

SHEIKS, TEXANS and GAULLISTS World Oil Tangle

**Will Arab Oil Boycott
Cripple U.S. Economy?**

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In one very general sense, the oil boycott is a conflict between industrial capitalists and landlords over the division of surplus value between profit and land rent. It is the first such conflict of major political importance since the industrial revolution in early 19th-century England. At that time, the lag of agricultural productivity behind industrial growth, combined with a rapidly increasing urban population, led to ever-rising food prices and a fierce conflict between landed property interests and industrialists.

British landed interests were politically defeated with the repeal of the "Corn Laws" and the food shortage solved through the international expansion of capitalist agriculture. And in general the industrial bourgeoisie has been able to overcome shortages of primary products through economizing or substitutionist technology (e.g., synthetic rubber), or by geographical expansion into backward nations. Since the 1840's, the relative price of food and raw materials has remained stable or declined, except during major wars. However, this pattern was sharply reversed during the worldwide economic boom in the early 1970's; from November 1971 through this month the world market price of food and raw materials has risen 117 percent (*Economist*, 7 July and 24 November 1973). Thus the historic conflict between landlords and industrialists is being revived on an international plane. The sharpest (but not the only) current expression of this conflict is the deployment of the "oil weapon" by the Persian Gulf sheiks.

Inter-Imperialist Rivalry Encourages Oil Cartel

World oil production and distribution is dominated by seven companies, five American, one British and one British-Dutch. Beginning in the early 1950's, the oil-producing states received a 50 percent royalty on the official, so-called "posted" price of crude oil. (The actual world market price was sometimes lower, while the price of U.S. domestic crude was higher due to tariffs and import quotas.) Faced with a market surplus in 1959, the oil majors cut the posted price provoking the oil-producing states into creating the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), whose core is Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf sheikdoms and Iran, in order to increase their bargaining power against the companies.

During the 1960's the major oil companies dominated the weak OPEC. Both the posted prices and royalty shares remained unchanged, so that with inflation their real income per barrel fell. The weakness of the oil-producing Arab states was demonstrated by the total ineffectuality of the boycott after the 1967 Arab-Israel War.

A decisive turning point in Arab-oil company politics came in 1970 when Colonel Qaddafi's newly-fledged "revolutionary Islamic" regime took advantage of a favorable economic situation (the closing of the Suez Canal and the cutting off of the Syrian pipeline to the Persian Gulf) to demand both a rise in the posted price and in the state royalty. Qaddafi threatened to prohibit oil to the American companies

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Saudi King Faisal and his palace guards.

As Woodcock Accepts Zionist Award...

Arab Workers Shut Down Dodge Main

DETROIT, 29 November—More than 1,500 Arab auto workers refused to work yesterday in a political strike aimed against the UAW bureaucracy's collusion with U.S. imperialism's pro-Israeli foreign policy. In a highly-organized action, nearly every Arab worker on the second shift at Chrysler's huge Hamtramck assembly plant (Dodge Main) heeded the call of demonstration organizers not to go to work. The plant was forced to shut down all but one of its numerous assembly lines and to send home most of the remaining second-shift workers.

Together with other Arabs and various radical groups, the Arab workers from Dodge marched 1,000-strong to Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit to demonstrate against UAW president Leonard Woodcock's acceptance of B'nai B'rith's "Humanitarian of the Year" (!) award. Although the crowd was predominantly Arab in composition, some

black workers also participated. The militant chants attacked the UAW's purchase of nearly \$1 million in Israeli war bonds during the recent Arab-Israeli conflict.

This significant political strike and demonstration is one of several indications of the increasing militancy of Arab auto workers. It follows by only two weeks another demonstration, by 2,000-3,000 Arab workers in Dearborn, protesting the purchase by UAW Local 600 (Ford's River Rouge complex) of Israeli war bonds.

An indication of the bourgeoisie's concern about these events is the news blackout in the ruling-class press. There was absolutely nothing in either of Detroit's daily papers about the highly significant political strike at Dodge Main, and only the smallest mention of the demonstration in the *Detroit Free Press*.

The strike and demonstration fur-

ther revealed the deepening isolation of the UAW bureaucracy from its ranks. Only two days before, over 100 auto workers had picketed a meeting of the union's GM Council at which delegates meekly accepted the sellout contract negotiated by Woodcock. Despite mounting reports of economic downturn and imminent layoffs of thousands of workers announced by GM, no preparations for a fight against these layoffs were included in Solidarity House plans. Meanwhile, anger and discontent over the contract betrayal are still rampant in Ford plants where a majority voted down Woodcock's terms on the first ballot. The Arab workers' protests are simply aimed at another aspect of the bureaucracy's policy of class collaboration—its craven support to the U.S. bourgeoisie's foreign policy.

Special Oppression of Arab Workers

Detroit's 80,000 Arabs are the largest concentration of Arab population in the U.S. Intimidated by the lack of legal rights of citizenship and separated from their fellow workers by a pervasive language barrier (only about half the Arab workers in Dodge Main speak any English), the Arab workers are a specially-oppressed layer of the work force. Fully integrated into the capitalist economy, they are kept in desperate conditions by segregation in the lowest sectors. In the auto plants they are given the dirtiest, most difficult jobs. At the Hamtramck assembly plant, where 20-25 percent of the work force is Arab (the highest concentration in Detroit's auto plants), there are no Arab supervisors or foremen and no Arab union representatives.

The importation of Arab workers into its plants in Detroit was undertaken by Chrysler in 1968 as part of a conscious effort to divide its increasingly racially homogeneous (black) work

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Arab workers demonstrate in Detroit against Woodcock support for Israel. A mass walkout by Arab workers shut down Dodge Main earlier in the evening.

What Labor Should Do About Watergate

The continuing Watergate crisis has pretty nearly totally discredited the U.S. government, thereby creating unusual opportunities to fight for an independent workers party based on the unions and for a workers government, as the only alternative to Nixon and the capitalist system which produces his ilk. Of course, as we have said before, Watergate is fundamentally a dispute within the capitalist class. Spying and bugging have long been used against labor and the left, along with frame-up trials, murder and other police-state methods. But Nixon used

his "Watergate methods" against the Democrats, another bourgeois party, and he got caught.

This in itself would be enough to cause a minor scandal. But the subsequent cascading crises have been the result of Nixon's own desperate efforts to cover up absolutely everything. As I.F. Stone wrote in a recent *New York Review of Books*, Nixon's behavior is entirely rational if you assume (as he must) that once out of the White House he would go straight to the federal penitentiary. What has been revealed in the process is an administration in which skulduggery, rake-offs, blackmail and various forms of corruption have reached unprecedented levels. And, according to the Harris Poll, 55 percent of the population believes the President of the United States is lying. Such a situation is not normal, and it is necessary for Marxists to know how to respond to the present sharp government crisis.

A Socialist Answer to Watergate

For his truly enormous crimes against the working class Nixon should be removed from office at once. Socialists should support a congressional move to impeach Nixon. But impeachment is not enough! We do not seek to perpetuate bourgeois democracy, the system that has produced a quarter-century of imperialist aggression in Vietnam, the bombing of Dresden, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the Great Depression. To limit the labor movement to calling for impeachment of Nixon, as do the AFL-CIO tops and the Communist Party, is to wind up

supporting Gerald Ford. A class-struggle answer to Watergate must shift the axis of struggle. The fight to remove Nixon must become a fight not to replace Nixon with Gerald Ford, but to fight to replace the rule of capital with a workers government!

The labor movement cannot leave the fate of Richard Nixon in the hands of the U.S. Senate ("the most exclusive club in the world"). Instead, labor must call for immediate recall and new elections. This demand is a sharp attack on the structural bonapartism of imperialist democracy and a threat to capitalist stability—which is why the bourgeoisie will strongly resist it. Consequently it is necessary for the working class to reply with a political general strike of the organized labor movement to force new elections, so that labor can present its own candidate against the twin parties of capital.

The Democrats and Republicans have both amply proven their unfitnes to rule, and in the absence of a working-class political alternative new elections would remain a hollow victory. On the other hand, there is today no mass workers party in the U.S. Socialists must seek to overcome this contradiction by demanding a labor candidate for the presidency, with a class-struggle program counterposed to both bourgeois parties, and a workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government.

Such a demand can strike a sensitive nerve among America's working population. Faced with runaway inflation, threatened mass layoffs and now the prospect of being frozen out of their homes this winter, wide sectors of the working class can be won to see the need for a socialist transformation of society as the only real answer to Watergate corruption and Nixonomics. Militants must take these demands to the unions where the biggest obstacle to a workers party and a labor candidate will be the bureaucracy. Local unions should be challenged to issue a call to the labor movement for a giant rally to launch a labor

candidate.

