anti-communism within the working class, which made the international cold-war drive of U.S. imperialism virtually unopposed at home.

The purge and pressure of the cold war caused a section of the SWP trade-union cadre to become disillusioned and give up on the perspective of building a vanguard party in the U.S. This de-

featism was organized into a tendency by Cochran, on the basis of liquidation of virtually all public party activity in favor of a "propaganda" orientation which would have left the Cochranites, many of whom were officers in the UAW, free to make their peace with the Reutherite bureaucracy.

The Cochranites made an unprincipled combination with forces in New York around Bartell, Clarke and others who considered themselves the American representatives of the Pablo leadership of the Fourth International. Objectifying the post-war creation of deformed workers states in Eastern Europe and Yugoslavia into an inevitable, world-historic trend, the Pablo leadership proposed, in essence, that Stalinist and reformist leaderships could be forced to the left by the pressure of their mass base into creating more such states in a situation in which the imminence of World War III made the creation of independent Trotskyist parties impossible: the Trotskyist task, therefore, was to liquidate into the Stalinist and social-democratic parties. It was this essentially liquidationist perspective which brought Cochran and Clarke together into a temporary amalgam in the SWP.

While defending the twists and turns of the SWP trade-union policy, Cannon nevertheless indicated that these twists and turns might have had something to do with the degeneration of the cadre into material for Cochranite liquidationist opportunism:

"Factional struggles in the trade unions in the United States, in the primitive, prepolitical stage of their development, have been power struggles, struggles for office and place, for the personal aggrandizement of one set of fakers and the denigration and discreditment of the other side...."

"Cochran's conception of 'power politics' in the party; his methods of conducting a factional fight—come from this school of the labor fakers, not from ours."

—*"Some Facts About Party History and the Reasons for its Falsification," Internal Bulletin*, October 1953

The main cause of Cochranite liquidationism lay in the pressures of the cold war and witchhunt, which had, of course, been completely beyond the control of the SWP. However, Cannon's own documents defending the party against trade-unionist combinationism and liquidationism make clear that the party's position in the trade unions had been insufficiently distinct from "struggles for office and place," just as it had been insufficiently distinct from blocs with progressive Rooseveltians before World War II.

In the course of pursuing a trade-union policy based almost exclusively on making blocs on the immediate trade-union issues, the SWP had gradually adapted to trade unionism and become less discriminating in whom it blocked with and why. Unlike the Stalinists and Schachtmanites, the Trotskyists maintained their class principles by refusing to make unprincipled alliances or "by breaking them as soon as they became untenable. (Thus the SWP switched sides in the UAW in 1947 while the Workers Party of Schachtman pursued Reuther et. al. into the arms of the State Department.) In the final analysis, the SWP remained a principled party of revolutionary socialism by struggling against the fruits of its trade-union work internally and accepting the split of 20 percent of its membership in 1953 rather than making further concessions to trade unionism.

Spartacist League: Learn and Go Forward

The policy of making united fronts in the trade-union movement around the immediate issues is not in itself incorrect. What the SWP did wrong was to see this as its exclusive policy for all periods, except those in which no blocs could be made without gross violations of principle, in which case the answer was to do nothing. In any period of normal trade-union activity, blocs can be made around immediate issues. The task of revolutionists is to

forge a cadre, within the unions as well as without, armed with a program to break the unions from their role as instruments for tying the workers to capitalism and imperialism. Such a program must go beyond immediate issues and address all the key political questions facing the working class and provide answers which point to a revolutionary policy and leadership.

While the Trotskyists advanced the struggle for revolutionary leadership dramatically with the right united front at the right time, as in Minneapolis in 1934, they more often tended to undermine their own party building with an exclusive policy of blocs, some of which had little or no basis for existence from the standpoint of revolutionary politics. By presuming that it was necessary for a small force to prove itself in action against the class enemy before it could present itself independently to the workers as an alternative leadership, the Trotskyists' united fronts tended to increasingly take the form of promoting someone else's leadership.

