

## UAW Official Shoots Militant at River Rouge—

# Auto Workers Threaten Woodcock/Big 3 Agreement

DETROIT, 18 November—Threatened with the prospect of a simultaneous strike against Ford and General Motors, the UAW bureaucracy is stopping at nothing to defend the interests of the auto companies against its own membership. As the built-up anger of Detroit auto workers bursts out in repeated walkouts and protests, the chief obstacles to a massive, industry-wide auto strike are the Woodcock clique and, even more directly, the absence of an opposition in the UAW which could unite the ranks in militant struggle against the companies and the capitalist system.

A widespread and largely leaderless rebellion against the sellout Ford contract broke through the bureaucratic straitjacket last week as the UAW leadership was exposed trying to conceal the terms of the contract and results of membership voting became apparent. Solidarity House (union headquarters) stopped reporting totals and delayed announcement of the final vote on the contract, which was negotiated on 26 October. After spirited demonstrations by workers opposed to the contract and mounting violence in the union halls, the UAW finally admitted on 13 November that skilled workers had rejected the pact by a 4 to 1 margin. However, the bureaucracy claimed the contract had been ratified by majority vote of the production workers.

In fact this was not true. Even according to the UAW's undemocratic "unit rule" voting procedures, the contract was actually voted down in the initial balloting! As the union had agreed at its 1966 convention to separate balloting for skilled trades, with the assumption that they would have veto power over the contract, the "no" vote by skilled workers, acknowledged even by the bureaucracy, meant that for the first time UAW members had turned down a contract negotiated by the leadership.

### UAW Tops Force Re-Votes

While the UAW was clearly required to authorize a nationwide Ford strike at this point, Woodcock and Co. sought to extract themselves from the threatening situation by a two-pronged ma-

neuver. First, they maintained that the 1966 constitution amendment actually gave skilled workers a veto over only their own section of the contract. Second, the bureaucracy sought to swing the vote by ordering re-balloting in key bargaining units while it was stalling on announcing the national totals.

According to the union's unit-voting rule, a majority vote for or against the contract at a unit ratification meeting commits the entire membership of that unit. The same holds true for the local itself. Thus in a close vote, the pivotal unit in a large local (such as the River Rouge plant, Local 600, with 34,000 members) could change the national outcome drastically. In the vote as finally presented by the UAW (111,886 in favor to 58,773 opposed, including both skilled and production workers), recording Local 600 in the "no" column would have turned down the contract.

This was no academic question. Before the re-votes River Rouge was reported to have rejected the settlement. While repeat balloting at the skilled-trades units in Local 600, was called off by UAW Ford Division chief Ken Bannon when the situation looked hopeless, re-votes were carried out at the Michigan Casting Center. The bureaucracy's claim that the contract was ratified is based on these re-votes of production workers in Local 600. In fact, therefore, the contract was actually rejected by the membership in the original voting.

### The Secret Letter

The serious movement to reject the contract developed after revelation of a secret letter, reportedly obtained from union files, which spelled out assurances to the company to keep up production when skilled tradesmen refuse work under the so-called "voluntary overtime" provision of the contract. The secret terms, not even hinted at in the official announcement of the contract, allow the company to use production workers, part-time employees and employees of outside contractors to do the work of tradesmen refusing overtime. Furious over this potential threat to their jobs and the

continued on page 2



FREE PRESS

Ford skilled tradesmen picket UAW headquarters following revelation of a secret letter granting rights to the company threatening their jobs. Voting on the contract subsequently went heavily against, forcing the UAW tops to call re-votes in the critical Local 600. Skilled tradesmen opposed ratification by a 4 to 1 margin.

The Birth of the Zionist State, A Marxist Analysis...6

British Labour Party Adopts "Socialist" Program:  
A Left Face for Labourism...8

NYC Hospital Workers' Leadership Bows to Nixon...12



# Auto Workers Threaten Woodcock/Big 3 Agreement

fact that they had been asked to vote on a contract, the terms of which were being kept concealed, hundreds of skilled workers and other UAW members picketed union headquarters over a three-day period, with signs reading, "Read the Fine Print and Say No," "What You See Ain't What We Got," etc.

The *Detroit Free Press* (13 November) described the tense atmosphere in the middle of the dispute last week:

"With all reports indicating that skilled tradesmen have rejected the Ford Motor Co. contract offer overwhelmingly, the UAW Monday delayed its scheduled announcement of results at ratification meetings for Ford workers.

"The postponement generated a flurry of rumors in Ford plants and local union halls.

"Speculation mounted among tradesmen that the UAW leadership would try to salvage victory by running second elections in pivotal plants where the contract has been rejected."

While finally admitting the skilled workers had rejected the contract, the UAW continued to insist it had been approved by the vote of production workers. Bannan announced that he would only renegotiate details of the "voluntary overtime" provisions for skilled trades. But the "renegotiated" version would not be subject to membership

vote, thereby guaranteeing a deal on the company's terms!

## Bureaucrats Pull Guns

Opposition during the voting focused on the skilled-trades units of the mammoth River Rouge complex as well as on the Michigan Casting Center, another unit of Local 600. Fistfights and bitter arguments continued all day on 13 November while pickets called for a "no" vote in the re-balloting. In the middle of the tension David Mundy, chairman of the casting center unit, shot one of the militants, William Harrell, a millwright, after chasing him into a filling station. The incident was viewed by dozens of UAW members and news of the attempted murder soon spread through the Rouge works.

According to one Local 600 official, who asked to remain anonymous, "there is a war going on between the top leadership and the middle leadership, between Solidarity House and people who depend on the ranks." Workers were threatened with "you'll get your throat cut" for voting the "wrong" way. Disputes broke out even in the Local 600 executive board, with a top official reportedly drawing a pistol on another board member. In addition to physical intimidation, the bureaucracy played heavily on defeatism ("you will lose your Christmas holiday pay for nothing if there is a strike") in order to secure changed votes.

## UAW Leaders Attack Reds, Members

The attempted murder of a worker by a bureaucrat during the contract dispute should come as no surprise to auto workers after recent events in the union. Physical intimidation of the membership—under the guise of driving off "outside agitators"—has been rampant since the beginning of the contract period last summer. During a series of wildcat strikes in Chrysler plants in Detroit before the contract expiration, UAW leaders blamed "reds" and formed a 1,000-man goon squad composed of local officials to break a sit-down strike at the Mack Avenue Stamping Plant.

This goon squad was then turned loose on radical paper salesmen outside the plants, and a special article in *UAW Solidarity* (September) attempted to blame unauthorized strikes, over what even the bureaucracy admitted were legitimate grievances, on "communists." Bureaucratic thugs were also mobilized in other cities, including an

18-man standing goon squad at the Chevrolet transmission plant in Parma, Ohio, which brutally attacked salesmen of four left-wing groups, including the Spartacist League, over a two-week period this fall. At the conclusion of our report on the Parma assault (*WV* No. 30, 12 October) we warned that the bureaucracy's campaign against "outside agitators" would lead to vicious attacks on the union membership which is exactly what is now occurring:

"The official union goon squads and attacks on reds at Ford and GM plants are a direct attempt to intimidate the workers and cow internal opposition at this sensitive time, when the officials know what a rotten sellout they will soon have to delend to the ranks."

At the height of the crisis surrounding the Ford ratification vote, Woodcock called off the deadline for a nationwide strike at GM (originally set for November 19) despite the fact that "practically nothing has been settled." His excuses for this clearly revealed where his primary interests lie—protecting the capitalist economy from the disruption of an industry-wide auto strike:

"A massive general strike in this present tentative economic situation, and the temptation possibly by G.M. to say 'O.K., the strike fund is so much less than it was three years ago that we'll bankrupt the union again.'... We would just like to remove that class struggle temptation from them."

—*New York Times*, 15 November

The decision to work past the strike deadline opened the union up to the possibility of a campaign of intimidation by the company, through firings of union representatives, etc., and abandons the threat of a national auto strike, thereby guaranteeing a sellout contract settlement. As a sop to militancy, Woodcock called for isolated one- and two-day "mini-strikes," reminiscent of last year's phony "Apache strategy," which accomplished nothing but let the workers blow off steam without depleting the union treasury. With new car sales slow, GM will lose nothing through these mini-strikes. (As we go to press there are radio reports of a last-minute GM settlement as Woodcock pulls all the stops to prevent a GM strike.)

## Class-Struggle Leadership or Capitulation

Leadership of the skilled trades' revolt fell by default to the existing reformist bureaucratic oppositions to the Woodcock gang, chiefly the Local 228 (Sterling Heights Stamping Plant in Detroit) leadership and the United National Caucus, which, though it has pretensions to being a UAW-wide opposition, has never developed a base beyond skilled workers in a few locals. The UNC's origin lies in the 1966 battle to give special privileges to the trades so that they would stay in the UAW, a battle uniquely unsuited to mobilize production workers' support. Founders of the UNC, such as Art Fox of the Local 600 tool-and-die unit, had long ago given up any aspiration to build a militant, class-struggle opposition to the bureaucracy, and sought instead to climb aboard the official gravy train through militant posturing.

Now this tradition is being reaffirmed as the UNC responds to the rank-and-file revolt with a campaign to sue the union in the capitalist courts. At a citywide UNC meeting today proposals for actions to mobilize the ranks were swept under the rug, while the leaders pushed through a drum-beating campaign for their court case.

Calling in the bourgeois courts to settle disputes within the labor movement can only backfire and serve as a further precedent for government interference in the unions. Legal restrictions are already a prime argument of the bureaucracy against militancy, and government meddling is drawing an ever-tighter noose around the workers' necks. The UNC suit is merely designed to use skilled-trades particularism as a jumping-off point for the bureaucratic careers of its leaders.

The interests of skilled workers

cannot be aided by pushing special-interest demands at the expense of production workers. This only serves the company by dividing and weakening the union. What is needed is a leadership and a program which can unite the working class in struggle against capitalism. The present skilled-trades rebellion has raised several demands which are in the interests of all auto workers, though directly counterposed to those of the pro-company bureaucracy. Dump the fraudulent contract! Publish the original unit votes! No secret deals! Abolish all compulsory overtime, with no company rights to bring in replacements for regular workers!

Such demands must be broadened into a call for an international, industry-wide auto strike and open negotiations controlled by rank-and-file strike committees with full reporting of all proposals. With the election of reformist opposition leaders at GM, Ford, International Harvester and Chrysler plants this spring; with the several Detroit-area Chrysler wildcats this summer; and with the widespread dissatisfaction with the Big Three "pattern" contract, it is obvious that a struggle involving all sections of the million-strong union is a real possibility.

The key to the situation is a fight to replace the present isolated bureaucracy not with reformist fakers whose program is limited to demanding "more" (in time-tested business-union fashion), but with a class-struggle leadership whose program educates the workers to the need for unity of the entire class in the struggle to replace the domination of the bosses with a society in which production is for need rather than profit.

This means consistent opposition to interference of the capitalist state in the unions, including rejection of the reformists' tactic of suing the unions in the courts and demanding that all union officials get off all government boards. (Woodcock still sits on several Nixon wage-freezing agencies, despite the UAW's call for Nixon's impeachment and fake "opposition" to Phase Four!) Break state wage controls by militant national strikes!

A class-struggle leadership would also open up skilled jobs to minorities, women and all production workers by demanding equal access to upgrading and training programs and the elimination of all discrimination in hiring. Likewise it would also call for strikes against layoffs, opposition to protectionism and the imperialist exploits of the ruling class. As opposed to the reformists' reliance on Democratic politicians and limp calls for impeachment of Nixon, a militant leadership would pose a class alternative by calling for a workers party based on the unions to fight for a workers government.

Obviously, such a program depends not on hiring the right lawyer, but on developing a class-struggle opposition throughout the union. *Oust the bureaucrats! For a class-struggle national caucus in the UAW!* ■

## RCY Forum

### Building a Leninist Youth Movement

Early Communist Party and Trotskyist youth work and the tasks of the RCY today.

Speaker: LIBBY SCHAEFER  
RCY National Secretary

Wednesday, November 28  
Northwestern U., 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 29  
U. of Illinois (Circle Campus), noon

## Chicago

for more information call:  
(312) 728-2151

## Spartacist Local Directory

**BERKELEY-**  
OAKLAND..... (415) 653-4668  
Box 852, Main P.O.  
Berkeley, CA 94701

**BOSTON**..... (617) 492-3928  
Box 188, M.I.T. Sta.  
Cambridge, MA 02139

**BUFFALO**..... (716) 837-1854  
Box 412, Station C  
Buffalo, NY 14209

**CHICAGO**..... (312) 728-2151  
Box 6471, Main P.O.  
Chicago, IL 60680

**CLEVELAND**..... (216) 696-4943  
Box 6765  
Cleveland, OH 44101

**DETROIT**..... (313) 921-4626  
Box 663A, General P.O.  
Detroit, MI 48232

**LOS ANGELES**..... (213) 467-6855  
Box 38053, Wilcox Sta.  
Los Angeles, CA 90038

**MILWAUKEE**  
Box 5144, Harbor Sta.  
Milwaukee, WI 53204

**NEW ORLEANS**..... (504) 866-8384  
Box 51634, Main P.O.  
New Orleans, LA 70151

**NEW YORK**..... (212) 925-2426  
Box 1377, G.P.O.  
New York, NY 10001

**SAN DIEGO**..... (714) 272-2286  
Box 22052, Univ. City Sta.  
San Diego, CA 92122

**SAN FRANCISCO**..... (415) 653-4668  
Box 1757  
San Francisco, CA 94101



# Stalinists on Chile: Lame Brains in Turbulent Waters

Cynicism is such a deeply ingrained characteristic of Stalinist thought patterns that reality seldom has any effect whatsoever upon them. As the ex-"Great Father of the Peoples" used to say, "paper will take anything that is written on it." But to Stalin's great misfortune, parties are made up of human beings capable of thought, not mere scraps of paper. The so-called "Communist" parties have the added disadvantage of supposedly representing Marxism and the interests of the working class, though their actual practice contradicts this.