At the same time, the fight for a working-class program is primary since a "labor party" in the image of George Meany, without a program counterposed to Republicans and Democrats, would be a deception for the masses and quite possibly a step backwards in the class struggle. In the present situation of rampant inflation and mass layoffs, the transitional demand of a sliding scale of wages and hours is one key programmatic demand which can awaken widespread enthusiasm in the working class and is absolutely necessary to maintain present living standards. Likewise the demand of labor off all government boards, smash state wage controls is crucial to the program of a working-class party, as is opposition to the U.S. imperialist designs in Vietnam and the Near East.

Class Struggle and Democratic Rights

The SL's policy of integrating the struggle for the removal of Nixon into the class struggle against capitalism has recently been attacked by the tiny, semi-syndicalist Revolutionary Workers Group, which in effect denies the importance of any struggle for democratic rights. In order to explain the methodology behind the Marxist attitude on the question of democratic rights we wish to reply to this attack, a classic example of ultra-left abstentionism.

In an article, "American Capital-

Skylab and "The Crisis"

In conjuring up an ethereal all-encompassing "Crisis," which magically transforms labor reformism into revolutionary struggle and renders the Transitional Program superfluous, Healy/Wohlforth have gone to considerable lengths to deny reality. One example which comes to mind was the article "Skylab Fiasco Dooms Future Space Programs" in the *Bulletin* of 28 May 1973:

"The Skylab fiasco is a manifestation of the crisis of international capitalism and the resulting refusal of big business to invest any significant amount of capital in new technology, factories or equipment."

We refrain from the temptation of asking Wohlforth what he believes the corporations spent a record amount of investment capital on last year, and simply inquire: if the original Skylab difficulties are a manifestation of the "final crisis" of capitalism, then what does its current success signify, the beginning of the bourgeois millennium?



UPI

In Defense of Exclusionism... Wohlforth Lies!

It is the elementary obligation of all Workers League/Young Socialist members who claim to support workers democracy to examine the facts concerning the exclusion of the Spartacist League from a WL "public" meeting in San Francisco. They will thereby soon discover what the rest of the left already knows, namely that their leadership is composed of inveterate and shameless liars.

Several recent *Bulletin* articles have contained allegations that the SL "brings in the cops" as part of an "anti-communist" drive to disrupt and break up WL meetings. The 23 November article asserts:

"It is now clear that the Spartacist League's sole reason for existence is to break up our meetings and disrupt our activities. They are willing to do anything and ally with anyone to accomplish this aim."

"It is this blind frenzy and hostility to constructing a revolutionary movement that places them in league with agent provocateurs and the most reactionary forces who are out to destroy the revolutionary movement."

The purpose of such hysterical statements is to serve as a provocation to violence against the SL on the part of WL/YS supporters. We can only warn that the WL will greatly regret any such attempt.

We have already outlined the facts concerning what actually took place during the incident in question in the 9 November *Workers Vanguard* ("What Really Happened at the Jack Tar Hotel and Why Wohlforth Calls the Cops"). The latest *Bulletin* account now charges that: 1) the SL attempted to disrupt the meeting, 2) that the SL picketed the

meeting shouting slogans, 3) that SLers threatened Lucy St. John they would force their way into the meeting and 4) that St. John told the hotel management in the presence of SLers that she did not want police there. Each of these statements is a total fabrication.

Every WLER has undoubtedly witnessed the exclusion of the SL from at least one WL "public" meeting, since this has been Wohlforth's policy for years. But never have they seen the SL bring in the cops, since the SL is opposed on principle to using the apparatus of the bourgeois state against tendencies within the workers movement. Wohlforth is attempting to claim that "somewhere else" the SL behaves differently. In San Francisco, as elsewhere, the SL did not bring in the cops nor threaten to break up the WL meeting, but the WL admittedly called the Jack Tar Hotel management to prevent Spartacists from selling outside the meeting. And this was done with full knowledge that the order to leave was to be enforced by the police. Local WL leaders sniggered as police identified themselves and ordered the SL to leave the premises.

In this incident the SL did what we consistently do throughout the country—namely, we protested vigorously at this undemocratic, anti-communist exclusion of our supporters and called it what it is, a disgusting, cowardly refusal to defend the WL's own politics. Wohlforth, St. John, O'Casey and their ilk openly sneer at workers democracy because they have no use for it. They, like the union bureaucrats and the Stalinists, do not seek open debate so that the working class can become conscious

of its own interests and act accordingly. For a group whose politics consist of chasing after every conceivable faker from Huey Newton to the Red Guards, meanwhile gazing with affection on the posteriors of the labor bureaucracy, workers democracy is less than worthless—it is a threat. It is an invitation to principled Marxists to challenge Wohlforth to defend his support of the 1971 New York City police strike or his obscene praises of Ho Chi Minh, the murderer of the Vietnamese Trotskyists. This Wohlforth does not want and, so far as he can manage to do so, will not permit.

Any supporter of the WL/YS who does not believe our account can find out for himself what Wohlforthian politics consist of by simply demanding of his leadership that SL supporters be admitted to the WL's public meetings with the same rights as everyone else. Some WL supporters have attempted this course and soon discovered that the internal regime of this fake-Trotskyist mini deformed workers state strikingly resembles that of Stalinist organizations.

Wohlforth is worried because his own membership occasionally gags when forced to swallow some of the slimy excretions he feeds it, now twice-weekly, in the *Bulletin*. This is why the WL uncharacteristically noted that the Spartacist League was thrown out of a "Chile support" meeting in Cleveland organized by the SWP, among others. And it is because Bay Area WLERs know quite well that the SL energetically defended the *Bulletin's* right to sell at Fremont GM that Wohlforth tries to whip them into a frenzy to support the class treason of excluding socialist opponents from public meetings and calling on the management (and therefore indirectly, and knowingly, the cops) to remove them. Only those who have no principles can show no shame, for they have nothing to betray. ■

ism's Constitutional Crisis," in *Workers' Truth* (November 1973), the RWG ridicules the demands for publishing the 1970 secret police plan and playing the Watergate tapes in full on nationwide radio, thereby tacitly acknowledging the "right" of the capitalists to keep the government actions secret from the population. If the RWG were consistent we presume it would also criticize Trotsky's call to "open the books" as irrelevant or reformist. Likewise the *Workers' Truth* article dismisses the call for new elections as irrelevant since the bourgeois state would still remain. A labor party is rejected without explanation, and the slogan of a workers government is treated as if it were simply a parliamentary labor government.

For revolutionary Marxists, in contrast, the question of the direct democratic expression of the will of the working masses (immediate elections) is of enormous importance. It is the key reason why we call for the formation of soviets and factory committees at a time of revolutionary upsurge, even though such institutions by themselves are no more working-class in character than the unions. Likewise the struggle for a workers party based on the trade unions is a key instrument for polarizing political struggle on class-against-class lines, as well as a necessary demand for raising the struggle against the union bureaucracy to a political level. The fight for the independence of the working class is, after all, the crux of Marxist politics from the *Communist Manifesto* onwards. But the intransigent syndicalists of the RWG would simply have us abandon the parliamentary arena altogether. As for the call for a workers government, we (with Trotsky) always maintain that this can only mean the replacement of the rule of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat. We raise this demand precisely to counterpose the program of revolutionary Marxism and the interests of the working class to the reformists, who at all costs seek to avoid a break with the capitalist parties and an assault on the institutions of the bourgeoisie state.

The essence of the RWG position is conveniently underlined in this same article, namely that "The bourgeois state, because it is in the final analysis the instrument of the capitalist class, is organically incapable of aiding the working class." Hence they attempt to ignore it as far as possible! Marxists, however, have never ignored the question of democratic rights. The SL supports the equal rights amendment (against sexual discrimination), equal rights for blacks and other minorities, and freedom of the press. Karl Marx himself fought in the 1848

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Letters

November 25, 1973

To the Editor:

The National Caucus of Labor Committees has made major contributions in exposing current forms of proto-fascism. These forms include slave-labor programs (e.g., Work Incentive Programs, methadone treatment, work-release for prisoners), the counterculture (e.g., Hari Krishna, Jesus freaks, the Guru Maharaj Ji), co-determination or local control, Meadows and Forrester's Zero Growth ideology, Skinnerian rat psychology, Jensen and Herrnstein's racist genetics, and Imamu Baraka (LeRoi Jones) of Newark. The NCLC's contributions signify that the NCLC could hardly be an organization of "fascist government agents," as many people contend. Instead, the events of recent months show that the NCLC is a cult of demoralized psychotics engaged in a dance of death.