The Spartacist League sees as the chief lesson from this experience not the need to reject united fronts, occasional blocs or the tactic of critical support in the trade unions, but the need to subordinate these tactics to the task of building a revolutionary political alternative to the bureaucracy within the unions. A bloc or tactic of electoral support which fails to enhance revolutionary leadership through undermining the bureaucracy as such can only build illusions in reformism. The central conclusion is that there is no substitute for the hard road of struggle to inject a political class perspective of proletarian internationalism into what is normally a narrow, nationalist and parochial arena of struggle. Especially in the initial phases of struggle when the revolutionary forces are weak, it is necessary to make an independent pole as politically distinct as possible, so that the basis for future growth is clear. To this end, the SL calls for the building of caucuses based on the revolutionary transitional program. ■

Continued from page 1

For an International, Industry-Wide Auto Strike!

would obviate the possibility that the greater militancy of Canadian workers would make a sellout in the U.S. negotiations more difficult.

Despite its pretensions to "internationalism," the nationalist Woodcock bureaucracy has no intention of showing real international strike solidarity. The UAW, for instance, has made no mention of or given any aid to electricians at Chrysler's Ryton plant in Coventry, England, who were on strike for three weeks recently in an attempt to break the government-imposed wage limitations which union leaderships have refused to fight.

The bulk of Chrysler's plants is in the Detroit area. While Chrysler, the smallest of the Big Three, employs only 127,000 hourly employees in the U.S. and Canada, some 68,000 of these are in Detroit. These plants tend to be among the oldest in the auto industry, and conditions are notoriously bad. This was to a large extent responsible for the outbreak of militancy in the past few weeks. The bureaucracy, in order to undercut any possibility of sympathy strikes from restive Chrysler workers, might well prefer to let them go out on an "official" strike in order to drain off their combativeness. This is particularly so in light of the fact that the UAW's stated objectives in these negotiations center on "humanizing work conditions," downgrading the equally key issues of jobs and wages. Of course, this decision was conditioned by the apparent ability of the UAW leaders to insure that Chrysler workers would not be "too militant" and really disrupt the cozy talks of UAW and company leaders before the formal negotiation period ended. A *Wall Street Journal* article of 23 August commented, "However, the fears about control at Chrysler apparently evaporated after Douglas Fraser, UAW vice president in charge of the Chrysler department of the union, mobilized a successful counterattack on the radical agitators."

This reference to Fraser's policing action at Mack Ave. underscores the bureaucracy's real role as guarantor of labor peace and enemy of all militants in the unions. While wildcat actions like the one at Mack are often adventurist—poorly planned and easy to isolate and crush—they are indications of the inability of the present union officials to provide any real leadership to the working class. Even when forced by mass pressure to conduct an "official" strike, these so-called leaders do everything in their power to sabotage and limit the effectiveness of such an action. The costliness of a poorly prepared strike that mobilizes only a small section of the workers in an industry will be used by these "labor statesmen" as one more reason for their policies of "labor peace" and "harmonious relations" with the companies. In fact the real "costliness" is their rotten leadership, which is the main obstacle to a successful strike.

The policy of selecting a single company as target was initiated by Reuther after World War II, supposedly so as to put pressure on the struck company to settle quickly in order to avoid losing profits to competing firms. Of course, when threatened by labor, these firms do not compete, but on the contrary cooperate with each other—financially, politically, and otherwise.

Woodcock Asks for "Moderate" Demands

The central thrust of the official UAW demands has been toward "humanizing the work place" and increasing fringe benefits. Key demands that have been highlighted are voluntary overtime, a full "thirty-and-out" pension at any age, prepaid dental care, and an improved cost-of-living formula. There has also been a host of less-emphasized demands such as profit-

sharing, joint union-management health and safety committees and similar committees to handle racial grievances. Conspicuously absent are demands that would really hit at the companies' power, by contractually limiting speed-up, providing more jobs, or challenging the government wage "guidelines" (i.e., disguised controls).