As a result of these "unfortunate" circumstances the reactionary military coup in Chile this September has caused considerable unrest in the pro-Moscow CPs. Here is the sterling example of the "peaceful road to socialism" in ruins, eliminated by a mere flick of the generals' batons. The Chilean CP had for months been praising the "democratic" loyalties of the armed forces, and now these same "constitutionalist" officers are shooting down workers, peasants and socialists by the thousands. Since 1970 the Chilean CP had pushed to include the Christian Democrats in the "Popular Unity" coalition government, yet one day after the coup these same "democrats" endorsed this overthrow of the constitutional order! Despite their Stalinist affiliations, the rank-and-file CPers can hardly be enthusiastic about a political line which leads directly to their own physical annihilation.

The protests and objections in the Moscow-line Stalinist parties have been

so widespread that in recent weeks every major western Communist Party has launched a vicious campaign against "defeatists" and "ultra-leftists" who oppose the so-called "peaceful road to socialism" and who today seek to draw the lessons of the Chilean events. In an article "On Monday morning quarter-backing and pessimism [sic] on Chile" in the 13 October *Daily World* we read:

"Some self-styled 'revolutionaries' in the U.S. are already starting to ask: 'What went wrong in Chile?' and are churning out elaborate analyses of all the alleged 'mistakes' of the Popular Unity coalition government which supposedly led to the fascist junta's coup. 'The answer to this nonsense is that these 'revolutionary' analyses serve no purpose except to distract attention from the real culprits, the U.S. imperialists.

"In Chile, as in Spain in the 1930's, the popular coalition was gaining strength, consolidating its power base, when the fascists struck....

"The same thing is true of Chile. The Popular Unity coalition government undoubtedly would have succeeded in handling all the problems that came up in Chile, if it had not been for the active hostility of U.S. imperialism...."

Aside from the fact that this "analysis" is designed above all to justify the Stalinists' calls to include the Christian Democrats in the Popular Unity (UP) coalition and denies that the Chilean bourgeoisie is capable of mounting its own counterrevolutionary offensive, the CP's whole "explanation" amounts to wishful thinking that "if U.S. imperialism did not exist...." or more accurately, "if only U.S. imperialism had a more peaceful policy...." then a reformist line would be successful. But if only capitalism were not capitalism, then all our problems would be solved! The same self-righteously philistine theme was repeated in a 29 September *Daily World* editorial and in CPUSA General-Secretary Gus Hall's October 15 speech on Chile. The "ultra-lefts" and "Trotskyites" drove the bourgeoisie into the arms of reaction is the common lament.

## "Chile is Not France"

If Chile is a hot issue for the CP in the U.S., it is a burning question in France where the local Stalinists have been calling for several years for a "Left Front" with the Radicals and advertising the "Chilean road." When it turned out that the "Chilean road" ended not in socialism but a reactionary military coup, French CP leaders immediately washed their hands of the whole affair. The very day of the coup, PCF General Secretary Georges Marchais went on radio to announce that "Chile



"THIS JOB IS VERY EASY... PART OF THE 'LEFT' IS DOING OUR WORK FOR US!"

Stalinists defend Chile popular front, label all who oppose myth of "peaceful road to socialism" as "ultra-lefts" and "imperialist agents."

is not France" and while "the Chilean experience was going in the same direction that we want to take here, that is to say a union of the left parties coming to power legally," there were also important "differences." In Chile, the "reactionary forces refused to play by legal rules." The conclusion? "This Chilean experience confirms the necessity... of isolating the big bourgeoisie and preventing it from maneuvering as it did in Chile" (*France Soir*, 13 September).

A leaflet passed out shortly afterwards by the Paris Federation of the French CP put it more bluntly: "... the ultra-left groups add their support and thus also become accomplices of the assassins." And for those who continued to doubt, who worried about the implications of the Chilean bloodbath, the PCF replied in typical bureaucratic fashion—simply denying reality:

"We must forcefully reaffirm: Yes, it is possible in our country to bring about a new democratic regime; yes it is possible to reach socialism by the peaceful path.

"Yes, it is possible to force the big bourgeoisie to respect democratic legality by isolating it."

But asserting that "yes, the world is flat" will not make it so.

Certainly the hundred-thousand-strong Communist Party of France would not go to such great lengths to denounce "ultra-lefts" simply on account of the criticisms of far smaller groups such as the OCI or the ex-Trotskyist ex-Ligue Communiste. The real reason for this international campaign is the internal protests, by members of the Stalinist parties themselves, against the consequences of the murderous "peaceful road" policies. This was revealed in an article by G. Pajetta, a leader of the Italian Communist Party, in the PCI's newspaper *L'Unita* on

16 September. After accusing those who called for "breaking this state apparatus" of "encouraging the radicalization of this apparatus toward the right" (!), Pajetta complained that "thousands of our comrades" are asking about the possibility of a "peaceful road."

## Laying Down the Line

That this unrest is not limited to Italy is indicated in a forum given by CPUSA National Chairman Henry Winston in San Francisco on September 14. Though the talk was advertised as a public forum it obviously had the quality of Winston coming out to quiet any questions about what really had happened in Chile and what the CP's role had actually been. According to our report:

"Winston's remarks were pretty much along the lines of the Third Period Stalinist line following the rise of fascism in Germany. According to him, the Chilean workers were further along the road to socialism after the coup [!] than the American workers. The coup was just a temporary setback to the Chilean workers...."

Winston's arguments contained an unusual twist. Instead of harping on the need to unite with the Christian Democrats and the "democratic" officers in order to isolate the "reactionaries" and quoting from Stalin and Dimitroff on the need for a "popular front" embracing everyone except the fascists (and maybe "honest rank-and-file fascists," too!), the CP leader spoke of a united front of the working class.

"He [Winston] stated repeatedly that the Chilean CP had pulled together a 'united front' of the CP and SP which in turn welded together the Popular Unity. He made absolutely no mention of the fact of the Radical Party or the MAPU [two petty-bourgeois parties] in the Unidad Popular. He was clearly basing his remarks on the Fourth Congress [of the Comintern] conception of the United Front (as opposed to the Dimitroff version) and saying that this indeed was the CP strategy in Chile."

Like Gus Hall's belated criticism of both Democrats and Republicans after the 1972 presidential elections, in which the CP campaigned heavily for McGovern (see Hall's pamphlet, "Lame Duck in Turbulent Waters"), this alter-the-fact fake orthodoxy is simply a cover. The CP in Chile and in the U.S. never once called for a working-class united front against the capitalist parties and the generals, but repeatedly called for expanding the UP to include ever broader sections of the class enemy! His audience apparently had adequate memories to recall these facts, for our correspondent reports that "This [the bogus appeal to Leninist orthodoxy], I think, is an important

continued on page 11

## SL/RCV Public Offices

### BAY AREA

Wednesday }  
and } 1:00-6:00 p.m.  
Thursday }

Saturday 2:30-6:00 p.m.

330-40th Street  
(near Broadway)  
Oakland, California  
Phone 653-4668

### BOSTON

Wednesday } 1:00-5:00 p.m.  
and }  
Friday } 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Saturday 11:00 a.m.-3:00

639 Massachusetts Avenue  
Room 335  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Phone 492-3928

### NEW YORK

Monday }  
through } 3:00-7:30 p.m.  
Friday }

Saturday 1:00-6:00 p.m.

260 West Broadway  
Room 522  
New York, New York  
Phone 925-5665

## Women and Revolution

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable/mail to: SPARTACIST PUBLISHING CO.  
\$1 for 4 Issues Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10001

REVOLUTIONARY  
LITERATURE



# Black Democrat Defeats Cop in Detroit Elections

DETROIT—On November 6 State Senator Coleman A. Young, a liberal Democrat, became the first black mayor of Detroit by scoring a narrow victory over former Police Commissioner John F. Nichols. Young's victory in one of the country's largest industrial centers made him the third black mayor of a major metropolis to be elected this year, following the election of black candidates in Los Angeles and Atlanta.

Far from being a working-class victory, the victory of a "responsible" black "progressive" fits in nicely with the liberal bourgeoisie's current game plan for siphoning off racial tensions by giving the oppressed minorities the illusion of political power. In fact, the election was a set-up to split Detroit's population, which is composed of roughly equal numbers of whites and blacks, along racial lines.

Nichols, organizer of the notorious STRESS (Stop the Robberies—Enjoy Sale Streets) special police unit, ran solely on his record as a cop, with special emphasis on his personal efforts to crush the recent rebellion of black auto workers. It was Nichols who led the police into the Chrysler Mack Avenue Stamping Plant to arrest the leaders of the sitdown strike there last August.

Young, on the other hand, is perhaps the most consistent example of the liberal black mayoral candidate (Hatcher, Stokes, Bradley, Jackson), as well as of the left-liberal, "pro-labor" Democrat. Thus while Nichols appealed to the most backward, racist impulses of poor white workers facing increasingly insecure and threatening conditions, Young was purveying illusions to both black and more conscious white workers. Young's road of legislative reform and pressure for black equality within the system can only pave the way for the eventual victory of the likes of Nichols.

Young based his campaign on his image as a veteran of class-struggle and civil-rights battles who has remained uncorrupted and loyal to his original goals. He was fired from Ford's River Rouge plant in pre-union days for slugging a company spy who discovered his union organizing efforts. Often accused of being a member or former member of the Communist Party, Young was a supporter of Henry Wallace's Stalinist-backed Progressive Party campaign in 1948 and led the "subversive" National Negro Labor Council in the 1950's. Called before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1952, he refused to testify against CP members. As a State Senator since 1964, Young has continued to cultivate a "man-of-the-people" image, authoring liberal reform laws such as one making it illegal to fire workers for having their wages garnisheed, talking readily with individual constituents, using "brothers and sisters" rhetoric, etc.

Young manages to combine this image as the personification of militancy with a reality as the personification of class collaboration within mainstream Democratic Party politics.

## Reform the Police Image

This demagoguery is expressed today in Young's direct appeals to business and religious organizations (he accepted support from the Black Christian Nationalist Church, which called for scabbing in the recent Detroit teachers' strike) and in a basic program which, stripped of its illusory trappings, is remarkably similar to Nichols', even on the question of police. The Young campaign coalition emerged directly from the struggle against STRESS. This elite police unit was set up in 1969 as a direct response to the Detroit riots two years earlier and to militant developments among black auto workers such as DRUM and other black-nationalist-oriented militant caucuses organized in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW). Although

STRESS was initially welcomed even by some blacks as a means of fighting crime in the ghetto, the real nature of the "dscoy unit" was soon revealed: giving the cops a free hand to terrorize and intimidate ghetto residents. By the end of 1972, these storm troopers had killed 16 people, 15 of them black. In January of last year STRESS cops attacked members of a black vigilante organization (Kwazi) involved in combatting drug pushers. However, the intended victims defended themselves,



Ex-cop John Nichols

wounding three cops and killing a fourth. Detroit cops then ran amok in a campaign of racist harassment and in a nationwide manhunt for the "suspects" of the cop killing. STRESS was discredited, however, by the subsequent revelation of police complicity with the drug pushers.

STRESS was thus a prime target for a pressure campaign involving a coalition of radicals and liberals in the black community. Initiated by radical lawyer and ex-LRBW leader Ken Cockrel, an Independent Black Commission (IBC) was formed after a shootout last December in order to oppose STRESS through a campaign of public investigations, at which only blacks were allowed speaking rights. In order to attract support from black ministers, professionals and the liberal bourgeoisie of Detroit, demands were limited solely to the abolition of STRESS; any fundamental tampering with the police was excluded. The result has been that while STRESS was formally abolished to quell criticism and eliminate an obvious point of attack on the system, the "decoy unit" has continued under another guise.

The reformist anti-STRESS campaign played directly into Young's hands. Young's goal is to restore popular illusions in the police, rather than expose their real role as the armed defenders of the capitalist order:

"First of all, I think that we need a complete reorganization of our police department. I would think that we need a greatly increased number of police officers.... The police department has become too alienated from the people.... I think that could be corrected, first of all, by dramatically increasing the percentage of black police officers." —*Detroit Free Press*, 2 August 1973

The racially polarized voting during the primary election led both candidates to soften their images, with Nichols attempting to paper over his racist anti-unionism and Young attempting to appear as "responsible" as possible. In the process they revealed only their lack of substantial differences. While Nichols defended the police department as it is and Young called for racial balance in all departments of city government, both were agreed on fundamentals.