The grandiose NCLC is running full speed in hell. The NCLC's most recent flop-triumph was its demoralized campaign in the New York City mayoral race. The National Executive Committee of the NCLC psychologically caved in while its sacred chairman, Lyn Marcus, was absent from New York due to his trip to Europe; the nine members of the NCLC's National Executive Committee are supposedly the junior Prometheans of the world. The National Executive Committee as well as the local New York City Labor Committee, the largest local chapter of the NCLC, actually believed that their candidate, Tony Chaitkin, was destined to become the next mayor of New York City. Witness the manic-depressive psychosis of one Nikos Syvriotis, a National Executive Committee member who fainted in the middle of his speech at the NCLC's last national conference. The following is an excerpt from an article he wrote in the September 21, 1973 issue of *New Solidarity*:

"The irony is that none other than the U.S. Labor Party (the party representing the NCLC on the ballot) will force a decisive swing of the pendulum of their (the ruling class's) moods. On November 5, every half-baked political commentator in the country will be writing columns to explain how Abe Beame's campaign was wrecked by the Chaitkin... campaign. Similar results from elections in other cities will help drive the point home."

In reality, however, on November 5 Beame won the election by a landslide, and Chaitkin received far less than one-tenth of one percent of the vote.

The NCLC, especially its leadership, is literally psychotic. The NCLC is detached from reality; they have no true awareness of space and time. In the same article, Syvriotis further reveals his organization's sick grandiosity:

"This year's election day will demonstrate that our movement has changed the rules of the political game in this country. The panic that the capitalist toads will feel running up and down their spines as they watch the impossible, the (NCLC's) mass organizing of workers around a revolutionary program, this panic will drive them back to grim reality, back to Rocky, back to Nixon's jocular. From that moment on it will dawn on them that they too are walking on a tightrope."

The NCLC has repeatedly stated that "we are the only thing that scares the ruling class."

The NCLC's delusions of grandeur which caused their insane election prediction are the same delusions which cause the NCLC to claim that they will overthrow the governments of the United States, Canada, and Western Europe within the next five years. They are the same delusions which cause the NCLC to claim that its insipid Operation Mop-Up against the Communist Party "smashed the CP" and gave the Labor Committee "hegemony" over the left throughout the world. Operation

Mop-Up was essentially a minor military tactic lasting about a month last spring, and mainly occurred on college campuses in a few cities in the northeastern U.S. Lyn Marcus provides the ideology for Operation Mop-Up in his article "Their Morals and Ours" in the April 23, 1973 issue of *New Solidarity*. In essence, Marcus echoes Nietzsche: the NCLC casts aside conventional morality and ruthlessly creates its own morality; the NCLC smashes the weak, demoralized CPers; the NCLC is invincible. Accordingly, the NCLC membership believes that they are Supermen fighting a Holy Crusade in the name of Humanity. While Chairman Lyn Marcus publishes his erudite paper, "Beyond Psychoanalysis," the organization he created has fallen victim to a fatal psychotic disorder.

Fraternally,

Robert S. Solomon
Detroit

WV replies: We agree that the NCLC is not "fascist," as the Communist Party and others on the left claim, and see the origins of its truly bizarre politics in an unusual intersection between petty-bourgeois frenzy and the psychological quirks (to use a mild expression of its Supreme Leader, Lyn Marcus. However, it would be equally inaccurate to describe the Hari Krishnas, followers of Guru Maharaj Ji and Imamu Baraka as "proto-fascists." None of these movements has anything approaching the social base of European (or even American) fascism in the 1920's and 1930's. A real fascist movement in the U.S. would not draw its sustenance from the Christian mysticism of the Jesus freaks, the frenzied Jewish nationalism of the JDL or the anti-white nationalism of Baraka's Young Simbas, but rather from the much more powerful brew of white racism.

□

25 November 1973

To the editor:

The NMU Militant-Solidarity Caucus resolution on the Arab-Israeli war (WV No. 31, 26 October) has an omission which could require a policy of giving military support to the Arab side in the war. The resolution specifies Israel's aggressive capitalist designs "to continue the suppression of the Palestinian Arabs... and exploitation of both Arab and Jewish workers." However it only says that "the Arab states similarly seek a victory not to liberate but to oppress the Arab masses themselves."

Just because they will not liberate the masses does not mean socialists would not support the Arab states if, in this war, they were fighting for the right of self-determination for the Palestinians. The right of self-determination under capitalism means calling for the exploitation of workers of a particular nation by their own bourgeoisie—in order to undercut nationalist sentiments and eliminate sources of national hatred in the working masses.

As it stands, the resolution implies a situation in which Marxists would, without extending any political confidence, bloc militarily with the Arab states against Israel. What the resolution left out was the fact that the Arab states have no intention of defending the right of self-determination for the Palestinians, and that they also seek to oppress (or drive into the sea) the Hebrew masses just as the Israeli state seeks to exploit and/or expel Arab peasants and workers. The resolution's correct conclusion, in favor of revolutionary defeatism on both sides, was thus somewhat weakened.

A comrade

□

November 10, 1973

Comrades,

In an article entitled "SL Polarizes Toronto Women's Conference" (WV No. 32) mention is made of the origins of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG). The RMG is a Canadian group formed last spring which describes itself as "a Trotskyist organization in active political solidarity with the Fourth International" (USec.). The article states that the RMG is "an organization which split from the LSA" (League for Socialist Action). This is completely inaccurate.

The RMG was formed by a fusion of two groups (the Old Mole and the Red Circle) and various individual leftists. The Old Mole was formed in mid-1971 as a new left student group at the University of Toronto. The Red Circle was formed as a study group in the summer of 1972 from among individuals in the left wing of the New Democratic Party (Canadian social democracy). At approximately the same time the Revolutionary Communist Tendency [RCT], a pro-"European majority" tendency was formed within the LSA.

All of these formations had certain informal links, and in the case of the Old Mole and the Red Circle, they were largely initiated by the same individuals. Also since its creation the RMG has been joined by a few ex-LSA members and numerous members of the LSA's youth group (the Young Socialists). In no sense, however, can the RMG be considered to be a split from the LSA.

It is my opinion that the RMG represents a significant development in the North American Left and deserves the more careful and serious attention of the SL than this error would seem to indicate.

Comradely,
Anton Delgado

WV replies: While the RMG was formally independent of the RCT, the "informal links" between them certainly existed and the identity of their political views was not accidental. The original RMG leaders were contacts of the RCTers who were doing entry work in the New Democratic Party. Moreover, during June of this year some 26 members of the LSA and its youth group resigned to join the RMG. Finally, on October 4 the remaining 29 members of the RCT resigned from the LSA; the next day they attended the first national convention of the RMG where several ex-RCTers were elected to the leadership. Thus while the process has been somewhat ragged, it is essentially correct to characterize the RMG as a split from the LSA. Both the LSA and RMG consider themselves supporters of the "United Secretariat," the former allied with the SWP-led reformist minority and the latter tied to the centrist European majority.

Debate

The Vanguard Party and the Class

Speakers:

Class Struggle League
HENRY PLATSKY

Spartacist League
STEVE GREEN

Sunday, December 9, 7:00 p.m.
Third Unitarian Church
310 North Mayfield

Chicago

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What Is the CP Up To?

Curiously, despite its almost daily coverage of auto news, the reformist Communist Party's *Daily World* has not seen fit to print a single line about the massive rebellion in Detroit against Woodcock's latest contract sellout. It has never even mentioned the infamous "secret letter," in which UAW leader Ken Bannong gave Ford Motor Co. guarantees on overtime that threatened the jobs of skilled workers, leading to a stunning three-to-one rejection of the contract by tradesmen. The *Daily World's* only mention of several days of militant demonstrations at Solidarity House by angry skilled workers was a single picture.

Shortly afterwards, David Mundy (unit president of the Michigan Casting Center) allegedly shot a militant in front of dozens of union members during heated arguments over the contract. Despite front-page coverage across the nation, the *Daily World* has never mentioned the incident. Perhaps the CP agrees with Woodcock that news about a bureaucrat shooting a militant is just "sensationalism." Or does a sympathetic interview with Mundy published in the *Daily World* only a few days beforehand indicate more than meets the eye? In any case, the CP apparently agrees with Woodcock on the contract because, while Ford and GM workers were still protesting the sellout, the CP plant newspaper *Dodge Worker* called on the ranks to "implement the contract!"