While the official demands are important, they are neither fully realizable nor even effective unless they are linked to the latter demands. Only an apologist for capitalism could possibly view overtime as "voluntary" when workers' wages are being eroded by massive inflation! Similarly, the experiences of the maritime, mine workers and railroad workers unions have clearly demonstrated the hopelessness of trying to achieve a decent pension without maintaining employment levels through a struggle for jobs lost by automation, speed-up and runaway shops. And in the absence of any limits to speed-up, talk of decent work conditions is a farce.

The real thrust of Woodcock's program is simply to avoid a showdown with the companies (and the bourgeois state that backs them up) on the issues that are vital to their drive for profits and their rivalry with competing national bourgeoisies. Thus the *Detroit News* (3 September) reported: "He [Woodcock] said that the union is not seeking a wage and fringe package that will be unsettling to the nation's economic objectives." For Woodcock to launch a fight against the wage controls would require an all-out mobilization of the rank and file. It would discredit his line that the state is "neutral" between capital and labor, and that it is the bureaucracy's experience and expertise in dealing with company and government officials, rather than the united strength of a militant working class, which is responsible for the gains of labor. In order to "justify" this capitulation to the American capitalists, Woodcock appeals to the age-old excuses of "national interest" and "mutual interdependence" summarized in the "Harmony Clause" adopted at the UAW's bargaining convention last March:

"...The UAW...proposes that the management and the union acknowledge in writing that their relationship is one of mutual respect and responsibility; that the growth and success of the company are of direct interest to the workers and their union, and the growth and success of the union are of direct interest to the company; that each party, therefore, pledges respect, understanding and cooperation with the other and covenants that it will not, in any way, impede the growth or success of the other."

What Woodcock aspires to is to be a managing partner of American capitalism, a role similar to that played by the German Social Democracy, with its emphasis on a "codetermination," in which trade-union officials sit on company administrative boards. Thus UAW propaganda throughout the negotiations has emphasized the "inhumanity of big business" and called on the unions and companies to form joint committees to work out problems mutually. In actuality, such committees, while increasing the prestige of the bureaucracy, accomplish little for workers, instead subordinating the independence of the working class to the interests of capital. To Woodcock's proposal of joint union-company health and safety committees, Leninists counterpose the need for workers control. We demand strict contractual specifications of working conditions and line speed and call for the formation of factory committees of workers to ensure that these are enforced. Sharp class struggle rather than cozy deals with bosses is required in order to eliminate the barbaric working conditions in the plants. Rather than joint union-company

committees to handle racial grievances—which are merely devices that allow the union bureaucrats to slough off their own responsibility for inaction on issues of racial discrimination—we call for union control of hiring and training—workers to be advanced from production to skilled jobs on a non-discriminatory basis.

Voluntary Overtime and Jobs for All

The similar reformist manner in which Woodcock raises the important bargaining demand of voluntary overtime is characteristic. While voluntary overtime per se would provide some relief to the killing pace of the plants, the bureaucrats mean it as a substitute for a program of a shorter work week at no loss in pay, which would not only achieve this but would be a giant step in unifying the working class by striking a blow at unemployment. Thus in order to guarantee that voluntary overtime would not interfere with the companies' production schedules, Woodcock offered to provide a pool of reserve labor from among UAW retirees, or possibly from among workers at plants where there is little opportunity for overtime! Without increasing jobs, this would save the company huge amounts on overhead for health and other benefits, and in fact would cost them little more than do existing overtime procedures.

In addition, the UAW bureaucrats have offered to guarantee in the contract that voluntary overtime would not be a weapon to pressure the companies into compliance with other demands. Such "concerted action" would be treated like a wildcat, subject to company discipline! Bannon [UAW vice president for Ford] said that the UAW would assure Ford that the right of refusal to work overtime would not become a weapon to be used by workers to settle other grievances. Concerted action violates the UAW constitution, he said, and contract language could be written to prevent it" (*Detroit Free Press*, 10 August).