## A Pro-Business "Man of the People"

Side by side with advertisement of his "militant" past, Young lauded himself as "a successful businessman who understands business needs," some-

how managing to subsume the typical struggling small businessman and insurance salesman, as well as the trade-union bureaucrat, in his so variegated personal history. Both candidates appealed to downtown business interests with plans for revitalization of Detroit through attracting more business, as exemplified in Young's plan to build a new sports stadium. Both candidates supported a newly redrafted city charter which included mild reforms of the police commission and institution of an "ombudsman."

Finally, both candidates, "friend" and foe of labor alike, not surprisingly turned out to have identical positions on...labor. On the recent Detroit teachers' strike, which the city was attempting to crush with an injunction, Young's position differed from that of Nichols only in that it was a greater masterpiece of evasion:

"As a labor man and a former worker, I support the right to strike as a pretty sacred weapon and I would hesitate to restrict it. I think that in some sensitive areas of public service that is necessary but I'm not prepared to say that teachers fall in that category." —*Detroit Free Press*, 7 October

Thus on the most crucial issues facing labor—the right to strike and the struggle of public employees—this "friend" of labor of some 30 years' standing was "not prepared to say" what his position was! This was the necessary culmination of a policy based on class collaboration and work within the Democratic Party, the largest capitalist party.

The Detroit labor bureaucracy, of course, has always worked through pressuring the twin parties of capital. While opposing Nichols' heavy-handedness, it could only counterpose more of the same reformism which has

union candidates or a working-class political party, as well as direct responsibility for the careers of politicians like Young, rests squarely with the Communist Party. Consciously rejecting a class analysis, the CP policy favors tailing after popular bourgeois politicians to bolster liberals and weaken conservative forces within the ruling class. Thus (despite CP leader Gus Hall's recent deceptive rhetoric against both capitalist parties) the Stalinists supported Young in order to defeat what they term police control of the city as represented by Nichols. This policy ties the workers to the system more securely than does direct police intimidation, by curbing working-class demands in order to retain the liberal capitalists in the "people's coalition," thereby preventing the development of independent class politics.

The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, which ran its own campaign in the Detroit elections, is not qualitatively different from the CP politically. Only his Democratic Party membership kept the SWP from supporting Young. Thoroughly reformist, the SWP tails after popular "movements" uncritically, including the reformist anti-STRESS campaign. The SWP openly supported the racial exclusionism and single-issuism of the IBC, the classless community focus of the campaign and the call for community control of the police, suppressing the fact that such community "control" would in no way change the nature of the police as the repressive arm of the capitalist state.

The opportunism of the SWP was closely rivalled by that of the international Socialists (IS) which elevated the art of tallism to impressive heights in its leaflet "Detroit Needs a Black Mayor—Is Coleman Young the one we need?"



Liberal Democrat Coleman Young

led to the complete erosion of its political authority with the workers and the alienation of the most conscious. In the primary, both the AFL-CIO and UAW Wayne County CAP Council endorsed Common Council President Mel Ravitz over Young. The result was a split and the walkout of Detroit leaders of the UAW from the County CAP Council (the union's political arm, similar to AFL-CIO's COPE), reflecting the pressure of black Detroit auto workers in favor of Young. The UAW's endorsement of Ravitz only had a negative effect on his popularity at the polls, to the benefit of Young, forcing both the UAW and AFL-CIO to endorse Young for the November election.

## Reformists and Democrats

On the left, primary responsibility for the lack of working-class political alternatives, in the form of trade-

As for why "Detroit needs a black mayor," this is never explained. We assume it is not part of the IS "preferential hiring" program. Actually, of course, no explanation is necessary. We understand this slogan for what it is—a rather pathetic example of the IS policy of accommodation to black nationalist currents.

Even the best examples of bourgeois reformism, such as liberals of the Young stripe, can in no way improve on the system which produces STRESS and racist politicians like Nichols. Left-talking demagogues are dependent for their survival on the same system as the reactionary bigots—on a system that ensures the continued flow of profits through exploitation of labor by the capitalists. The only way forward is the path of class struggle, beginning with the struggle to form a working-class political party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government. ■



# Once More on Healy/Wohlforth and "The Crisis:" Cynics Who Scorn Trotskyism

"There is no crisis which can be, by itself, fatal to capitalism. The oscillations of the business cycle only create a situation in which it will be easier, or more difficult, for the proletariat to overthrow capitalism. The transition from a bourgeois society to a socialist society presupposes the activity of living men who are the makers of their own history. They do not make history by accident, or according to their caprice, but under the influence of objectively determined causes. However, their own actions—their initiative, audacity, devotion, and likewise their stupidity and cowardice—are necessary links in the chain of historical development."

—L. D. Trotsky, "Once Again, Whither France?" March 1935

The article "Healy/Wohlforth and 'The Crisis'" (*Workers Vanguard*, 3 August 1973) must have touched sensitive nerves, for it provoked a rare polemic against the Spartacist League in the pages of the Healyite daily, *Workers Press*. Perhaps feeling that the turgid ravings of its American acolyte, Tim Wohlforth, were incomprehensible to its readers, the Socialist Labour League (recently rechristened the Workers Revolutionary Party) assigned the task of refuting the SL to its chief monetary theorist, Peter Jeffries. In a mercifully brief (by Wohlforthian standards) polemic entitled "Cynics Who Scorn The Crisis" (*Workers Press*, 26 and 27 September 1973) Jeffries attempts to defend the International Committee's analysis of the "fundamental nature of the world monetary crisis."

As we shall show, Jeffries succeeds only in demonstrating the fundamental nature of the ignorance and dishonesty of the Healy/Wohlforth school of politics. Indeed, it is not until the end of his otherwise worthless article (which unfortunately must be dealt with for reasons of elementary political hygiene), that Comrade Jeffries manages to ask one useful question. Pointing out that the capitalists are compelled to "launch the most brutal attacks on the living standards of the working class and their class organizations," Jeffries shrieks:

"Tell us, Mr. Robertson, where has your group made any preparations in the working class for such events? Where, please, are your statements in which you warned the working class of such events?"

"There are no such statements, because like all the revisionists, you hoped that the working class would remain firmly under the control of the Stalinist and reformist trade union leaders, leaderships under which they would be defeated."

Unfortunately for Comrade Jeffries and the IC the record is clear. For example, just eight days after the Allende popular-front coalition gained a plurality in the Chilean elections we read in *Workers Press* (12 September 1970): "There must be a preparation for class action to defend Allende's victory and his election programs to meet this danger." And your co-thinkers of the U.S. Workers League state: "There is only one road and that is the revolutionary road of the October Revolution. . . . As a step in this understanding the workers must hold Allende to his promises. . . ." (*Bulletin*, 21 September 1970). In contrast, shortly after the election of Allende we stated in our article "Chilean Popular Front" (*Spartacist*, November–December 1970):

"It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class

treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism, is ready."

Yes, Comrade Jeffries, the record is clear. Not only are you a liar, but your organization, the so-called International Committee, urged a policy of class treason on the Chilean working class, feeding its illusions in the Stalinists and Social Democrats. Today, faced with the murder of thousands of working people in Chile, which we warned was on the agenda, you can denounce the popular front. Hindsight is cheap indeed! But in the fall of 1970, when Allende had just won his electoral victory, when he was popular with the Chilean masses, you demanded that the Chilean workers should compel an essentially bourgeois government to achieve socialism! No amount of bombast can erase this shameful crime from the record of the IC. Our political differences could not be more clearly posed. Who, Comrade Jeffries, is the revisionist?

## "The Crisis" and Political Banditry

Having thus disposed of Comrade Jeffries' question, we can turn to the bulk of his article. In doing so, it is useful to recall that we are engaged in a polemic with notorious political bandits. The salient feature of political banditry is the subordination of political principles and program to organizational appetites. Thus Wohlforth can court Huey Newton of the Black Panther Party and at the same time support the strike of the New York City police. Thus Gerry Healy, who in 1966 proclaimed Pabloism definitively destroyed and the IC to be the Fourth International, four years later comes to the United Secretariat with a proposal for common political discussion and common work hopefully to result in a "joint international conference"! This subordination of principles to appetites is a primary characteristic of the Healy/Wohlforth school of politics and explains many of their activities that might otherwise be perplexing.

But Healy and Wohlforth are not simply political bandits operating in a vacuum. They are political bandits masquerading as "Trotskyists." This affords them a certain left cover, but it also is something of a hindrance to their gross appetites. Consequently they are in need of a talisman which can subtly transmute Trotskyism into the fools' gold of opportunism. "The Crisis" plays the role of one such talisman for the priests of the IC. For under the objective impact of "The Crisis," it seems that trade-union demands become profoundly revolutionary. Thus Jeffries states:

"It is this sectarianism that leads Robertson to deny that the wages fight today is a political fight with directly revolutionary implications. For him, capitalism can still grant concessions, if only to limited sections of the working class. Here is but an expression of his denial of the depth of the capitalist crisis, of his middle-class belief in its continuing strength and stability."

Under the impact of "the depth of the capitalist crisis" Jeffries renders the Transitional Program obsolete! Simple minimum reforms have come to have "directly revolutionary implications." What is behind this, of course, is the appetite of the Healy/Wohlforth gang to unite with the trade-union reformists—on the basis of simple trade unionism—and become their "left" advisers.

Furthermore, for Jeffries to deny that capitalism can grant concessions to limited sections of the working class is to deny the material basis for labor reformism. Thus is why Tim Wohlforth

continued on page 10

## Vaudeville at the Hammersmith Odeon: Gerry Healy Presents "The Revolutionary Party"



Gerry Healy



Finding the billing of Socialist Labour League too modest for his pretensions to grandeur, Gerry Healy has proclaimed the advent of the Revolutionary Party. This transformation was accomplished at a rally in London on November 4 featuring the characteristic carnival atmosphere—the rock groups, the comic skits, the dancing girls—to which the SLL has increasingly resorted in order to divert attention from its record of political banditry.

According to the Workers League's *Bulletin* of 16 November "the great strength of the WRP [Workers Revolutionary Party—the SLL's new name] . . . was shown in the completion of the \$250,000 party-building fund." (Can the WL's recent request for discussions with the Socialist Workers Party be explained by the SWP's \$400,000 party-building fund, supposedly indicating even greater strength?)

For Leninists, the proclamation that a revolutionary organization has become a party is a serious matter indicating an objective, qualitative change in the relationship of that organization to the class and to its existing leadership. Thus Lenin did not proclaim the Bolshevik faction as a party until the Prague Conference in 1912 when the fusion with the "pro-party" Mensheviks had stripped the reformists of their industrial proletarian base.

On a smaller scale, the American Trotskyists did not declare themselves a party until 1938, when they had won over the social-democratic youth group as well as the Socialist Party's best cadre and had acquired indisputable hegemony over those forces to the left of Stalinism. In contrast, the Healyite organization remains a propaganda group whose relationship to the British working class and left has remained essentially unchanged, though somewhat deteriorated over the past decade. Having devoted much energy to making nonsense of the Marxist concept of economic crisis, the Healyites will now devote themselves to making a mockery of the Leninist concept of the party.



# Part 1/ Jewish Colonization in Palestine

## A Marxist Analysis

# The Birth of the Zionist State

While the "Yom Kippur" war of 1973 is the direct result of the defeat of the Arab states by Israel in the 1967 war, it is more fundamentally the product of the conflict between Zionism and Arab nationalism which has torn apart Palestine since the demise of the Ottoman Empire in World War I. To determine what position to take in the present war it is useful to look at the whole process of Balkanization in the Near East which resulted in the formation of a Zionist state side by side with a series of artificial royal states and "republics" led by petty-bourgeois military cliques, all of them (to different degrees) subject to imperialist domination. In particular, we must look at the 1948 war which led to the present state of Israel and the simultaneous expulsions of several hundred thousand Arabs from their homes and lands.

For the Zionists the 1948 war was an "anti-imperialist" war of "national liberation," the creation of a haven for a people decimated by fascist genocide. For the Palestinian Arabs 1948 was the origin of their "diaspora," the destruction of their nation, the deprivation of their means of livelihood and their relegation to the wretched refugee camps where they are imprisoned in an enforced state of idleness and subsist on ten cents of UN rations a day. This has resulted in one of the most difficult national conflicts in recent decades with both a Hebrew and an Arab nation competing for the same small territory. The fact that Israel emerged victorious in the first three wars (1948, 1956 and 1967), and thus bears direct responsibility for the tragic plight of the Palestinian Arab refugees, must not blind us to the need to recognize the right of self-determination on both sides as a necessary guarantee against genocide. The struggle for a truly democratic bi-national Palestinian workers state, as part of a socialist federation of the Near East and the product of a united struggle of Hebrew and Arab workers and peasants, cannot simply ignore the national question.