The suspicions of some kind of hanky panky between the CP and auto union tops are heightened by a curious report in the *Detroit News* (24 August) at the time of last summer's wildcats. Interviewing William Allan, Michigan correspondent of the *Daily World*, the newspaper reported:

"Allan was at the plant gates along with UAW officials when the trouble was stirring last week.
"Irving Bluestone and Emil Mazey (two UAW officials) both asked me if I knew any of the leaders of this stuff," Allan said. "I told them I didn't know any of them, but that I could spot them easy enough in a crowd. They're the kids with the credit cards sticking out of their back pockets!"

Whether or not Allan actually fingered anyone to these UAW vice-presidents is unclear, although he does not make the obviously called-for remark that refusing to finger militants to the bureaucracy or company is a matter of principle. Instead he took up the UAW leaders' theme of blaming the sit-downs on "outsiders": "Say, there are plenty of legitimate reasons to complain about conditions in the auto plants. But pulling stuff like these outsiders did last week isn't going to help anything." The CP's policy of playing up to "liberal" and "progressive" trade-union bureaucrats is nothing new. And just as in the 1940's when the UAW ruthlessly purged any known "reds" from the union, no "secret deals" or understandings will aid the Stalinists when the ruling class puts the heat on. Only a consistent political struggle against the sellout bureaucracy can prepare the road to victory for auto workers. "Diplomatic" reporting and playing footsie with the Woodcock gang, as the CP is evidently doing, means defeat for the class and self-destruction for the communists.

Continued from page 1 Arab Workers

force which was becoming dangerously militant (exemplified by the DRUM, ELRUM and other oppositional caucuses). Chrysler opened a labor recruiting office in Yeman for this purpose. Compared to the blacks in Detroit auto plants, it is now these Arab workers who are subject to the double oppression to which blacks are subjected in the economy generally.

Although the demonstrations and political strike by Arab workers have engendered little more than mixed neutral reactions from black workers, there is a background of tension in the plants. Many black workers resent the presence of the Arabs who, because they are economically desperate and legally vulnerable to immediate deportation, can be induced to accept more work by the foremen. The company uses them to dampen militancy. When Dodge workers "jumped the gun" on the Chrysler strike by walking out early at Dodge Main in September, it was Arab workers on the second shift who led a general back-to-work movement for the remainder of the day. Yet two months later it was these same workers who led a one-day political strike!

The situation of Arab workers in auto plants in Detroit underlines the importance of a Marxist understanding of racial and national oppression. Rather than petty-bourgeois race-guilt theories, it is necessary to understand how racial/national divisions are used to perpetuate capitalist domination and the role of doubly-oppressed minorities as a "reserve industrial army" to hold down wages. Because Chrysler Corporation found itself with an increasingly racially homogeneous and militant work force and needed a mechanism to replace the divisive role that black-white hostility had previously played in the plants, it is now black workers who are occasionally heard uttering that infamous line, "they ought to send them back to where they came from" ... about the Arabs!

It would be a disaster for black workers to fall into the chauvinist temptation to adopt a hostile attitude toward Arab workers in imitation of white chauvinism and the anti-foreignism of the labor aristocracy. The fact that desperate black workers were often used by the auto companies to break strikes of white workers in the 1920's and 1930's merely made the slogan of black-white unity all the more important, in fact vital for the advancement of labor. Today it is likewise crucial to fight for real black-



SL/RCY pickets call for international working-class unity.

WV PHOTO

Continued from page 3 ... Watergate

revolution for a bourgeois republic instead of Prussian absolutism. But in all cases we seek to integrate the struggle for democratic rights into the class struggle rather than simply restricting ourselves to classless reform demands. What the RWG does is simply reject the struggle for democratic rights altogether.

Failing to understand the distinction between calling on the bourgeoisie to remove Nixon as the solution to Watergate, and supporting such a move if the bourgeoisie should undertake it (while continuing to call for a class-struggle solution), the RWG falsely counterposes two quotations from *Workers Vanguard*. In the 8 June WV we wrote: "For socialists to call today for impeachment of Nixon can only mean a desire to have another bourgeois ruler..." In the 26 October WV we stated: "Socialists should support a congressional move to impeach Nixon." Are these counterposed policies?

No. In the spring the bourgeoisie was not proposing to impeach Nixon,

while in late October (and as early as July) they were forced to consider this move. But even in October WV only calls for "support[ing] a congressional move to impeach" and plainly states in the headline, "Impeachment Is Not Enough." For "revolutionaries" who find this difficult to understand how one can support impeachment yet still call for new elections and a workers party based on the unions to fight for a workers government we suggest they read Lenin's explanations of why the Bolsheviks called for all power to the soviets yet still supported moves to convoke a constituent assembly.

Bolsheviks are the most consistent supporters of democracy, yet at all times giving precedence to the class question. To call for impeachment (that is, for the bourgeoisie to replace the president in the framework of the existing bonapartist constitution) as the solution to Watergate, as do the AFL-CIO and the reformist Communist Party, is to abandon any independent working-class political perspective. But to ignore questions of impeachment and democratic rights maintains the "purity" of one's principles by simply abandoning the political struggle, and thereby the revolution as well. ■

Correction

The article "New Left Maoism: Long March to Peaceful Coexistence—The Revolutionary Union" in WV No. 31 (26 October) stated that the RU's initial core of leaders set up the Radical Student Union to fight PL influence at the University of California (Berkeley). In fact, however, the RSU was organized by an amalgam of New Leftists, anarchists, student-power activists, unaffiliated Maoists and ISers, welded together by anti-communist hostility toward PL's empirically pro-working-class line in SDS. The RU did not become heavily involved in the RSU for several months, eventually gaining considerable influence, however. The Berkeley RSU-SDS split anticipated the later split in SDS nationally by six months and reflected the same political divisions.

The article also refers to the RU's "layer of veteran CPers, two of 20-year standing" who "left the party during the late 1950's, in the wake of Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the 1956 20th Congress of the CPSU." The RU's core of ex-CPers actually included at least five of 20-40 year standing, most of whom left the CP during the mid-1960's, reflecting a specifically pro-Chinese current, loyal to the Maoist bureaucracy from its very inception, unlike the more Stalin-oriented tendencies which later gave birth to the Communist League and Progressive Labor Party.

SOVIET UNION: State Capitalist or Degenerated Workers State?

SPEAKERS:

Revolutionary Socialist League
Jack Gregory, RSL Central Committee

Spartacist League
Joseph Drummond, SL Central Committee

For more information call: (212) 925-5665

DEBATE

Saturday, December 15
St. Gregory's Church
144 West 90th Street
7:30 p.m.

NEW YORK

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) 651-9147
Box 6765	Cleveland, OH 44101
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Arab unity and against the special oppression of Arab workers. Full citizenship rights for Arab workers! Special programs under union control for the advancement and training of Arab workers, including special publications in Arabic, and English-language training! Fight layoffs with a shorter work-week at no loss in pay—jobs for all!

Not Arab Nationalism, But Proletarian Internationalism

The highly political character of the Arab workers' protests underlines the possibility and importance of communist work in this specially-oppressed section of the class. The Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth, in full support of the demonstration's opposition to any support for Israeli war aims, participated with its own banners, signs and slogans. The SL/RCY refused, however, to capitulate to the prevailing sentiment in favor of Arab victory in the conflict, pointing out that the Arab armies would neither liberate the Arab masses (not to mention the Hebrew masses) nor allow the right of self-determination for the Palestinians. As the SL/RCY leaflet at the demonstration declared:

"Only the organized and conscious working class, Arab and Hebrew alike, can overcome the endless cycle of war, oppression and revenge, issuing from the domination of competing nationalisms, and provide a truly democratic solution to the national conflict—a binational, Palestinian workers state, as part of a socialist federation of the Near East."

The SL/RCY banners and signs at the demonstration included the slogans: "End Discrimination Against Arab Workers! Oust the Bureaucrats—Build a Workers Party! Forward to a Workers Government!" Also raised were the demands "Oust Woodcock—Defeat the Sellout! For a Class-Struggle Leadership in the UAW!" and "No Support to Arab Regimes, Butchers of the Palestinian Resistance!"

The rest of the left capitulated in one way or another to the demonstration's Arab-nationalist mood. The Maoist Revolutionary Union, which played a leading role in organizing the demonstration in the Arab-American Coordinating Committee, was careful to keep its political line completely indistinguishable from the mass sentiment. Neither the RU leaflet nor speaker for the occasion in any way helped to prepare Arab workers for the inevitable struggle against the treacherous Arab rulers, both reactionary sheiks and demagogic nationalist colonels.