The UAW officials have tried to justify the "practicality" of the voluntary overtime demand by pointing to the example of American Motors, whose contract with the UAW, due to expire in 1974, includes a voluntary overtime provision. In fact, however, in many instances voluntary overtime meant a setback for AMC workers. This is the case with members of UAW Local 72 which represents 9,000 workers at the Kenosha, Wisconsin plant, where voluntary overtime was a concession to the company after the 1969 strike. Previously the company had been required to check with the union before scheduling overtime when there were laid-off workers. Such a procedure is far more effective than voluntary overtime, because, when combined with sufficiently high overtime rates, it gives the workers a powerful lever to penalize the company for not hiring more workers.

The Crisis of Leadership

The auto negotiations pose with special urgency the question of proletarian leadership. The trade-union bureaucracy continues to isolate and crush the spontaneous militancy of the workers. And as the Nixon government is completely discredited by mounting scandals which expose the conspiracies of the bosses' state, this bureaucracy actually plays a vital role in maintaining the credibility and normal functioning of the system through its determination to maintain labor peace at all costs, continued acceptance of government wage "guidelines" and participation on government wage-freezing agencies.

While it may be fragile and hated, the bureaucracy will not crumble of its own weight—it must be replaced by revolutionary leadership. But the spontaneous, shop-floor militancy revelled in by most left groups does not attack the political roots of the trade-union bureaucracy and only serves to regenerate it through the careers of individual "militants." Calculated adventurism such as pushed by PL/WAM can, in the most favorable

case, lead to a successful single action (though it usually fails at this also) but cannot provide a long-run alternative leadership in the unions. This requires winning mass support for a class-struggle program. The recent wildcats in Detroit, for instance, while they are legitimate expressions of the pent-up anger of the ranks and must be defended against the bosses and UAW leaders, did little to weaken the stranglehold of the Woodcock machine.

These outbursts of militancy must be organized and directed in order to challenge the UAW bureaucracy, which is itself the main roadblock to winning the crucial demands of auto workers. The task is both political and organizational. Victory in the contract negotiations requires open negotiations! For an international, industry-wide strike! Line speed and job descriptions fixed by contract! Stiding scale of wages and hours! No layoffs or victimizations—rehire the fired militants! Break the government wage controls!

But the union tops have indicated in every possible way—their "harmony clause," their sabotage of the Lords-town-Norwood strikes, their acceptance (and even encouragement) of company firings of militants, their strike-breaking at Mack Ave. and now their completely passive negotiations (negotiations held in secret, no hard demands against the company, no challenge to government wage controls, inadequate strike fund, selection of the smallest of the Big Three as target company)—that they have no intention of fighting for the members' interests. To counter this no-win policy, a broad united-front rank-and-file strike committee with a militant strike policy could, if it became a mass organization truly representative of the ranks, open the road to victory.

But to be successful, opposition to the labor bureaucracy must be organized on a permanent, political basis, to challenge these labor fakers down the line on their fundamental policy of propping up the capitalist system. A class-struggle opposition in the unions must stand for the historic interests of the working class, even where that involves taking unpopular stands at times. Any opposition group, such as the rapidly disintegrating United National Caucus (supported by the International Socialists, the Communist Party and Progressive Labor) which fails to go beyond the economism of simple trade-union militancy will inevitably give rise to outright strike-breakers such as Miller of the Mine Workers. Instead the Spartacist League calls for the organization of class-struggle caucuses on a program including opposition to imperialism: Labor strikes against the Indochina war! Against protectionism—for international strike solidarity! Likewise it must fight for the independence of the working class by opposition to government interference in the labor movement: Labor off government wage-control boards! Keep the bosses' courts out of the labor movement! It is necessary to provide a political alternative to the fake "friends of labor" who regularly vote for wage-freeze and strikebreaking laws: Dump the labor bureaucrats, for a workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government! ■