### Origins of Zionism

Zionism as a political movement is as much a product of the epoch of imperialism as is its counterpart, fascism. Jews as a "people-class," to use the expression of the Belgian Trotskyist theorist on the Jewish question, A. Leon, as money lenders and merchants, provided the yeast for the development of capitalism. Those Jews able to transcend the obscurantism of the synagogue and the parsimony of the marketplace were often the leaders of cultural enlightenment. But capitalism in its decline and death agony has no

place for the merchant caste of the Middle Ages. Like the proletariat the Jews "were without a country," and it was partially because they entered the 20th century unshackled by nationalism that Jews played such a leading role in the proletarian movement, especially its left wing.

Only with the world historic defeat of the German proletariat in 1933 was Zionism transformed into a mass movement. Prior to 1933 Zionism was a tiny sect of petty-bourgeois Jewish intellectuals who were emancipated but not assimilated. The Jews of the Eastern European ghettos, if they identified with any political movement at all, were either Communists or members of the Bund, an anti-Zionist Jewish socialist group with Menshevik policies.

At the end of World War I there were 60,000 Jews in Palestine, many of these living in ancient orthodox communities which were hostile to political Zionism, and 644,000 Arabs of whom 574,000 were Moslem and 70,000 Christian. In order to encourage an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire Britain armed and equipped Hussein, the Sherif of Mecca, to wage "Holy War" on the Turks. The Levant was carved up in the secret Sykes-Picot Treaty (1916) between Britain, France and tsarist Russia, a treaty which was made public only by the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution. This treaty gave Lebanon and Syria to France while Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq went to the British.

The Zionists early realized that they could accomplish their aims of creating a Jewish state in the Arab East only under the sponsorship of somebody's imperialism. Theodor Herzl, the originator of modern Zionism, had first approached the Ottoman Sultan and German Kaiser where he was rebuffed. After the tsarist Minister of Interior Plehve had organized the Black Hundred pogrom of Kishinev in which hundreds of Jews were massacred, Herzl had an audience with Plehve where he offered him the Zionist method of "getting rid of the Jews." As Nathan Weinstock says in his *Le sionisme contre Israel* (Paris, 1969): "The Zionist course and anti-Semitic reasoning are symmetrical."

Indeed, the Zionists finally got a sympathetic ear from that notorious anti-Semite, Lord Chamberlain, who was at the time British Colonial Minister. Chaim Weizmann, the leading British Zionist and the future first president of Israel, had already succinctly stated the Zionist case for the British bourgeoisie in his November 1914 letter to the editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, C.P. Scott, which stated:

"We can reasonably say that should Palestine fall within the British sphere of influence and should Britain encourage Jewish settlement there, as a British dependency we could have in twenty to thirty years a million Jews out there or more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal."

This argument was not lost on the British branch of the Rothschild banking family, which was the largest holder of Suez bonds and had become also the most prominent contributor to the Zionist financial arm, the Jewish National Fund. Immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian withdrawal from the war the British, both in order to mobilize Jewish support behind the war effort and Zionist support behind Britain's imperial ambitions in the Arab East, issued on 2 November 1917 the Balfour Declaration which promised a "Jewish national home" in Palestine.

Prior to the smashing of the Ottoman Empire, no Palestinian nation existed as such, at least in the modern sense of a nation. Instead Arab nationalists living in Palestinian towns considered

themselves part of Syria and attended the Syrian National Congress of July 1919. On the basis of Wilson's fourteen points and promises made to the Arabs by both France and Britain this Congress proclaimed political independence for a united Syrian state (Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan) which was to be a constitutional monarchy ruled by Hussein's son, Faisal.

Thus the "promised land" was simultaneously promised to British imperialism, the Jews and the Arabs. The Sykes-Picot treaty was reaffirmed at the San Remo conference and implemented as French troops occupied Damascus chasing away "King" Faisal. The British gave Faisal the throne of Iraq as a consolation prize, severed Transjordan from Palestine and recognized Faisal's brother, Abdullah, as the Emir of Transjordan.

### Zionism and Colonialism

Prior to World War I Jewish colonization in Palestine was by religious communities which were hostile to political Zionism. Later colonization by Jewish entrepreneurs, who wished to colonize Palestine in order to exploit Arab labor in the tradition of the French colonization of Algeria and Tunisia, was sponsored by the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association. The PJCA was backed by the Rothschilds, was hostile to political Zionism and soon to come into conflict with the latter.

Zionism was motivated by a sophisticated and even "Marxist" understanding of the "Jewish question," recognizing Jews as a "people-class" whose economic function as merchants and money lenders had become antiquated. But it sought the solution to the "Jewish question" not from the assimilated Jew, Marx, but from the anti-Semite, Proudhon. The Jew was to be liberated from the stigma of the ghetto through the creation of his own ghetto-state. The transformation of the Jew from money lender and merchant to proletarian and farmer would come about in a racially-exclusionist closed economy.

Zionism went to Palestine under the slogans of "conquest of labor" and "conquest of land," well knowing that labor and land were to be conquered from the Arabs. As early as June 1895 Theodor Herzl wrote in his diary:

"The private lands in the territories granted us we must gradually take out of the hands of the owners. The poorer amongst the population we try to transfer quietly outside our borders by providing them with work in the transit countries, but in our country we deny

effects of the Zionist "conquest of labor" on the indigenous Palestinians were much more vicious and devastating than the role of the British in Rhodesia, the Portuguese in Angola or the French in Algeria, depriving them not only of national independence but, eventually, of any ties to social production whatsoever.

The so-called twin pillars of Zionism "socialism," the Histadruth and the kibbutz, were the pride of the "left" Zionists, the old Poale Zion, which at one time actually applied to the Comintern for membership, and the Hashomer Hatzair (Young Guard). However, these were the institutional embodiments of the reactionary racialist slogans, "conquest of labor" and "conquest of land." The Histadruth was founded in 1920 as the "General Confederation of Hebrew Workers in the Land of Israel" by 4,500 of the 5,000 Jewish workers in Palestine. At the time there were ten times as many Arab workers in Palestine but they were excluded from the Histadruth.

In fact, the Histadruth was not even created to defend the Palestinian Jewish proletariat, but to *destroy* the Palestinian Arab proletariat! Its first activities were the boycott of businesses (both Jewish- and Arab-owned) which hired Arab labor and the physical intimidation of Jews who shopped in the Arab marketplace and Arab workers who worked for Jews.

The kibbutz was originally set up to make the Jewish community agriculturally self-sufficient but increasingly it more closely resembled a U.S. Army fort in the "Wild West" than an agricultural settlement. As pointed out by Amos Perlmutter in his book, *Military and Politics in Israel*, the kibbutz provided the foundation for Israel's modern army and the kibbutzniks provided both the elite for the General Staff and the core of the Defense Ministry. The Haganah was originally the defense arm of the kibbutz, a kind of farmers' militia.

Prior to the 1948 war most of the land occupied by the kibbutz movement followed the dictum of Herzl and was purchased, generally from absentee landlords at "overvalued prices." The Jewish Agency, the shadow Jewish government set up under British mandate, stated before the Shaw Commission of 1929 that 90 percent of the lands purchased up to that time came from absentee landlords. While some of this land represented heretofore uncultivated desert and swampland, on much of it, especially in the coastal plain near Haifa, thousands of Arab tenants were evicted to make way for Jewish settlements.

On the one hand this created land speculation and inflation leading to the boom/bust of the 1925-27 period, and on the other hand it created a disenfranchised peasantry and lumpenproletariat in the cities. In the absence of a strong proletarian movement, or even a republican bourgeois nationalist movement, these declassed elements were easily incited by Moslem religious leaders like the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem into intercommunal strife against the Jewish communities. Thus the 1929 riots were not between the Palestinian Arab and Hebrew nationalities, but between Moslem and Orthodox Jewish communities. The precipitant to the 1929 riots was a struggle over, of all things, the old "Wailing Wall" in Jerusalem.

### Zionism and the Workers Movement

Where Arab and Jewish workers were forced to work together as on the docks of the port city of Haifa, intercommunal strife was held to a minimum, and Arab and Jewish workers often crossed racial/religious lines and gave a deaf ear to their respective

### Next Issue—

## THE 1948 WAR

them all work. Those with property will join us. The transfer of land and the displacement of the poor must be done gently and carefully. Let the landowners believe they are exploiting us by getting overvalued prices. But no lands shall be sold back to their owners."

—quoted from Theodor Herzl's *Selected Works* in "The Class Nature of Israel" by the Israeli Socialist Organization

This was an accurate prognosis of the next 55 years of Zionism in the Arab East except that the conquest was neither gentle nor peaceful, nor was the bulk of the land which constitutes the modern Israeli state "purchased," much less at "overvalued prices," but it was stolen through outright terror, intimidation and military force. Unlike classical colonialism and imperialism which established settler-colonies to exploit native labor, Zionism colonized in order to *displace* native labor. The



IMIG  
OR



Chaim Weizmann,  
head of the World  
Zionist Organiza-  
tion, in 1942.

clericalist-chauvinist "leaderships" in order to engage in common strike action. But the overall impact of Zionism, in collaboration with British imperialism, was to prevent the development of a united Arab-Hebrew working-class movement, but also to retard the development of a Palestinian proletariat or even a Palestinian bourgeoisie.

Arab Palestine was overwhelmingly rural consisting of poor peasantry or fellahin, a rich landlord class or effendis and a tiny middle class. The effendis were more often than not like the Mufti, Haj Amin el Hussein, also religious leaders, and were divided among themselves along family lines. Each family organized its own "political party." Thus the Mufti organized a "Palestine Arab Party"; another rich prominent effendi clan called the Nashashibis (traditional antagonists of the Husseinis) organized a "National Defense Party," etc. In pursuance of family vendettas they tried to play off the British and the Zionists, but were usually unsuccessful.

Another obstacle to Arab-Hebrew proletarian unity was the treacherous role of Palestinian Stalinism. In its early years the Palestine Communist Party (PCP) had a modest but real influence among Jewish workers. However, it was unable to build up an organization because it correctly told those Hebrew workers it won over to return to their countries of origin and join the revolutionary movement there. (A significant number of Comintern agents in inter-war Europe were former members of the PCP who had followed this advice. Among them was Leopold Trepper, head of the famous "Red Orchestra" Soviet intelligence network in World War II.)

The party from its inception recognized the need to reach the Arab workers and fellahin, but under Stalin's Comintern "Arabization" came to mean something else. During the 1929 riots the PCP played an essentially correct role, trying to quell the intercommunal strife, putting the blame on the mandate, defending the Jewish quarters and pointing to the situation in Haifa (where the most conscious workers, both Arab and Hebrew, refused to get caught up in the riots) as a model. However the Stalinist denounced the role of the PCP in the 1929 riots and demanded a purge of all party members who did not "accept the view that the August uprising was the result of the radicalization of the masses."

This was obviously not popular with the Hebrew workers so the PCP began to publish separate propaganda. For the Hebrew workers they stressed Arab-Hebrew class unity, and to the Arab worker the PCP essentially became a more radical mouthpiece of the Mufti. This laid the basis for the later split in the party into its Jewish and Arab components, the former be-

coming pro-Zionist, the latter pro-Arab nationalist. Such is the logic of Stalinism and nationalism.

### Large-Scale Jewish Immigration

Between 1919 and 1931 some 117,000 Jews immigrated to Palestine. But the harsh life, the hostile environment, the racial/religious tensions, the unemployment and economic crisis of the late 1920's, caused many to leave after a short stay. Between 1924 and 1931, for every 100 immigrants who arrived, 29 departed. By 1931 the Jewish population was 175,000 out of a total population of 1,036,000 or 17.7 percent.

Without Hitler's victory in 1933 and the subsequent closing of all borders to Jewish immigration—especially those of the U.S., Britain and the Soviet Union, where Eastern and Central European Jewry would have been most assimilable—Zionism would never have become a mass movement and the "Jewish National Home" in Palestine would never have become a state. The Jewish Agency which purported to represent all Jews, not just the Jews in Israel, did not lobby for opening the borders of the U.S., Britain and the USSR to Jewish immigration. Quite the opposite, it wanted "its" Jews for colonization to Palestine. And this is not only where Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin wanted them, but also Hitler.

Before World War II the Jewish Agency and the Nazis came to a meeting of minds on how Eastern and Central Europe were to "get rid of their Jews." The most "responsible," "respected," "prominent" Zionists are only too willing to brag about their collaboration with the Nazis to "save" a few thousand Jews with enough money and the right connections while millions went to the gas chambers. For example, the leading British Zionist Jon Kimche and his brother David (who joined the Israeli diplomatic corps after "independence") co-authored a book entitled *The Secret Roads: The "Illegal" Migration of a People, 1938-1948* (London, 1954) from which it is worth quoting extensively:

"...the only road to large-scale emigration from Austria led through the Gestapo Headquarters and the S.S.

Office for Jewish Affairs for which the sumptuous mansion of Baron Rothschild had been requisitioned. There in charge of the 'Central Bureau for Jewish Emigration' sat Captain Carol Adolph Eichmann.