Like black nationalism, Arab nationalism (particularly in the U.S.) can only play a divisive role within the working class, serving to further isolate a doubly-oppressed layer without in any way providing a political basis for its liberation. Only the building of an international Leninist vanguard party of socialist revolution—the rebirth of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky—which unites all racial and national groups behind its proletarian internationalist program can lead a struggle capable of smashing capitalism and thereby liberating the world working class and all oppressed peoples. ■

Marcus Raves On, Part 2 "RATS!"



Lyn Marcus

Apparently in preparation for his current class series, entitled "Beyond Psychoanalysis," National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) leader Lyn Marcus wrote an internal document "Trotskyism as Organized Sexual Impotence," dated 20 August 1973, from which we reprint excerpts below.

...As many know, I have had to confront the hazard of "massive rejection" by potentially everyone with whom I am associated, repeatedly, to sometimes attack the entire membership of our tendency at all costs. It is this not-so-easy chore, repeatedly confronted, which has been the special personal quality demanded of me, otherwise our tendency could not have come into being nor grown....

...The "Trotskyist," not-accidentally so, has transferred certain of his special religious needs from the Christ of religion to the "Trotsky" of "Trotskyism." "Trotsky" has become the image of Christ in Gethsemane, Christ crucified. "Trotskyism" is the cult of the passion of Trotsky, his blood that of the Lamb of God, and the entire liturgy of "Trotskyism" either a strictly canonical Requiem Mass ("Trotskyist orthodoxy") or a Lutheran cantata. It is a chiliastic image of man, squatting in earthly impotence, unable to consider actually changing the world, dreaming self-righteously of the embrace of Heaven, where "Trotsky" stands smiling, waiting to embrace the faithful one who has given long, suffering years of impotent service to the Faith on earth....

...The fear of rats, or sometimes insects substituted, is the deeper mental image which one locates "underneath" the immediate impulses for sexual and other social impotence....

...Rats! See them approaching! See their beady eyes! So many beady eyes all looking at us! Ugh! It almost seems that rats have hands! Stand still! Let's hope they pass us by! Shut up! Do not move! Perhaps they will not be annoyed by our presence! Be like a rock—anything inert, unalive; the rats must not see us! Or, perhaps we can convince them that we, too, are rats!?!???

Impotence! Fear of rats! CIA-rats, KGB-rats, FBI-rats, trade-union-official-rats, Left-rats generally. Rats! Rats! Rats! Save yourself! Be impotent! The rats hate anything which is not impotent! There are so many rats!

Gigantic, awfully monstrous beetles, malevolent beetles with beetle eyes and gigantic sexual organs are coming to rape us!

You are at work. You fear the employer-rat, who will destroy you with hunger and depersonalization. You look at your fellow-employees as the rat-employer's eyes turn evilly against you; your fellow-employees are turning into rats, too. Rats! Rats! With their evil, beady eyes, there are so many of them! Be impotent!

You are before a union meeting. The union members turn into rats. You "forget" what you were going to say, and say something obviously foolish (impotent) instead, or you close your inner eyes against the audience and recite to the skies, cautiously not directing anything you say to the inside of the rats; do not provoke the rats; evoke their sympathy for your pathetic self-righteousness, for your innocent (impotent) sincerity of belief. It is only your "little thing;" you are not actually trying to change the world, you are begging only for a little sympathy. Seeing that you are impotent after all, the union members look a little less like rats. You are alive; you have survived. The rats did not attack you; you reassured them with your impotence.

Live! Be a rat! Be a sadist! If you are a woman, find a susceptible man for your female sadism. You feel better; you are one of the rats; the rats, therefore, may not attack you, especially the gigantic, awful rat of a mother-image inside you.

Live! Be a rat! Be a male masochist with a woman. Find a woman to be a surrogate for your mother, and prostrate the awful gigantic rat of a mother-image

sadist within you with another woman. Good! You have suffered self-degradation at the hands of the surrogate-mother-image of this woman-rat. You feel better at the same time you feel the awfulness of that degradation. Mother always loved you again after you were punished. Degrade yourself with a woman; that is the way to be loved again.

Rats! The furies who revenge the Gods upon those who commit the crime of hubris—the crime of potency.

Impotence is the fear of rats, the rats who hate anything human. Do not expose your humanity, do not reach for the humanity of another. Live a private life of Hell, keep your frightened Self cowering within the rat-mask you wear for the edification of the world of rats. Be impotent; be a "Trotskyist."

Present-day "Trotskyism" has seized upon the failures of the living Trotsky to create a morbid cult of self-righteous sexual impotence around his name. Most conspicuously in such a case as the U.S.A.'s tiny "Spartacist League," or the so-called "Trotskyists" of the other Schachtmanite [sic] cults, the name of Trotsky has been degraded into a premise for introducing the most obvious manifestations of sexual impotence as "orthodoxy." In other cases, such as those of the Healeyites [sic] or the followers of Mandel, the direct connection to impotence in the bedroom is more veiled, although ultimately no less decisive.

...The male, at the same time, oppresses the woman by encouraging her sadism. In the extreme case, we have the commonplace Madonna-whore pattern of the "Latin lover." This pathetic victim of Latin motherhood (only Black ghetto mothers tend to be as effectively sadistic to their male children as Italian or Spanish mothers) divides his mother-image into two parts: one, his Madonna-wife, whom he touches with guilt, and the other the whore, the degraded woman who permits him to be a pure beast....

...In Left politics, the same pattern persists as "Trotskyism" (in particular). One sets out to love the workers as potential revolutionaries, yet, meeting the workers, actually speaking to workers, becomes a degraded act in the same way as the proximity of the bed affects marriage. One "takes a position." The worker and the "Trotskyist" are both degraded in the same fashion as Lady Chatterly (Lawrence's wife-mother and the "Trotskyist" alike) and her gardener (the worker). The only term which adequately expresses the outcome of such Left political antics is Blah, and then more, Blah, Blah, Blah. It is a very bad morning after the night before, like a night in bed with an existentialist, the most sexually impotent of all lovers.

...Sexual life—and Left politics—is generally dominated by exactly such fantasy. The so-called program of the "Trotskyist" group is essentially nothing but such a pathetic fantasy, through which he says, chiefly: "This is my current fantasy, otherwise known as my party's program, my political position." The Trotskyist can imagine a large audience of workers or others swooning in admiration at his fantasy-speeches; one has but to watch a member of the Spartacist or Workers Leagues in action to catch this performance with the greatest clarity. Such a "Trotskyist" never imagines himself or herself actually penetrating the inside of the worker and changing him. It is all the fantasy of a sexually-impotent person.

We, by contrast, address ourselves to the deep feeling of impotence in the worker, evoke this terror within him, charge him with destroying himself and his family by his infantile submission to authority. We give him no peace, and no alternative but that of organizing for expanded reproduction. We are not impotent, and the "Trotskyists" and other Leftists therefore hate us deeply—because we confront them with the fact of their political and sexual impotence.

The time has come to deal more seriously with this. We shall no longer make merely an implicit threat to reveal the sexual impotence of these pathetic "Trotskyists" to them. We shall pull up the image of their own sexual impotence, their own terror, from within their unconscious processes, and hold it before their eyes until the echoing unconscious knowledge of the truth of what we say comes bursting forth into their conscious recognition. Then, they have no choice but to accept our terms or dissolve themselves. We shall do the same for the working-class generally.

Forum

The Crisis in Leadership: The Need for a Vanguard Party

Speaker: SUSAN ADRIAN
Spartacist League
Central Committee

Sunday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
Trinity Methodist Church
13100 Woodward

DETROIT

For information call: (313) 921-4626

For A Class-Struggle Alternative to the Woodcock Machine—

Unchain the UAW!

1973 has been the year of the Great Betrayal by the labor bureaucracy. The U.S. working class is being subjected to staggering increases in the cost of living. Food prices alone soared upwards by 19 percent in the last twelve months. Yet the corrupt Nixon regime has been able to enforce its vicious anti-labor wage-control policies without difficulties, despite its almost total isolation due to the revelations of the Watergate scandal. More than 700 contracts came up this year affecting more than five million workers, yet strike activity for 1973 represented a nine-year low! This is through no fault of the ranks.

Not since the CIO leadership initiated the World War II No-Strike Pledge has the real role of the labor tops been so sharply revealed. In 1973 we have seen the great reformer Arnold Miller of the UMW, in office only a scant two months, launch a campaign against wildcat strikes. I.W. Abel of the Steelworkers, himself brought to power by an earlier rank-and-file revolt, signed a no-strike pact with the steel barons to last four years. The "progressive" Harry Bridges of the ILWU signed a no-strike pledge in a desperate (and successful) effort to head off a dock strike. Cesar Chavez, darling of the Kennedy liberals, simply dissolved the grape strike, thereby threatening the very existence of the UFW, rather than mobilize the ranks for a militant struggle against the Teamster/grower conspiracy. When we speak of the labor bureaucracy as the agents of the bosses inside the workers movement we are simply giving a factual description of their activities in the last year!