RCY Forum

Racial Oppression and the Class Struggle

SPEAKER:
Reuben Samuels
National Chairman RCY
SL Central Committee

BUFFALO

Thursday 20 September 7:30 p.m. SUNY Norton Union Room 337

WORKERS VANGUARD

Bureaucrats Battle for Government Support

Labor Department Upholds Dempsey in CWA Election Rerun

NEW YORK—Ed Dempsey emerged as momentary victor in the ongoing bureaucratic war for control of CWA Local 1101 here when the union announced on August 30 his victory over Ricky Carnivale in a Labor Department-sponsored election rerun. Dempsey wrapped up his campaign for local president by taking Carnivale to court, charging him with defrauding the union's 1971 strike fund of \$113,000.

Responsibility for defeat of the bitterly fought, seven-month 1971 strike (when Carnivale was local president) is still a volatile issue, and Dempsey's suit was interpreted as a move to further discredit Carnivale only days before the voting deadline was reached. Dempsey originally defeated Carnivale for president last fall, but Carnivale challenged the election, charging his opponent and the newly constituted executive board with violating the local's by-laws by dissolving the election committee before it could rule on charges of election irregularities.

But whatever the resolution of the Dempsey-Carnivale turf fight had been, Local 1101 would have been saddled with a leadership that could only take it down to further defeats. In taking one another to court Carnivale and Dempsey reveal a fundamental similarity in program. Instead of fighting for the independence and strength of the workers movement, they bind the union to control by the bourgeois government, whose only interest in intervening is to further weaken the CWA.

This tendency to rely on the bosses' courts, political parties and the U.S. government as the "neutral arbiter" or "friend of labor" is the common thread of class collaboration with which the present leadership of the trade unions binds the American working class to its class enemy and renders it powerless to fight. The degree to which these politics describe the top-level workings of CWA was vividly illustrated at the annual convention in Miami this July. Carnivale's credentials challenge against the Dempsey delegation lost when the convention upheld a Labor Department decision to consider Dempsey president until the re-election returns came in, even though this decision clearly violated procedures outlined in the Local 1101 by-laws! International President Joe Beirne cut off any attempts by delegates on the convention floor to investigate the New York situation saying that the job of the convention was not to take sides, interfering in that domain belonging to the federal government. "The only question in front of us is not to do that which the United States will eventually do," ruled Beirne ("Daily Proceedings and Reports, 35th Annual Convention, C.W.A.").

One of the most important lessons of the '71 phone strike was that the government is never neutral in the struggles between labor and capital. Phone workers watched the government do nothing while New York Telephone imported scabs across state lines, although the courts ruled out-of-state picketing "illegal." Police beat up demonstrating phone workers and the final local settlement allowed the company to fire any workers who had been arrested during the strike regardless of whether they were proved guilty of the charges.

Yet all during the strike period, the political lessons were not drawn, as the ostensibly radical groups in the union watered down their politics to attract numbers, chasing their appetites for "getting a slice of the action" through unprincipled blocs. For example, the United Action Caucus (which is supported by the International Socialists) refused to raise the issue of an independent political party for labor, in order not to alienate such "popular" stewards as Shaefer and Dempsey. Reflecting its strategy of pressuring lesser-evil local-level bureaucrats to struggle against the Beirne machine, the UAC concentrated solely on tactical issues such as out-of-state picketing.

Following the 1971 defeat Dempsey began his bid for office, and almost all the so-called radical groups immediately jumped onto the Dempsey bandwagon. The UAC came out for Dempsey, basing its support on his call for a big-city alliance to dump Beirne and reform the CWA, for his stated support for organizing operators into CWA,

into CWA, the key issue for the New York locals.