"Bar-Gilad [a kabbutz leader] explained that he wanted permission to establish pioneer training camps to train young people for work in Palestine and to arrange for their emigration as quickly as conditions permitted. Bar-Gilad could not know that the man he was talking to was the prime mover behind the plan of 'Jewish emigration for money.' Eichmann's Central Bureau was designed originally for this very purpose. It would receive all Jewish applications for permission to leave Greater Germany. For all those who could pay for the services—and his charges were adjusted to the anxiety of his well-to-do Jews—Eichmann would sweep aside bureaucratic formalities and delays and issue passports and visas and provide the passage. ... It was a lucrative business for the Gestapo.

"...[Eichmann] supplied the farms and farm equipment. On one occasion he expelled a group of nuns from a convent to provide a training farm for young Jews. By the end of 1938 about a thousand young Jews were training in these Nazi-provided camps."

The sense of arrogance and Realpolitik, the supreme qualities of the Zionist self-image of the "new, tough soldier-Jew" which pervades this book were certainly needed "virtues" for members of a Zionist intelligentsia who were soon to become apologists for "their state" born from the cadavers of six million Jews and from the wretched multitude of one million Arab refugees.

### The Second World War

Although the leadership of the 1936-39 Arab revolt was clericalist and middle class, nonetheless it was a genuine expression of the Palestinian



Henryk Erlich, leader of the Bund

democratic aspirations. The three demands raised by the revolt were an end to Jewish immigration, the end of land sales to Jews and self-government. The Zionists had always opposed self-government in Palestine for they realized a genuinely democratic regime would place control of immigration in the hands of the Arab majority. The 1936-39 revolt was primarily launched against the British and not against the Jewish communities. Nonetheless, the Zionists were only too willing to aid the British in order to maintain the protection of the mandate. During this period the Zionists strengthened their economy during the extended Arab un-

rest. (The revolt started with a middle-class-led shutdown of Arab businesses in protest against Britain's pro-Jewish policies. This was later followed by guerrilla warfare waged by Arab workers and fellahin.) They also strengthened their army, the Haganah, under the protection of the British in order to collaborate with the British police actions against the Arabs. The Haganah, for example, was assigned by the mandate authorities to guard British pipelines. The strike could not have been broken and the revolt suppressed without the collaboration of the Zionists.

Twenty years of British imperialism in the Near East had, on the eve of World War II, turned many Arab governments pro-Axis. In order to shore up their shaky Arab support the British were quite willing to jilt their faithful Zionist servants. In 1939 they issued another "White Paper" which restricted Jewish immigration to 75,000 for the next five years and thereafter made it conditional on the consent of the Arab majority. Further, the Jews from European displaced persons camps, who had been promised a "haven" in Palestine, were not only surrounded by hostile British forces, pro-Axis Arab governments and coups, but Palestine itself was threatened with German occupation.

At the end of the second imperialist war, Britain, while militarily "victorious," was in ruins and bled white. A Labour government headed by Atlee was swept into power in the General Elections of 1945, assigned by the British bourgeoisie with the thankless task of trying to put back the pieces of the British Empire with as little dismantling as possible. Although the Labor Party was in the same "International" as the Zionist "socialists" and for 11 past conferences had voted for Jewish statehood, nonetheless Palestine was the British "fallback" position in the Arab East, and Atlee and his Foreign Secretary Bevin were determined to hold on with bulldog determination.

Bevin ordered the commandeering of wretched vessels like the *Exodus*, 1947 of Zionist moviemaking legend, whose overcrowded "cargo" were the desperate survivors of German concentration camps, and this "cargo" either shipped back to Germany or "stored" in specially prepared concentration camps on Cyprus. At the June 1946 annual Labour Party conference, its first since the electoral victory of the previous year, Bevin had a ready response to the waves of vociferous and self-righteous indignation that swept across the Atlantic from the U.S. The U.S. wanted the Jews in Palestine "because they did not want them in New York." This was, of course, true but equally hypocritical in the mouth of Bevin, for the Labour Government did not want the Jews in London either. At this conference Bevin made it quite clear why he also did not want to admit the remaining 100,000 Jews in displaced persons camps to Palestine: it would cost Britain another army division and 200 million pounds. As Sir John Glubb put it, in his *Soldier With the Arabs* (London, 1957): "It was a question of how many divisions of troops would have been necessary to fight a three-cornered civil war against Jews and Arabs simultaneously."

Just as the U.S. rushed into to replace the crumbling empires of the British and French in Asia and the Arab East, so the center of imperialist patronage for Zionism switched from London to

continued on page 11

### Debate

## The Coup in Chile

Speakers from:

SPARTACIST LEAGUE  
COMMUNIST PARTY  
NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

Friday, November 30  
7:30 p.m.  
1100 Broadway

New Orleans

## Which Way Forward for the Women's Liberation Movement?

Speaker: SUE MCKINLEY, RCY National Committee

Tuesday, November 27  
7:30 p.m.  
Hillberry A, U.C.B.  
Wayne State University

DETROIT

Wednesday, December 5  
7:30 p.m.  
Michigan Union—Anderson Room A  
University of Michigan

ANN ARBOR



## British Labour Party Adopts "Socialist" Program:

# A Left Face for Labourism

LONDON—The annual conference of the British Labour Party (BLP) was held in October amid widespread publicity of a radical left turn. The prestigious conservative journal *The Economist* (29 October) concluded that even if the Labour left was checked, "Mr. Wilson and his parliamentary colleagues will be saddled with the most rigidly old-fashioned, left-wing programme that the Labour Party has ever put before the electorate. They will be committed, if they win the next election, to such widespread nationalisation and state intervention as to make the British economy and society the most controlled of all major industrial countries outside the communist system." The liberal newspaper *The Guardian* (3 October) claimed that the Labour Party had adopted the "most radically socialist election programme for sweeping new extensions of public ownership in its 70-year history," one that in effect fell "little short of an industrial and financial revolution." Likewise, Harold Wilson described the program as "socialist," the official BLP paper announced that "the Labour Party has united around the most radical programme in its recent history" (*Labour Weekly*, 5 October), and Michael Foot, M.P., perennial leader of the Labour-left Tribune group cheered "the finest socialist programme I have seen in my lifetime." *The Tribune*, (5 October) for its part, proudly trumpeted in a front-page headline, "We've kept the Red Flag flying here!"

### Wilson and Jones Fudge the Nationalization Issue

The sound and the fury centered around the BLP National Executive Committee's document, *Labour's Programme for Britain*, which was put out last May. Amid the usual rhetoric about the BLP being a "democratic socialist party" and about how "the economy is completely dominated by a hundred or so giant companies," the document had the temerity to concretely project that "some twenty-five of our largest manufacturers... would be required [to be nationalized], very early in the life of the [National Enterprise] Board." This suggested a commitment to nationalize, not bankrupt or failing industries as previous Labour governments have, but the highly profitable core of British capitalism, companies like British Petroleum, Imperial Chemical, Royal Dutch Shell, Leyland and Ford.

There were a number of factors leading the BLP's Executive to come out with a program which under present British conditions could only create economic and political chaos as in Allende's Chile. The BLP leadership, of course, had no intention of ever carrying out such a program, much less the social revolution which would be necessary to consolidate it. Rather, the most fundamental reason for its current "leftist" phrasemongering has been the gradual radicalization of the working class as both Labour and Tory governments have attempted to get Britain out of its decade-long economic stagnation through attacks on the trade unions. This radicalization has manifested itself primarily by leftward motion in the unions and, in a weaker way, in the Labour Party. (Thus, while the 1972 Trades Union Congress voted to oppose entry into the Common Market on principle, the Labour Party conference merely voted to re-negotiate the entry agreement.)

A second factor was the belief that, given the Tories' widespread unpopularity, Labour could not lose the next election, so that a program able to satisfy Labour's socialist constituency would not be damaging electorally. (Since May the electoral advantage of

Labour has eroded, primarily because of the unexpected gains of the Liberal Party.) Another important reason for the "radical" nationalization stance has been the union bureaucracy's desire to deflect industrial conflict against the Heath government onto "the parliamentary road to socialism."

The use of nationalization as a sop to the left has a certain history in the BLP. For example, in the early days of the Wilson government (1965) the renationalization of steel was a genuflection to socialist principle in the context of generally right-wing policies centering on state wage control. Another indication that the Labour leadership intends this program only as a sop to its constituency, rather than as a call to militant class struggle, is the determined efforts by the union leadership to maintain "labor peace." Strikes have fallen to their lowest level since Heath took office, with a drop of 77 percent since the wage freeze began (*Economist*, 6 October 1973). (However, the lengthy electricians' strike at British Chrysler this fall and the current miners' strike threaten to upset this pattern.) Shortly after the BLP conference, the Heath government announced its "flexible" Phase III which allows for a 7 percent basic wage increase; the trade-union leaders have reacted by making some militant noises, but generally acquiescing to it.

Harold Wilson threatened to veto the 25-companies commitment, stating that it was "inconceivable that the party or its leader would go into a general election on this proposal, nor could any incoming Labour government be so committed." After an attempted compromise was rejected by the BLP Executive in late September, it appeared that the 25-companies issue would convulse the BLP conference creating a deep left-right schism.

Had the conference voted to endorse the 25-companies proposal it would have created a situation similar to that in 1959 when the party conference voted for unilateral nuclear disarmament and the Gaitskell parliamentary leadership had to openly flout the will of the "highest" party body. The repetition of such a situation would have done considerable damage to the illusion that the British Labour Party is a democratic organization. This is important since the widespread and deeply held belief that the BLP is internally democratic and thus responsive to its working-class base is a decisive factor in keeping the socialist aspirations of the British working class within the framework of reformist politics.

This dangerous situation for the Labour bureaucracy and British capitalism was averted when one of the powers in the Labour "left," Jack Jones, head of Britain's largest union, the Transport and General Workers (TGWU), defected to Wilson. Since all members of British unions are automatically members of the BLP, the union bureaucracy, with its bloc vote, holds the voting power at party conferences. (And despite occasional appearances and widespread illusions to the contrary, the union bureaucracy wields the real power as the BLP is totally financially dependent on the unions.)

With Jones' support the conference passed all kinds of motions for nationalization, but by a vote of 3.9 million to 2.2 million rejected "the concept of a shopping list of industries and companies for social ownership." This was the death of the 25-companies proposals. The real politics of the trade-union "left" leaders, like Hugh Scanlon, and the real weakness of the socialist forces in the Labour Party were revealed in a motion to nationalize 250 major companies plus the banks, finance, real estate companies, etc. without compensa-

tion; it failed 5.6 million to 290,000!

When the smokescreen created by Wilson and Jones' rhetoric had cleared away, the newly "radicalized" BLP was left with a stated commitment to nationalize (with compensation) shipbuilding, the docks, the aircraft and machine tool industries, all of which are already heavily subsidized or failing, and to nationalize the North Sea oil and gas reserves (which, since it means cheaper fuel, may be supported by sections of British industrial capital). Such a program of nationalizations obviously does not mean socialism, but neither is it purely token.

The question of nationalization could thus become a highly explosive issue if Labour comes to power. On the one hand, the Labour Party's working-class base expects even more in the way of public ownership. On the other hand, the right wing of the BLP, under the leadership of prominent M.P.s such as Roy Jenkins, is well organized, willing and able to break party discipline (they did it during the Common Market debate last year), and controls about one-quarter of the Labour parliamentary delegation; it can thus easily block any scheme for widespread nationalizations. Therefore, elements of the parliamentary Labour Party might oppose even the present limited program in the event of a Labour government.

The other issue on which it was expected that major differences might emerge was the Common Market. The Wilson leadership feared that the anti-Market left might provoke the pro-Market right into open protest. As it was, the BLP reaffirmed its policy of re-negotiation and pledged to submit the issue to the electorate. A resolution stating that the Common Market was set up to promote capitalist interests and further that the "fight for a socialist Britain is part of the fight for a united socialist Europe" was put forward. But it did not even concretely call for withdrawal and was narrowly defeated. To make matters worse, much of the opposition to the Common Market was couched in chauvinist terms. Jack Jones said, "Those who threatened our lives in the last war should not be allowed to determine our future," and Michael Foot simply called for the Labour Party to "appeal to the greatness of the English people!"

Because a major dispute was averted over the nationalization question, a confrontation over the powers and independence of the parliamentary Labour Party did not materialize. And here again the "lefts" showed they can be depended on to defend the present anti-democratic structure. In a private session Michael Foot made a strong plea in defense of the prerogatives of the right-wing M.P.s. A resolution that the Labour parliamentarians must accept conference decisions as party policy was referred back to the National Executive for consideration. What this meant was made clear by right-wing M.P. John Cronin at the end of the conference when he attacked the "extreme and unrealistic" decisions of the conference which he stated would never be implemented since they would be "buried by Labour Cabinets and Labour MP's who are accustomed to commonsense decisions and political realities" (*Guardian*, 6 October).

### All Join Hands to Re-Elect Wilson

For a conference proclaimed as marking a sharp left turn, it was surprisingly free of factionalism. Instead, the dominant theme was the need for unity to achieve an electoral victory. Wilson articulated the real consensus when he stated:

"We are debating not what we would

like to do if we had political power. We are debating what we must do to turn our debates into the reality of political power. Otherwise this party will be reduced for years to the frustrations of parliamentary opposition...."