Pistols, Lies and Vote Rigging

The most blatant example of this scabbing has been given by the supposedly "liberal" Woodcock leadership of the United Auto Workers. Not content with negotiating an incredibly rotten contract, which does not even keep wages in line with soaring prices, the Woodcock gang is determined to shove this garbage down the throats of the UAW membership no matter what. This meant mobilizing more than 1,000 union bureaucrats to crush the wildcat strike at Detroit's Mack Avenue Stamping Plant in August. This meant ordering re-votes when Ford skilled tradesmen turned down the sellout contract. This meant hiding key sections of the contract in secret "letters of agreement" with the companies. This meant "reinterpreting" the union constitution so that skilled workers no longer have veto power over the contract as was agreed to at the 1966 convention. (This provision was an undemocratic violation of the principle of industrial unionism, but Woodcock's unilateral abrogation of a convention decision had the sole purpose of thwarting militant resistance to the sellout.) This also meant simply eliminating the tradesmen's right to vote on the contract, since the revisions to be worked out between the UAW and Ford will not be submitted for membership ratification.

But this is not all! UAW leaders have not only taken to shooting rank-and-file militants but, according to sources in Local 600, pistols are even

being brandished at executive board meetings to force the contract on the middle-level leadership. And when the entire Local 600 (River Rouge) rejected the contract by a vote of approximately 15,000 to 11,000, Solidarity House suddenly stopped reporting vote totals altogether and ordered re-votes for production workers as well.

According to the UAW's undemo-

front of the UAW headquarters.

"...UAW craftsmen [following rumors of impending re-votes] were jangling Detroit's newsroom telephones off their hooks, charging 'dirty pool' and 'the fix is on.'"

As we reported in our previous issue (WV No. 33, 23 November) the atmosphere surrounding the re-votes in Local 600 was, according to one source,



UAW bureaucrat gunning for militant during contract dispute.

NEW YORK TIMES

cratic "unit voting rule" the entire Local 600 vote should have been recorded against the contract, which would have been sufficient to turn it down nationally. Woodcock & Co. say the contract was ratified. They lie! Both production workers and skilled workers voted down the Ford contract on the first vote! We challenge the UAW to publish the unit-by-unit vote totals on initial balloting.

War on the Ranks

The trouble around the Ford contract began with the skilled workers, who went into a state of virtual rebellion when they learned that concealed terms of the contract threatened the jobs of those who refused "voluntary" overtime (see the "secret letter" reprinted below). According to the *Detroit Free Press* (19 November):

"They [the skilled tradesmen] had won a qualified right to strike over subcontracting of their work and they had won a form of voluntary overtime. On the other hand, they might be replaced by subcontractors if they refused weekend overtime. It's like putting it in one pocket and taking it from another," said one tradesman.

The skilled trades units reacted sharply to this underhanded deal, rejecting the contract by a vote of 20,086 to 5,943 nationally. Emotions ran high. According to the same *Free Press* article:

"...at one ratification meeting after another, it was learned after the votes were in, the union officials were shouted down after a chorus of jeers and catcalls.

"The resentment ran so deep that at one debate in Local 600 a picture of the late UAW president Walter Reuther was torn from the wall. And pickets smashed a lock on a Solidarity House gate so they could get closer to the

front of the UAW headquarters. that of a "war going on between the top leadership and the middle leadership." Workers were physically threatened and intimidated into voting the "right" way, and a pistol was reportedly drawn on a member of the Local exec by another bureaucrat at a board meeting. The tension broke into the open when Michigan Casting Center unit president David Mundy allegedly shot a militant after an argument over the contract at the time of the re-votes.

The rejection of the Ford pact by the tradesmen sent the Woodcock clique into a state of frenzy. Sounding like a White Citizen's Council in the deep South, the UAW tops blamed all the trouble on the media and "outside agitators."

"...UAW President Leonard Woodcock termed one media account of the shooting of a union member by a local union leader 'sensationalism.'

"When the hassle boiled over into the senseless shooting near the Local 600 hall, Woodcock asked why nobody inquired about what the worker who was shot was doing there.

"The fact is, he was there to vote 'no' in a ratification election he did not know had been called off, a rerun that he thought never should have been called in the first place.

"He was there to do what the sitdown strikers did in the 1936-37 glory days of the UAW at Flint—dissent."

—*Detroit Free Press*, 19 November

The Bureaucracy Isolated

The incredible behavior of the "liberal" Woodcock bureaucracy only confirms its isolation from the ranks. What did they expect? It doesn't take "outside agitators" to tell auto workers that the 1973 contracts are sellouts and an insult to every UAW member. Woodcock tries to portray these pacts as modest victories. But what has been won? The "right" to be forced to work a 54-hour week (remember the 40-hour week which the union won before World War II?), with "voluntary overtime" thereafter... provided your attendance record has been perfect, not many workers take the same day off and the union secretly agrees to let outside contractors do the work at lower wages! This is no "contract gain" but a blatant effort to help the companies fight absenteeism.

Woodcock also "won" a provision extending a new hire's probationary period to six months, putting part of his wages into a fund to be paid only at the end of probation period—thereby making it financially attractive to the auto companies to fire large numbers of new workers. This provision (which allows the firing of probationary workers without cause) effectively guts the possibility of a serious fight against speedup in many auto assembly plants. And on the inflation front, Woodcock won a "whopping" three percent (that's right!) per year wage increase as prices are skyrocketing at more than double that rate. The bureaucrats try to ram this rotten deal down auto workers' throats and when they gag on it UAW leaders blame... "outside agitators"!

This performance is nothing new for Woodcock. During the wildcat strikes at Detroit Chrysler plants last August/September, the UAW tops also

THE "SECRET LETTER"

October 26, 1973

Ford Motor Company
The American Road
Dearborn, Michigan 48121

Attention: Mr. Malcolm Denise,
Vice President

Gentlemen:

If skilled trades personnel declines to work overtime hours under the Memorandum of Understanding at any location and this results in an insufficient number of tradesmen to perform necessary work to maintain operations, the Company may take the following steps to get the required work done during such hours: (a) upgrading unskilled Company personnel or assigning them to assist in doing work normally done by skilled tradesmen (without regard to the requirements of any upgrader, changeover or similar agreements); (b) hiring part-time temporary employees; or (c) utilizing employees of an outside contractor. If not enough skilled tradesmen who normally would be called in for such work volunteer for two successive weekends, the Company will be deemed justified to invoke the above alternatives for whatever period is necessary to be assured that the required work will get done.

Very truly yours,

Ken Bannon, Vice President
Director—Ford Department

7

World Oil Tangle

and sell directly to the European governments.

Qaddafi's challenge provoked consternation within the Nixon administration, with some officials advocating a coup against the upstart Libyan fanatic. After much debate and diplomatic goings-on in Europe, the American government capitulated to the Libyans. The decisive reason was that the Europeans would have tolerated, even welcomed the elimination of the American middlemen in order to deal directly with the Arabs. According to James Akins, a leading State Department official involved in the Libyan situation:

"It seemed unlikely, indeed inconceivable, that France, Germany, Spain or Italy would have allowed [Qaddafi's cutting of oil production] to happen; especially as the goal would apparently have been only to protect the Anglo-Saxon oil monopoly, which they had long sought to break."

—Foreign Affairs, April 1973

Qaddafi's victory put backbone into OPEC. Since 1970, there has been a continual spiral in the posted price of Arab crude oil and of the Arabs' share in it; the posted price has risen from \$1.80 to \$5.10 per barrel and the royalty share has gone to 55 percent (*Economist*, 24 November 1973). This price spiral is purely the result of the Arab state oil company capacity to organize and use monopoly power. Pure economic factors alone might well have led to a fall in crude oil prices since the Persian Gulf has enormous reserves extractable at constant real cost. The fundamental political condition for the effective use of this monopoly power has been and remains the desire of the European powers and, to a lesser extent, Japan, to replace the oil companies and deal directly with the sheiks, thus preventing a bloc of oil-importing nations.

The Oil Majors Twixt Mecca and Washington

There is a considerable overlap in economic interests between the oil companies and the Arab states. The way the system works, the oil companies almost always gain from higher posted prices since they are usually passed on through higher gasoline and other oil product prices. Very conveniently such price increases can be blamed on Arab pressure. One anti-company oil expert, M. Adelman, reports a British executive saying that prices are raised to cover tax increases. "and leave some over" (*Foreign Policy*, Winter 1972-73).