Upcoming Contract Period

Phone workers are now entering the 1974 pre-contract period. When the contract expires in April the struggle could be key not only for CWA but for the entire labor movement. Under intense pressure, marked by growing economic hardship, the unions are thinly controlled at the top by a bureaucratic layer which has already succeeded this year in forcing rotten no-strike contracts down the throats of rubber workers, steel workers and truckers. The gap between the militancy of the rank and file and the abject class collaboration of the isolated union leadership was seen in the recent Detroit Chrysler wildcats, where the bureaucrats were forced to play the role of open strikebreakers. After the auto contract in September, phone will be the next big negotiation

winning a few more cents an hour (although under "leaders" like Beirne, Carnivale and Dempsey that is hard enough to achieve). At the present time government intervention is one of the greatest threats to the union movement, a prime example being the so-called "Affirmative Action" programs.

With the single exception of the Militant Action Caucus in CWA Local 9415, Oakland, California, all the opposition groups in the communications union have capitulated in one form or another to state intervention. In contrast to supporting government-backed preferential hiring plans, which also divide the class by making white male workers pay the price for upgrading minority and women workers who have suffered discrimination from the companies, MAC calls for hiring on a first-come first-served basis through a union hiring hall, strikes against layoffs and forced transfers and 30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay—a demand which would open up thousands of new jobs for the unemployed.

This class-struggle approach to fighting racial and sexual discrimination would unite workers, instead of dividing them on racial and sexual lines and bringing in the capitalist government. MAC also opposes on principle government intervention in the labor movement and taking the unions to court, and raises political demands such as labor strikes against the Indochina war; labor off the productivity board, dump the bureaucrats—for a labor party based on the trade unions; and for a workers government.

Demonstration of telephone workers during 1971 New York wildcat strike.



his call for a delegates assembly and his supposed "openness for including the ranks in 1101 life." The UAC had some difficulty in asserting that Dempsey actually stood for any of these minimal positions and admitted at the time that he had no program to reform the International nor interest in fighting racial or sexual discrimination. Even on its favorite issue, "more democracy," the UAC was forced to comment, "Nobody can have too much confidence from Dempsey's past that he will make any real effort to involve the rank and file in running the union at any level." Yet support him it did because, like its friends in the IS, the UAC supports anything that is popular.

Final Warning, the rank-and-file newsletter supported by the Revolutionary Union, also came out for Dempsey: "Although he is not ideal, we should elect Ed Dempsey president of 1101."

Now since his original election in 1972 Dempsey, as could have been predicted, has failed to keep his major election promise to organize operators

and could be the focus of a new labor breakthrough.

The outcome of the upcoming contract fight will pivot on the question of leadership in CWA. The New York phone locals came out of the 1971 strike and into the present period having suffered a great defeat which is still not understood. The once very militant ranks are now disoriented and divided, while the opportunist-reformist rank-and-file caucuses continue to prop up the Dempseys and Shaefer, the slicker breed of labor bureaucrats whose role is to try to satisfy the capitalist thirst for a "new era of labor peace," something badly discredited in incumbent bureaucrats, such as Carnivale and Beirne, can no longer do effectively.

Rather than a jazzed-up version of the same old business unionism that was responsible for the current sellout contract and the defeat of the 1971 New York strike, phone workers need a leadership that will really fight the company, along with the rest of the capitalist class and its government. Workers' problems will not be solved simply by

One of MAC's recent activities was a successful campaign at the CWA convention against the "19-2C" amendment which would have given the union powers to kick out insurgents and militants on such vaguely-worded charges as "publishing untruths."

In contrast to MAC's principled struggle to win support from the ranks on the basis of its class-struggle program, UAC, Final Warning, Strike Back and all the other fake-militant caucuses in the CWA want to latch onto any new gimmick or fast-talking "leaders" that promise to deliver instant popularity and power. Every day of Dempsey's term of office is a living proof of the futility of supporting "honest" reformers who stand for nothing but "democracy." A national caucus to expand the work of MAC is essential if phone company workers are to overcome trade-union reformism. The bureaucracy will not be eliminated spontaneously—it must be replaced by an alternative leadership committed to a full political program of working-class demands. ■