It was the upcoming election, in which a Labour victory cannot now be taken for granted, which conditioned the unexpected self-restraint of the "left." Michael Foot, leader of the left-wing Bevanite faction, played a key role with Jones in the nationalization compromise, justifying this beforehand by declaring himself against "old-fashioned fundamentalist ideas" (*Tribune*, 8 June 1973). Jones coined a new political axiom that the party should not make promises it could not keep in one term of office.

Similarly, Eric Heffer, an ex-red and now a prominent left-Labour M.P., limited himself to observing that "in some respects" Wilson's speech and



Hugh Scanlon

policy could have gone a "little further" and that he was "a little unhappy" with Wilson's reference to the constitutional rights of the shadow cabinet. Anthony Wedgewood-Benn, M.P., the left leader most closely associated with the 25-companies proposal, delivered the National Executive recommendation against the resolution for sweeping nationalizations and attempted to divert attention from the concrete nationalization proposals by railing against the evils of multi-national corporations.

Just as the left attempted to conciliate the party center, so did the right. In this "most left-wing" of BLP conferences the Labour right did not revolt or threaten to split, but jumped on the bandwagon. The leader of the right, Roy Jenkins, who broke party discipline to vote with the Tories for entry into the Common Market, declared himself a "radical," albeit "a responsible and reasonable" one.

On balance, the BLP leadership, which runs from Foot and Jones on the left to Jenkins on the right, successfully walked a tight-rope between placating the increased radicalization of its base through largely ideological concessions, and of convincing the bourgeoisie that it remains a responsible reformist party to be trusted with administering the state. However, the fundamental contradiction between the interests and demands of its base and the tasks it must accomplish for the capitalists, a contradiction which was only patched over by the compromises at the conference, can produce convulsive factional struggles in the Labour Party in this period.

### British "Trotskyism" Faces Left Labourism

Two ostensibly Trotskyist groups in Britain, those around the papers the *Militant* and the *Chartist*, exist essen-



tially as organic factions within the Labour Party and regard the task of building a revolutionary workers party essentially as one of pressure to transform the BLP into a revolutionary organization. The *Militant* group controls the Labour Party Young Socialists and, with the absorption of the Tribunites into the Wilson regime, is becoming something of the official left opposition.

The *Militant* group is characterized by a pollyanna-like belief in the ever-deepening leftward movement of the BLP. Despite the fact that the "left" leaders clearly sold out on all major issues, the *Militant* (5 October) rejoiced, "the Labour Party is once again aware of its working class nature. It is a class party.... the ranks are moving the leadership to the left." Reading *Militant* accounts of the conference, one would never know that Wilson, with the connivance of the "left," had scotched the 25-companies proposal.

For the *Militant*, the Labour Party by definition never moves to the right. At the 1972 BLP conference, the *Militant*-supported Shipley amendment calling for massive nationalizations was actually passed, partly because the bureaucracy was being careless about votes with the elections still a way off. At the recent conference, however, a similar *Militant* resolution was overwhelmingly defeated. Commenting on this turnabout, the *Militant* (12 October) judged, "the Labour Party has not taken a step backward."

The *Militant* group's illusions of gaining power in the BLP rest on its base in the constituency parties, which are composed of individual members. On the key nationalization vote all of the *Militant* group's support came from the constituency parties, while the trade-union delegations buried it, demonstrating for the millionth time that the BLP is controlled by the trade-union bureaucracy. Properly carried out, entry work in the constituency parties could be a useful means of projecting revolutionary politics. However, to believe that one is waging a struggle for power in the constituency parties is childish. Indeed, the union bureaucracy finds the constituency parties a convenient playground for the naive "revolutionary left."

At present, while the Labour Party receives at least 80 percent of the British working-class vote, and in the absence of any alternative mass workers party, one of the key means for transforming a Trotskyist propaganda nucleus into a revolutionary workers party (and winning the leadership of sections of the class in struggle) will be through entry work inside the BLP. The purpose of such entry is not to transform the BLP gradually into a revolutionary party by supporting endless successions of left oppositions. Rather, in this period it is to aid in recruiting and developing a hardened communist cadre through struggle against the Labourite leadership, both the Tribunites, Wilsonites and Jenkinsites. One of the most promising areas for such work at present is in Labour youth organizations. But the decisive conflict in the Labour Party will occur in the unions, through a struggle to oust the bureaucracy and replace it with communist leadership. And while it is important even for a small propaganda group to exploit Labour's contradictions by working inside the BLP, especially now when it is putting on leftist airs to appease its electoral base, to center activity on this single arena would be deforming a revolutionary organization.

The small Revolutionary Communist League (RCL), which publishes the *Chartist*, sees itself as the left wing of the *Militant* tendency in the Labour Party. It denies that the BLP is a social-democratic party, describing it as belonging to the category of "the mass, amorphous, 'united front' movements and bodies of the working class (which are in themselves politically colourless)..." (*Chartist*, August 1973). Thus, the RCL views the Labour Party as a politically neutral body (which occasionally administers state power) whose reformist leadership can be simply displaced, denying the need to split the BLP, to create

a fundamentally different type of party, both programmatically and organizationally.

In its current agitation the RCL (as well as the *Militant*) has laid great stress on the Chilean events and the similar dangers facing the next Labour government: "The terrible defeat in Chile hung over all of the debates at the conference" (*Chartist*, 13 October 1973). In one sense, of course, it is always in order to call for the arming of the labor movement. However, to project the Chilean situation onto the next Labour government suggests that Wilson will actually carry out massive nationalizations provoking capitalist economic sabotage and counter-revolutionary violence. This is nonsense. A second Wilson government will pursue policies similar to that of the first Wilson government which, one should recall, (after re-nationalizing the steel industry) was mainly called on to discipline the unions through a "national incomes policy"—i.e., state wage controls. Unfortunately, it appears that the *Militant* and *Chartist* groups actually believe that the next Labour government will deliberately disrupt the orderly functioning of British capitalism.

The RCL has perverted the correct position that revolutionaries must have an orientation toward the mass organizations of the working class into a position that the road to proletarian revolution must go through the BLP and its transformation into a soviet. It is certainly possible that in a revolutionary situation the organs of dual power may arise out of local Labour Party bodies, but to suggest that this is inevitable is to adapt to the present consciousness and organization of the class.

This is the same sort of error made by Andrés Nin, the leader of the Spanish Trotskyists in the early 1930's, who argued that because of their large size and relatively militant leadership, in Spain the trade unions would take the place of soviets. What this position amounted to in practice was revealed at the height of the civil war, when Nin's centrist POUM repeatedly capitulated to the anarchist leaders of the CNT labor federation. At the heart of this position is the substitution of organizational amalgams for political leadership. This is made clear in the RCL's document, *The Socialist Charter: A Programme for the Labour Party*, where it states that the "new Fourth International" will be based on the trade unions, labor and socialist organizations and the "socialist" states!

If the internal struggles of the Labour Party are pregnant with revolution for the *Militant* and *Chartist* groups, they are irrelevant for two other ostensibly revolutionary British organizations, the International Socialists (IS) and Gerry Healy's Socialist Labour League (SLL), recently metamorphosed into the "Worker. Revolutionary Party." Tony Cliff's IS is affiliated with and similar to its American namesake and is likewise a left social-democratic group currently on a syndicalist jag. The IS paper, *Socialist Worker*, devoted a few brief, condescending articles on the BLP conference, the substance of which was that it was not important. The theme of these articles is captured in the final sentence of one of them (*Socialist Worker*, 6 October 1973): "The energy spent in trying to convince Harold would be more profitably spent in fighting with the working class in its everyday struggles." In other words, the leadership of its mass party, supported by the trade unions, should be a matter of indifference to the British working class. Moreover, the IS agrees with Harold Wilson that, regardless of the attitude of the ranks, he runs the Labour Party and revolutionists should accept that. The ho-hum reaction of the IS to the BLP conference may reflect something more. The main issue at this conference was nationalization. Since the IS believes in the possibility of a completely collectivized capitalist society, it may regard the nationalization dispute in the BLP as an *inter-bourgeois* conflict in which the working class should be neutral.



"Left" union bureaucrat Jack Jones opposed nationalizing key monopolies.

During the period of the BLP conference, the SLL was feverishly preparing to announce itself as "the revolutionary party." The process consists primarily in the recruitment of raw youth by methods pioneered by P.T. Barnum and refined by the Maharaj Ji. The coverage given the BLP conference in *Workers Press* was often dwarfed by pictures of the SLL's rock groups and dramatic skits, its main methods of building "the revolutionary party." Countering the bourgeois press' claim that reds were playing an important role in the Labour conference, *Workers Press* (5 October) noted sarcastically, "our man at the conference combed the delegations searching for a Marxist, but has so far not encountered a single one. Nor do we expect him to." After years of banner headlines proclaiming "Make the Lefts Fight!" and projecting a refurbished Bevanite "Labour left," the Healyites have now decided that the BLP can simply be written off:

"It [this Labour Party conference] marks the total bankruptcy of social democracy in Britain. It means the end of the role of the 'left' in the workers movement. [!]"

"From now on, the fight for socialist policies can only be based on the growing strength of the Revolutionary Party and the Workers Press."

—*Workers Press*, 6 October

Thus the SLL brags that it has nothing to do with the internal life and struggles of the mass party of the organized working class in Britain, in effect asserting that a revolutionary party can be built completely independent of the real political motion of the class.

Last but not least is the International Marxist Group (IMG), British section of the revisionist United Secretariat (USec). For the past period the IMG has been the most "revolutionary" tendency within the USec, tending toward workerist sectarianism; it refused to give critical electoral support, much less do entry work in, the "bourgeois" Labour Party. Quite recently it has dawned on the IMG that social-democratic parties in Britain and elsewhere are moving to the left. As an example of this, the IMG points to the French "Union of the Left" where the Socialist Party united with the Stalinist Communist Party (the mass party of the French industrial proletariat). In reality, the "Union of the Left" was based on an explicitly capitalist program designed to attract the liberal wing of the French bourgeoisie, which was duly

represented by the left Radicals. Even more inspiring to the IMG than the "Union of the Left" is the fact that French SP leader Mitterand defended the rights of the Ligue Communiste and even shook Alain Krivine's hand.

Seeking to replicate these French triumphs in Britain, IMG has called for a broad front against the Tories:

"... we propose the formation in every area of a united body of all socialists, trade union and political organizations, open to all those who are prepared to struggle against the Tory government and its policies."

—*Red Weekly*, 31 August 1973

Perhaps without fully realizing it, the IMG is here calling for a popular front with that genuine and increasingly important bourgeois party, the *Liberals*, who clearly meet the criterion of opposing the Tory government. Such are the subtle ways of drifting into class collaborationism. Especially in the present context, the IMG's hoped-for anti-Tory front can hardly mean anything but the historic *bête noire* of the British labor movement, a Lib-Lab coalition.

#### A Lib-Lab Coalition?

Because of the betrayal of Ramsey MacDonald in the National Government in 1931 the BLP has been one of the few social-democratic parties with a strong policy against coalition governments with openly bourgeois parties. There are now, however, strong reasons why this tradition may be broken, producing a Liberal-Labour government. One is that the Labour leadership would very much like to escape responsibility for the "radical" party programme without openly opposing and defying it. Wilson would like to be able to say, "I, of course, favor nationalizing the 'commanding heights of the economy,' but our coalition partners would never go along." Secondly, the Liberals may well hold the parliamentary balance of power, and the Labour leadership is nothing if not hungry for office.

The real possibility of a coalition with the Liberals (explicitly pro private enterprise and Common Market) when the Labour Party is supposedly moving left reveals the fundamental contradictions within the Labour Party. One is that the Labour leadership is consciously committed to maintaining bourgeois society and does not just

continued on page 11



# Cynics Who Scorn Trotskyism

can with a perfectly straight face call upon the arch-reactionary George Meany to form a labor party. You see, there is no longer any basis for reformism—now it has directly revolutionary implications! Moreover, the argument that if trade-union demands cannot be objectively realized they are necessarily revolutionary can lead to dangerous utopian illusions. Why not assert that pacifism and parliamentarianism are objectively revolutionary since it is not possible to end war through disarmament or overthrow capitalism through electoral means?

It is, therefore, hardly surprising that Peter Jeffries should leap to the defense of "The Crisis" in so belligerent a manner. Stripped of the objective nature of "The Crisis," the Healyite opportunists would simply be naked.

## What Type of Crisis?

Since Healy/Wohlforth are purposefully vague about the meaning of the term "crisis," a few questions are in order. By capitalism's crisis, Comrade Jeffries, do you mean the historical crisis of the entire capitalist order? Or are you referring to one of the cyclical crises of capitalism? Or don't you make any distinction between these two types of crisis? In any case, our position is in essence that of Trotsky:

"However, the cyclical oscillations are inevitable, and, with capitalism in decline, they will continue as long as capitalism exists. And capitalism will continue until the proletarian revolution is achieved. This is the only correct answer to the question: 'Is this the final crisis of capitalism?'"

—"Once Again, Whither France?"