However, the oil companies are concerned (in a sense that the sheiks are not) that too-rapid price increases accompanied by shortages will lead to a political backlash. Since oil is basically an intermediate product important sections of the American bourgeoisie have an interest in low fuel prices. Thus the forces potentially hostile to the oil monopolies extend far beyond the left.

While the oil companies would like to steadily jack up prices, the present politically motivated boycott directed against the U.S. government is the last thing they wanted. Given the state of demand, it would be more profitable to sell all the oil they can extract. But more importantly this boycott creates near perfect conditions for popular attacks on the oil companies; they can be believably accused of colluding with enemy states, driving up prices to make outrageous profits and pushing the economy into a slump. If the pro-Zionist forces were clever enough to adopt a popular demand which would also undercut left-wing support for the Arabs, they would call for nationalizing the oil monopolies.

Since American imperialism is currently not in a position to simply smash Arab nationalism, the oil majors have a strong incentive to reach compromises

with the sheiks. From their standpoint, U.S. support to Israel is an unnecessary handicap when bargaining with Faisal, Qaddafi and Company. The oil monopolies are, therefore, the most important anti-Zionist interest group within the American bourgeoisie. However, they do not want to intensify the Arab campaign against Israel since this could lead, in short order, to a confrontation between the Arab states and U.S.—like the boycott. In any serious conflict between Washington and the Arab oildoms, the oil companies could only be chewed up by both sides as treacherous partners, the usual fate of strategically placed neutrals. The oil monopolies did not organize and do not want this boycott, but would like to see it ended by conciliating the Arabs through a marked change in U.S. foreign policy.

For Greed and Piety: Faisal Radical Nationalist

The most important reason that the U.S. tolerated the growing strength and wealth of OPEC was that its two leading members were ruled by pro-Western reactionaries—Shah Pahlevi's Iran and King Faisal's Saudi Arabia. Faisal had publicly opposed using oil as a political weapon and had promised to supply the U.S. with all its oil needs (if the price was right). Moreover, he had put his oil where his mouth was by forcing the liquidation of the attempted oil boycott following the 1967 Arab-Israel War.

However, last spring Faisal began talking about how the volume of Saudi oil exports was dependent on a reversal of the U.S.' pro-Israel policy. While the full reasons for Faisal's rather abrupt about-face may never be known, no

doubt he believed his uniquely favorable economic position would enable him to succeed in blackmailing the U.S. Probably he had visions of going down in Islamic history as the liberator of Palestine. Faisal's religious motives should not be dismissed. It is reported that while he is prepared to allow Egypt and Syria to work out the general terms of settlement, he insists that the "holy city of Old Jerusalem" be returned to Moslem hands. On a more mundane level, the boycott has enabled Faisal to outflank the republican nationalists on the left and still the money keeps rolling in. Praised by Allah, the masses and his bankers—he is in a rare state of perfection for any man. Faisal cannot enjoy it for long.

It should not be thought that the Saudi king is being pushed to the left by the pressure of the radical nationalists. On the contrary, Faisal is the hard, driving force behind this boycott, with the so-called "radical" states playing the role that Faisal did in 1967. Iraq, pleading poverty, has not cut its oil output so much as one barrel; Libya and Algeria have made only nomi-

nal cuts in their production. Because they are not cooperating with the Saudi policing machinery, it is reported that Iraqi and Libyan oil is filtering through to the U.S. (*Wall Street Journal*, 19 November)!

Faisal's boycott serves a useful purpose in showing up the Stalinist and revisionist notion of an "implacable" conflict between the "progressive nationalist republicans" and the "pro-imperialist feudal reactionaries" as so much hot air. A Faisal-Sadat axis now dominates the Arab world and, from a nationalist standpoint, that is how it should be. Faisal's oil weapon has done more harm to Israel than Egyptian arms or "Arab socialist" rhetoric, and every serious supporter of Arab nationalism should hail the god-given ruler of the last bastion of chattel slavery as his rightful leader. Those, like the SWP, who claim that "consistent" nationalism leads to socialism should now invite the Arabian king into the socialist movement. No doubt Healy and Wohlforth will claim that the ever-deepening "Arab Revolution" (a revolution not directed against the Arab ruling



Libyan leader Qaddafi (right) and Egyptian president Sadat (center).

Will Arab Oil Boycott Cripple U.S. Economy?

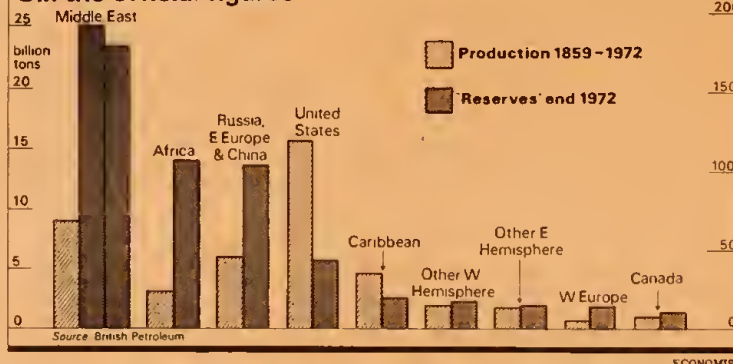
Historically the American ruling class has pursued the very same policy that it now condemns the Arabs for—state restrictions of the current production of crude oil and natural gas. The primary reason was military-strategic and secondarily to keep up prices, which is why the control system has been supported by the oil majors. In a system going back to Roosevelt's New Deal, the Texas Railroad Commission determines the current flow of crude oil from U.S. wells. Production and prices of natural gas, the main heating fuel, are likewise extensively controlled by the Federal Power Commission.

The Contrived "Energy Crisis" of Early 1973

The "energy crisis" began last year with a bureaucratic screw-up over natural gas regulation. Failing to anticipate either the rapid inflation or increased real demand, the Federal Power Commission kept the natural gas price too low for profitability, only one third of the price of imported gas, leading to an actual decline in gas production in the early months of this year (*Foreign Affairs*, April 1973). This is what caused the brownouts last winter in the Midwest and western states.

The natural gas shortage led to a sharp unexpected increase in demand for heating oil, creating the second stage of the "energy crisis." After heavy investment in refineries during

Oil: the official figures



the 1962-66 boom, the oil companies found themselves with excess capacity during the 1969-70 slump. So they stopped building refineries and ran out of capacity in 1972. The only way they could produce additional fuel oil was to cut back on gasoline production.

Naturally the oil monopolies used the cutbacks to drive out independent gas dealers by giving them no gas, while keeping their own stations adequately supplied. The anguished cries of bankrupt gas station owners both gave the impression that the oil shortage was worse than it was and led to the belief that the oil monopolies had created a completely artificial shortage.

In his April 18 energy policy state-

ment, Nixon, while paying lip service to environmentalism, capitulated to the oil companies. Price controls were removed from natural gas and taxbreaks were given for new refineries, wells and exploration. It is important to recall that the "energy crisis" of Nixon's April "energy crisis message" had nothing to do with a shortage of Arab oil imports. On the contrary, Nixon's policy called for a short-term increase in oil imports, removing all tariffs and quota controls. Even the most alarmist experts did not foresee any shortages of Arab oil before the 1980's. Despite the pro-Zionist purpose of his remarks, Harvard economist Wassily Leontief is undoubtedly correct in tracing the pre-boycott "energy crisis" to "gross mis-

classes) has forced even Faisal into its camp. Faisal's present role shows how utterly reactionary is the position that Zionism should be defeated not by the Hebrew and Palestinian workers and peasants, but by the Arab states.

What Will the Imperialists Do to the Sheiks?

The militarily powerless Arab oil-doms—"gazelles in a world of lions"—in Senator Fulbright's words—will not be allowed to do grave damage to the economies of the capitalist powers with impunity. However, the tactics in dealing with the sheiks present real problems.

The easiest solution would be a pro-American coup against Faisal. Analogies to what happened to Mossadegh when he nationalized the Iranian oil fields in the early 1950's are now being banded about in diplomatic circles. The influential conservative London *Economist* (17 November) is openly calling for an anti-Faisal coup. Quite likely the CIA unit in the Persian Gulf

whose assignment had been to prevent a republican-nationalist coup against the king has received a new, more difficult assignment—depose Faisal and replace him with a U.S. puppet regime.