Jeffries' article actually reaffirms one of our central accusations—that for the Healyites the term "economic crisis" has no objective criteria, but is simply whatever and whenever they say it is. Jeffries writes: "Economic crises" cannot be measured in terms of production indices. This is the shallow method of the capitalist commentator—and one shared by Robertson and his group."

We assert that the Marxian concept of economic crisis refers precisely to a phase in the industrial cycle when expanding production turns to contraction with its attendant effects on prices, circulation and employment. "The reverse is true in a period of crisis. Circulation No. 1 contracts, prices fall, similarly wages, the number of employed laborers is reduced, the mass of transactions decreases" (*Capital*, Vol. III, Ch. 28). Whatever Jeffries means by the term "economic crisis" (in reality everything and nothing), Marx clearly defined it in terms of quantitative indices. But the high priests of the IC never soil their hands by coming into contact with the raw data of the gross material world!

Having determined the essence of the SL's position, Jeffries proceeds to demonstrate the Spartacist League's "denial of the nature of the epoch in which we live as one of the decline and breakup of world capitalism...." He accomplishes this "demonstration" by grossly misquoting us. According to Jeffries:

"This is made explicit towards the end of his article when he tries to explain why capitalism did not restore the pre-1914 Gold Standard [Jeffries stands in such awe of these words that he feels compelled to capitalize them] after the end of World War II.

"That this did not occur after World War II was the result of the absolute economic and political hegemony of the U.S. in the capitalist world, a condition which lasted until the late 1960's," says 'Workers Vanguard.'

"What the Spartacists 'miss out' is that the restoration of the 1914 Gold Standard was made impossible by the historic decline of capitalism as a world system, seen above all in the loss of Russia, Eastern Europe and soon China. It was this, and not the power of US capital, which precluded a restoration of the relations of 19th century capitalism.

But like all petty-bourgeois revisionists, Robertson can see only the strength of American capitalism and not its contradictions."

Jeffries' quote is taken completely out of context, rendering it utterly fraudulent. Here is the paragraph from which this mendacious quack so cleverly extracted his single sentence:

"After World War I, the qualitatively greater instability in the world economy, the strengthening of the labor movement and development of powerful revolutionary proletarian tendencies made domestic deflation to correct a balance of payments deficit too politically dangerous.... After World War I, the conflicts between the national bourgeoisies produced international financial anarchy because this condition enabled a national bourgeoisie to maintain or increase its share of world trade and capital at the expense of other nations through permanent borrowing, competitive devaluation and direct control over foreign exchange transactions. That this did not occur after World War II was the result of the absolute economic and political hegemony of the U.S. in the capitalist world, a condition which lasted until the late 1960's.... The endless crises of international finance are arenas of

struggle between the imperialist powers over markets and spheres of exploitation. The decisive arena is war."

The rest of Part I of "Cynics Who Scorn The Crisis" is simply a plodding struggle against this tottering straw man set up by Jeffries.

The question arises as to why Peter Jeffries is so dishonest as to distort our position in such a crude manner. Evidently, he feels free to ascribe the most fantastic positions to us, confident that the great majority of the readers of *Workers Press* will have no opportunity to read "Healy/Wohlforth and 'The Crisis'" in *Workers Vanguard*. Why not, Comrade Jeffries, assert that the Spartacist League is composed of strange green creatures who are agents of the Milkado? The method of the lie is not the method of Marxists, but the method of the bureaucratic usurpers of the October Revolution. By stooping to such methods you only indicate again the depth of the political degeneration of yourself and of the IC.

## Monetarism and Crisis-Mongering

But finally, after all the lies and straw men, Jeffries gets around to defending the Healyite holy grail, "The Crisis," from the cynics, scoffers and scorners. It is a lie, he says, to accuse the IC of having a monetarist conception of the economic crisis:

"But we never said that this crisis was purely a monetary crisis. And Robertson can quote nothing from our many published statements which in any way give this impression. For us the monetary crisis was [sic] an acute expression of the capitalist crisis, the crisis of capital accumulation, the content of which is, of course, the contradiction between the development of the productive forces and the restrictions imposed on this development under imperialism by the system of production for profit."

Of course, no one can accuse Comrade Jeffries of saying that this crisis, "The Crisis," is purely monetary. Quite the contrary! Everything is lumped into one big super-crisis. However, readers of the *Workers Press* and *Bulletin* must be shocked by Jeffries' assertion that the IC merely regards the devaluation of the dollar as an "expression" among many other expressions of the contradiction of capitalism as a productive system. Why, then, is the definitive IC work on "the post-war economic crisis" entitled *The Dollar Crisis*? Why, then, does this same work state that the gold convertibility of the dollar caused the post-war "boom"?

"The fact that after the Bretton Woods 1944 conference it [the ruling class] was forced to establish a series of agencies through which the economy was artificially stimulated by means of inflation was its recognition that the working class was too strong to be dealt with at that stage."

Why, then, is the "greatest crisis ever" of capitalism projected because "nothing" can replace the dollar as an international medium of exchange:

"In no way could the implications of the crisis after August 1971 be likened to those of 1931. Despite the depth of the earlier crisis, it was one in which the world's major trading currency, sterling was replaced by another currency, the dollar. The blunt fact today is nothing can replace the dollar."

—"Development of the Post-War Economic Crisis," *Workers Press*, 24 February 1973

No, no one could possibly have the impression that "The Crisis" was rooted in the monetary system—unless he read the IC press!

## Crisis Mongers Deny Social Chauvinism

Jeffries' polemic is as significant for what it does not deal with as for what it does. A central theme of our article was that the IC analysis denied that the economic contradictions of capitalism lead to inter-imperialist conflict with attempts by the national ruling classes to line up the labor movement behind them on the basis of social chauvinism:

"Despite its lip service to Lenin's 'Imperialism,' the SL negates the Leninist-Trotskyist view of contemporary capitalism. Written during World War I, 'Imperialism' has two major themes. The first is that a decaying world economy intensifies inter-imperialist conflicts leading to a war over the division of world markets and spheres of exploitation. The second is that labor reformism necessarily leads to social-patriotic support for one's own imperialist bourgeoisie. In contrast to Lenin, the IC ignores the question of imperialist war and denies the possibility of labor reformism, even in its virulent social-chauvinist form."

It is most interesting that Jeffries' reply has nothing to say on these questions.

To summarize, the main purpose of the IC's concept of "The Crisis" is to assert that conventional trade-union struggles have become inherently revolutionary and the labor bureaucracy objectively revolutionary. The IC definition of an economic crisis is based on no objective criteria, but is completely subjective and arbitrary. The IC analysis is obscurantist monetarism completely at odds with Marx's analysis of circulation. And the IC in effect denies that the contradictions of capitalism as a productive system generate inter-imperialist conflict and war, giving rise to social-chauvinism as one of the most fundamental obstacles to revolutionary socialism within the working-class movement. Healy/Wohlforth capitulate to this as they consistently do to sundry other manifestations of reformism and bourgeois consciousness in the proletariat. ■

Continued from page 12

# 1199 Leadership Bows to Nixon

Nixon at Saturday peace rallies, they let pass the opportunity to generalize support for this strike by spearheading a political strike to smash the wage controls and oust Nixon at a time when both are highly vulnerable. When the bourgeoisie screams about "striking against the public" and causing increases in hospital rates, a militant union leadership would have responded by demanding municipalization of the "voluntary" (they are in fact heavily subsidized by the city) hospitals under workers control and free hospital and medical care for all. Davis, however, has given backhanded support to victimization of the working people by exorbitant medical costs, simply demanding more "equitable" subsidies and more community and labor representation on hospital boards.

## Stalinists Apologize for Sellout

The foremost apologist on the left for Davis, who has a well-known Stalinist past, was the Communist Party. From the beginning to the end of the strike it uncritically reported every bombastic assertion of the union leadership. The November 7 *Daily World*: "Local 1199 has made it clear that it will not back down on its demand for payment of the full increase." After the strike's conclusion, November 13, the *Daily World* cynically ran the following headline: "Hospital Strikers Win 6% Hike"! The CP is indeed driven to

the most contorted gymnastics in order to maintain the illusions of workers in the "progressive" wing of the bureaucracy.

The political subordination of these progressive bureaucrats to the bourgeoisie has never been clearer. For all their ostensible "anti-Nixon" posturing, these liberals differ not one whit from Meany and Co. in their fundamental response to the Nixon regime. During the week of the hospital strike, the CP advertised various rallies to impeach Nixon to be addressed by such bourgeois politicians as Abzug, Allard Lowenstein, Sidney Von Luther, etc. At the same time they openly collaborated with Davis' refusal to even hint at the need for a political strike to smash the wage controls and oust Nixon.

The trade-union bureaucracy has in fact been one of the most solid supports for the Nixon government. When even *Time* magazine has deserted the Nixon camp, the CP calls for impotent Saturday rallies that only tailend the parliamentary maneuverings of the bourgeoisie. The 1199 strike, occurring at the time of several other strikes in NYC, presented a real opportunity for the labor movement to launch its own offensive against Nixon and the capitalist policies he stands for. However, such a struggle would have clearly exceeded the bounds of labor respectability, demonstrating in action the need for labor to build its own party and threatening the bureaucracy's political ties with the bourgeoisie. ■



SL/RCY support hospital strike



Continued from page 3

# Lame Brains in Turbulent Waters

tell-tale sign of dissension in the CP ranks around the CP's pop-front strategy in Chile and elsewhere, and Winston was attempting to double-talk his way around it. Again, the way his remarks were received (quietly, almost sullenly) by the CP/YWLL [Young Workers Liberation League] membership present, I don't believe they were swallowing it."

## Who Defends Marxism-Leninism?

The most cynical of those who today are claiming to oppose the Moscow-line Stalinists' strategy of "peaceful co-existence" and a "peaceful road to socialism" are the various and sundry Maoists. In addition to the fact that Mao himself calls for peaceful co-existence with imperialist number one, Richard Nixon, and that the Chinese leaders supported the Indonesian CP's "peaceful road to socialism" through support for Sukarno; and in addition to the fact that Mao immediately recognized the reactionary junta, China still maintains an embassy in Santiago and refuses to grant political asylum to Latin American leftists threatened with execution by the military (!!!)—in addition to all this, we should note that none of these Maoists who today warn of illusions in a peaceful transition did so when the UP regime was in power and popular.

In an editorial, "Lessons of Chile," the U.S. Maoist *Guardian* (26 September) had some fine words to say about how simply placing the blame for the coup on the CIA was an attempt to absolve the Chilean CP of all responsibility for the bloodbath. It is notable, however, that the *Guardian* fails to mention Allende's role in fostering illusions in a "peaceful road to socialism" and the "democratic loyalties and professionalism" of the armed forces. Thus abstention is no accident, for at no point during Allende's regime did the Maoist *Guardian* oppose Allende's government, but it instead consistently supported the same reformists it criticizes today.

Such behavior is to be expected of

the Maoists, who simply represent a national variant of Stalinism and accept the same reformist strategy of class collaboration as the pro-Moscow species. Far more pernicious is the behavior of those who claim to support Trotskyism and today label the Allende regime a popular front, but who took an *opposite* line when he was first elected. We have pointed out before that following Allende's election in September 1970 the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party similarly gave what amounted to de facto critical support to Allende: "...failing to recognize the positive elements in it [the UP government], condemning it in toto out of some sectarian dogmatism, would mean suicidal isolation." To such Johnny-come-lately "Trotskyists" the label of "Monday-morning quarterback" can certainly be applied.

## SL Warns Chilean Workers

The Spartacist League, not afraid to swim against the stream, was the only one of all the ostensibly Trotskyist organizations to take a clear stand against the popular-front UP government *from the beginning*. Immediately after the 1970 elections we wrote:

"It is the most elementary duty for revolutionary Marxists to irreconcilably oppose the Popular Front in the election and to place absolutely no confidence in it in power. Any 'critical support' to the Allende coalition is class treason, paving the way for a bloody defeat for the Chilean working people when domestic reaction, abetted by international imperialism is ready."

—Spartacist,  
November-December 1970

The SL repeatedly warned in its press that this popular-front regime was leading to a massacre of the workers and peasants. In December 1972 *WV* stated:

"Beneath the evolutionary facade, Chilean society has been deeply polarized and is building toward an explosion, a counterrevolutionary onslaught before which the proletariat is defenseless. As the forces of repression gear

themselves for the confrontation and the petty-bourgeoisie slides into the camp of reaction, the working class stands naked, without the organs of dual power, without arms, without a vanguard."

—"Pop Front Imperialists  
Chilean Workers"

And as Allende was announcing that "there will be no coup d'état and no civil war because the great majority of the Chilean people reject these solutions" ("Allende support grows: Chile's right backing up?" *People's World*, 8 September), the SL warned in a leaflet: "A bloodbath is being prepared in Chile as rightist forces attempt to create poli-



Soldiers burning books in Santiago.

tical and economic chaos as preparation for a counterrevolutionary putsch. ... Only a workers revolution can prevent this, and the first obstacle in its path is the popular-front Allende government itself." ("Showdown in Chile," 4 September 1973).

The Stalinists can prate all they want about "Trotskyite sectarianism" but they cannot accuse us of "Monday-morning quarterbacking"! And to "revolutionary" organizations—such as the ex-Trotskyist SWP and pseudo-Trotskyist Workers League—whose opportunistic appetites and bankrupt tailist politics made them afraid to label the UP a popular front and to oppose it when it was popular for fear of "suicidal isolation," we can only reply that intransigent opposition to the popular front was the *only alternative* to suicide!

## Ex-Trotskyists Front for Stalinists

One might think that these ex-Trotskyists would learn the error of their ways after the Chilean disaster. But this would be to underestimate the nature of the disease. The SWP is not simply "forgetting" its Trotskyism or "making mistakes," it is committed to a Pabloist methodology which leads directly to the complete liquidation of Trotskyism. And this is clearly shown in its response to the Chilean coup.

The SWP's reformist line was graphically demonstrated at an October 12 New York rally called by the SWP-led U.S. Committee for Aid to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLAP). An endless parade of anguished liberals, fellow travelers and hardened apologists for Stalinism paraded across the stage without one word of protest from the supposed "Trotskyists" who built the meeting. Adam Schesch, a featured eye-witness reporter currently on tour for USLAP, viciously baited the "ultra-leftists" who maintain that the CP-Allende government disarmed the working class. Although the audience was filled with SWP luminaries there was no answer to this Stalinist garbage.

These Pabloist renegades from Trotskyism naturally have an elaborate explanation for this anti-Marxist behavior, speaking of a strategy of single-issue democratic demands. Thus in the antiwar movement they seek to bloc with the liberal Hartke on the slogan "Out Now" and in the women's movement they want a bloc with the liberal Abzug on the slogan "Repeal All Abortion Laws." But such mini-popular fronts serve only to eliminate in practice the fight for the Trotskyist Transitional Program, replacing it with a minimum program in the traditions of the Second International and abandoning the struggle for socialist revolution. ■

Continued from page 7

# Birth of the Zionist State

Washington. Truman became the champion of the "100,000" not only because he did not want them in New York, but because he knew that Britain could indeed not afford another army division and 200 million pounds for Palestine. It could not even afford having one fifth of its army and the 35 million pounds it required to hold on to Palestine after World War II.

The U.S. wanted to get into the Arab East fast. It was afraid that the USSR was about to pull off another Czechoslovakia in Persia. Furthermore, the British had joined Chaim Weizmann at the White House welfare line, and the U.S. was able to apply enormous economic pressure to England. By the beginning of 1947 the Atlee government had decided to wash its hands of Palestine and turned the question over to the UN. Stalin, motivated more by irrational Anglophobia than narrow conservative bureaucratic Realpolitik, lined up with Truman and co-sponsored the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. (The price of Thermidor is that the personal whim of The Leader may sometimes be even contrary to the interests of the bureaucratic caste he represents.) Thus Stalin, who in 1929 purged and denounced the Palestinian Communist Party for not supporting the Arab pogroms and in 1936 made the PCP line up behind the Mufti, in 1947-48 was the most vigorous ally of Zionism. Marshall Plan bribery combined with Stalinist betrayal led to the UN partition resolution passed on 29 November 1947. Britain then agreed to end the Mandate by the coming May 14.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

Continued from page 9

# A Left Face for Labourism

opportunistically tail backward consciousness among the ranks as do pseudo-revolutionaries. Leftward motion within the ranks does not automatically force the leadership to the left; rather that leadership may strengthen its ties to sections of the bourgeoisie to counter the radicalization of its proletarian constituency.

More fundamentally, because it involves the basic political attitudes of the British working class, a coalition with the Liberals raises the question of Labour's "inviolable" commitment to parliamentarism. The BLP's new "most left-wing program ever" begins by stating, "We are a democratic socialist party...." In plain English, the Labour Party is committed to come to political office *solely* through winning an electoral majority. Given the weight of the petty bourgeoisie in the electorate and the control of the bourgeoisie over the institutions of education, culture and information, it is possible that the Labour Party can never win an electoral majority running on a formally socialist program.

While the working class must always strive to win over the middle classes, the institutions of socialism can only come about by the *dictatorship* of the proletariat—the replacement of parliamentary rule by soviet power. With a possible coalition with the Liberals in order to attain a parliamentary majority, the fundamental contradiction between the socialist aspirations of the British working class and the parliamentary character of its party, the Labour Party, has rarely been more manifest. ■

SUBSCRIBE TO

Young Spartacus

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth section of the Spartacist League

Formerly the RCY Newsletter

\$1

6 ISSUES

Make payable/mail to: RCY Newsletter Publishing Company  
Box 454, Cooper Station, New York, N.Y. 10003

WORKERS VANGUARD

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

includes SPARTACIST

☐ Enclosed is \$3 for 24 issues

☐ Enclosed is \$1 for 8 issues

order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co./Box 1377, GPO/NY, NY 10001



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## NYC Hospital Workers Defy Wage Board but— 1199 Leadership Bows to Nixon

### 30,000 Strikers Forced Back to Work

NEW YORK—The Leon Davis leadership of Local 1199 (Drug and Hospital Workers' Union) successfully avoided a major political confrontation with the tottering Nixon regime when it led 30,000 striking workers at New York's private hospitals back to work on Monday, November 12. This strike took place concurrently with a series of other actions affecting New York City labor, including a nationwide strike against TWA, the first strike of firemen in the city's history and a strike against the Daily News. The hospital strike, however, was the key to this situation, not merely because it involved the largest number of workers, but also because a victory would have meant a successful defiance of government wage controls.

Wage controls have been the cornerstone of Nixon's domestic policy, and with the worst-ever inflation, particularly reflected in food costs, producing falling real wages, Nixon's bankrupt "Phase Four" has become widely unpopular in the working class. Simultaneously, the Watergate affair has seriously undermined the government's authority. Thus Nixon's current unpopularity, occurring at a time of marked labor restlessness in New York City, provided an excellent opportunity to launch a citywide strike as a definitive step to smash wage controls and to oust Nixon.

The ostensibly "leftist" Davis leadership, however, consistently de-emphasized the political nature of the strike and failed to mobilize support from other sections of the NYC labor movement, not even calling out the thousands of Local 1199 workers in city-owned hospitals. Instead, in the time-honored traditions of Meanyite "bread-and-butter unionism," the left-talking 1199 bureaucrats eschewed labor solidarity, pleading the special needs of their members, limited their propaganda to "more money now," and after the bourgeois press had effectively isolated the hospital workers, eventually caved in to the Cost of Living Council and hospital management.

The major conflict occurred over the size of the wage increase. A New York state arbitration agency had awarded 1199 a 7.5 percent increase or \$12 over the current weekly minimum, whichever was larger. This increase was due in July but, under Nixon's Phase Four, wage increases exceeding 5.5 percent in the food, construction and health industries must be approved by the Cost of Living Council. (Last year workers in Local 1199 had gone almost 12 months before receiving their increases.) A meeting of the Council, on October 30, was inconclusive. Blaming management's collective bargaining representative, the League of Voluntary Hospitals and Nursing Homes, for not putting sufficient pressure on the Council, the union called a work stoppage for 48 "private" institutions on November 5.

### Strikers Solid, Union Leaders Cave In

Union and management appeared in federal court on November 8. Leonard Boudin, representing the union, argued that the wage controls discriminated against low-wage employees in the

health industry, and were therefore unconstitutional. Dismissing these lofty arguments, Federal Judge Robert Carter sustained an injunction against 1199, while slapping a \$500,000 fine on the union, a \$10,000 fine on Davis, \$7,500 fines on other elected union officers and threatening the union with additional \$25,000 fines for each day the work stoppage continued. Judge Carter also ordered the Cost of Living Council to reconvene no later than two days hence. When the Council met shortly afterward, it determined that anything above a 6 percent increase would be unacceptable.

By this time the 1199 strikers had been effectively isolated. Threatened with the use of the anti-labor Taylor Law, which prohibits strikes in New York by government employees, the firefighters went back to work without a settlement only a few hours after the strike had begun. A couple of days later the leaders of the Newspaper Guild announced a settlement with the *Daily News*.

While the *Times*, *Daily News* and *Post* predictably launched an anti-strike propaganda campaign focusing on the plight of the patients, the 1199 leadership did not bother to obtain the official backing of any other city union. Utilizing this atmosphere the Davis leadership moved quickly to endorse the Council recommendations. Meetings of the union's executive council and the two city-wide delegate assemblies representing the Hospital Division (blue collar) and Guild Division (technical and clerical workers) ratified the agreement.

The following day, balloting at the picket sites, an angry but demoralized membership voted to return to work. While the Council decision okayed a small workweek reduction for some 10,000 workers and increased vacations for the Hospital Division, on the crucial questions of wages and employers' pension contributions the final settlement held firm to federal guidelines—and gave the lie to the earlier demagoguery of Davis and Co., who had promised to stay out until they received the full 7.5 percent.

### 1199's "Progressive" Image Exposed

While 1199 retains an image of being a progressive and democratic union, built by relying on the resources of the black and Spanish community, none of this is true. The origins of the 60,000-member Local 1199 lie in the pharmaceutical industry. In the post-war period 1199 membership barely exceeded 1,000 and consisted of a largely Jewish, relatively skilled workforce of pharmacists and drug clerks. Local 1199 belonged then, as it does today, to the RWDSU (Retail, Wholesale, Department Store Union), and within that international union it was "protected" by the larger District 65, whose leadership, like that of 1199, was of Stalinist origin.

Local 1199 began to organize hospital workers in New York City in 1958. This has radically altered the composition of the membership, with almost 80 percent of the hospital workers black or Spanish-speaking, and 60 percent women. The shrewd 1199 bureaucracy has demagogically played up this fact to the hilt, openly parading its alliance with civil-rights moderates like Martin Luther King (who called 1199



1199 picket captain (left) stands by while cops assault militant at Beth Israel Hospital. The union official told strikers to go home, later thanked cops.

his "favorite union") and King's SCLC, even winning occasional praise from more radical figures like Malcolm X.

Most of 1199's early organizing victories were due not to King and Co., however, but to the assistance of the openly right-wing trade-union bureaucracy. In the union's first big hospital breakthrough in 1959, picket lines of hospital workers were joined by members of the mostly white construction unions. Van Arsdale, head of the NY Central Labor Council (which was dominated by the construction trades and the conservative leaderships of other municipal unions), also supported these strikes.

### 1199 and Takenism

The 1960's were a period of general unrest within the ghettos, with considerable antagonism directed at the racial policies of the conservative union leadership. The official support granted to 1199 provided a cover for the bureaucrats' neglect of minorities in their own backyard. The bourgeoisie, too, while willing to grant certain concessions to blacks and Latinos, was interested in playing off the black and Spanish communities against the unions. Tolerating a union responsive to the wishes of the "community," and in a certain sense counterposed to the central leadership of the NYC labor movement, made sense as part of this broader strategy.

This policy paid off when Davis supported the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community school board against the UFT in the bitter 1968 teachers' strike. Davis again demonstrated his political loyalties by supporting Mayor Lindsay in 1969, against the wishes of the Central Labor Council.

In days past the bourgeoisie touted 1199 as a union uniquely responsible to the wishes of its membership. The record of the 1199 leadership leaves much to be desired, however. While Davis originally justified the organization into separate divisions of blue collar workers on the one hand, and clerical and more skilled technical workers on the other, as a temporary measure, he successfully opposed a move for merger in 1969. This allows the 1199 leadership to play off the "professionalism" of the Guild Division against the less well paid Hospital Division, while at the same time isolating opponent political

groupings (mostly concentrated in the Guild) from the real base of the union.

On the key issue of wage controls and anti-labor laws, despite occasional outbursts of demagoguery, the 1199 leadership has a positively dismal record. In 1962 Governor Rockefeller ended strikes at Beth-El Hospital and Manhattan Eye, Ear and Throat, promising to pass a law permitting collective bargaining rights for voluntary hospital workers. Davis in return promised to refrain from further strikes and threats of strikes.

The result, a state law passed in 1963, specifically directed that disputes not settled through direct negotiations be submitted to binding arbitration (i.e., denied the right to strike to hospital workers). And for all his harsh words directed at 1199's treatment at the hands of the Cost of Living Council, Davis has never called for a labor walk-out from that class-collaborationist board. Indeed, the president of RWDSU, Greenberg, today sits on the Council!

### Foot-Dragging Strike Leadership

A successful conclusion to the New York hospital strike would have won the confidence of thousands of underpaid, unorganized hospital workers for 1199. The ultimate failure was hardly due to lack of determination of the 1199 membership, which demonstrated over and over its willingness to fight on the picket lines. But a victory required a leadership fundamentally different from that provided by the reformist Davis bureaucracy.

While Local 1199 officials kicked off the strike by asserting their determination to stay out until all demands had been met, their conduct during the strike demonstrated total unwillingness to back up these empty promises. There were no real strike preparations or strike fund or legal defense fund for workers arrested by the cops. "Volunteers" were allowed to enter the hospitals. The top union leadership was virtually absent from the picket lines, consciously allowing individual militants to risk their necks in disorganized skirmishes with the cops that could only discourage the membership.

While the "progressive" 1199 leaders like to flaunt their opposition to

continued on page 10