However, there is damned little social basis for a pro-American coup in Saudi Arabia. This can be seen by contrasting the present Saudi situation with Iran in the early 1950's. Mossadegh's National Front, a petty-bourgeois movement (supported by the strong Stalinist Tudeh Party) had nationalized the oil fields in the face of opposition from the traditionalist ruling elite centered around the Shah. Moreover, the oil companies and great powers successfully boycotted Iranian oil driving the nation into bankruptcy. In contrast, there are no Saudi political groupings to the right of Faisal and this boycott is immensely lucrative for all sections of the Saudi ruling class. It is doubtful whether the most venal, ambitious and embittered officer in the Saudi army would sell his soul to the Americans to depose Faisal with his new stature as an Islamic hero. (Come to think of it, Faisal is in a better position finan-

cially and politically than Nixon, who at this point might be willing to trade the presidency for a sheikdom!)

A reverse economic boycott, including the confiscation of Arab financial assets in the West, is also being bruited about in ruling circles. Total economic war against the Arabs, backed up by comprehensive rationing and other wartime-type measures might well work. Losing most of their money and finding their nations economically dependent on the Soviet Union, the sheiks would probably capitulate.

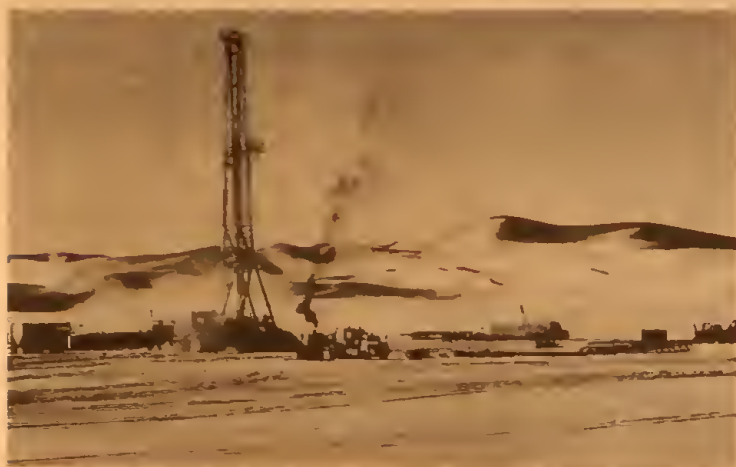
However, in reality, an effective economic boycott against the Arabs is a non-starter. It would require an impossible degree of cooperation between the capitalist powers. And the European and Japanese working classes will not accept the sacrifices of a full-fledged war economy in order to make the Sinai safe for the Israeli army.

That leaves direct military intervention as the most likely potential weapon against the boycott. This is the logical weapon since the sheiks are weak militarily, while strong economically, and currently enjoy considerable moral authority with their own people.

Should it come to invading the Persian Gulf, it will probably not be done by the marines, but by the U.S.' most important client state in the area—Shah Pahlevi's Iran. For several years the U.S. groomed the Shah to maintain order should the Arab-Israel conflict disrupt the steady flow of oil. As the Shah puts it, he will "not tolerate a subversive presence in the Gulf" (*Economist*, 7 July 1973). The Shah demonstrated his ruthlessness in 1970 by seizing three Persian Gulf islands, which were claimed by the Arabs. Exuding humanitarianism, the Shah has made his opposition to the boycott ominously clear:

"...why are you continuing to shut off oil supplies and reducing production? Oil is like bread. You cannot cut it off during time of peace. Why do you want to look as if you want the world to starve?"

—*New York Times*, 22 November



ECONOMIST

management on the part of our oil industry, abetted by our government" (*Harvard Crimson*, 21 November).

Pro-Zionist Oil Experts vs. Arab Conciliationist Oil Experts

It is virtually impossible to assess the ultimate impact of the Arab oil boycott on the U.S. economy because all relevant information is systematically distorted by rampant partisanship. Even the most elementary facts are hard to pin down, with the U.S. government admitting that it has no independent data on oil supplies, relying on that provided by the oil companies themselves. The 23 October *New York Times* states that Arab oil imports are 1.5 million barrels a day out of a total consumption of 18 million barrels. However, in the 25 November *New York Times* we read that by January imports will be down by 3 million barrels a day.

The major economic forecasting centers, such as at the Wharton School of Business, are making projections by assuming a decline in oil imports of 2 million barrels a day (*Economist*, 17 November). A group of pro-Zionist economists claimed the oil deficit will not exceed 12 percent (*Harvard Crimson*, 21 November), while Nixon is talking about a 17 percent deficit (*New York Times*, 26 November), and a recent Library of Congress study shows a possible 35 percent deficit by next month (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 24 November).

In general, the pro-Zionist spokesmen minimize the impact of the oil boycott, while Arab-conciliationist forces (particularly the oil companies) tend to maximize its importance. A leading spokesman for the "Arab oil is more important than Israel" school is James Akins, State Department official specializing in the Near East, main

author of Nixon's April "energy message" and newly appointed ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Akins' article on the oil crisis in the April 1973 *Foreign Affairs* is therefore an authoritative statement of those ruling class elements which believe the necessarily increased dependence on Arab oil requires a sharp change in U.S. foreign policy. Akins' main concern is indicated early in the article:

"Even King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, who has said repeatedly that he wishes to be a friend of the U.S. and who believes that communism is a mortal danger to the Arabs, insists to every visitor that U.S. policy in the Middle East, which he characterizes as pro-Israel, will ultimately drive all Arabs into the Communist camp."

An important part of Akins' article is his defense of the Nixon administration for not taking a harder line against the oil cartel, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Akins claims a harder line would have been undercut by the other capitalist powers:

"The general attitude [of the other capitalist governments] was that the U.S. was becoming vaguely hysterical as its import needs grew; the U.S., they thought, worried too much about losing Arab oil. This was something they, the Europeans and Japanese, did not need to think about. Israel was a millstone around the neck of the U.S.; this was the U.S.' choice; the Europeans and Japanese could make their agreements with the Arabs."

Akins believes that Arab oil is economically necessary, the Arab bargaining position strong, the other capitalist powers indifferent or hostile to U.S. interests in the Near East and continued unconditional support for Israel therefore no longer in the best interest of American capitalism.

Akins' arch-enemy is M.I.T. professor M.A. Adelman. Adelman argues that there is no physical shortage of Arab oil, which can be extracted at constant real costs. He blames the "oil

crisis" on the collusion of the Arab states with the oil monopolies whom he charges "are now agents of foreign powers" (*Foreign Policy*, Winter 1972-73), a collusion which is condoned by the Nixon administration. He argues that a hard stand by the U.S., lining up the other capitalist powers, would have broken the oil producers' cartel, ending any oil shortages.

However, Adelman is aware that the European powers are more inclined to ally with the Arab states against the U.S. oil companies than vice versa. This small flaw in his grand scheme Adelman blames on irrational nationalism:

"Hence it would be literally worse than useless for the U.S. to take the first steps, without firm assurance from at least France, Germany, Italy and Japan that they would not try to replace the American companies. These countries are still obsessed with vain notions of getting 'access' or 'security' through their own companies..."

—*Ibid.*

Adelman is unable to discern divergent interests among the imperialist powers. The 1973 Arab-Israel war revealed the state of inter-imperialist relations which has existed since the late 1960's. The traditional (since World War II) subservience of Western Europe and Japan to U.S. foreign policy was not based on rejecting the concepts of "security" and "access" but rather upon the hegemony of the American bourgeoisie. With the erosion of American economic and military power, U.S. imperialism has been reduced to the position of first among equals. The differing interests of the nationally-limited bourgeoisies are now being reflected in increasing (though still muted) conflicts over trade policies, monetary questions and now the Near East and oil. Adelman's writings are basically polemics for the quaint notion of a U.S.-led cartel of oil-

continued on page 10

If the boycott goes on long enough, the Shah's army, proclaiming sympathy for a "starving world," will turn the oil spigots back on.

Right now the imperialist powers are temporizing in the belief that the Arabs will back off. And this seems to be what is happening. The Arabs reversed their projected 5 percent cut in December oil shipments in return for official statements by West Europe and Japan supporting the U.N. resolution calling for Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories—statements that could have been forthcoming without the boycott. The main theme of the recent Arab summit was the need for moderation in using the "oil weapon." Mahmoud Riad, Egyptian Secretary General of the Arab League set the tone in talking about using oil "in a judicious way" (*New York Times*, 27 November). For the present the imperialists are banking on the self-liquidation of the boycott. If this doesn't happen, there will be threats and violence.

Who Will Win?

The boycott represents a defeat for European nationalism, particularly Gaullism. The Gaullist officials going around Paris boasting of France's "privileged position" in the Arab world must be well guarded. The Pompidou government appears to have overlooked one small fact—the American companies control the oil distribution. While the Arabs may allow France to have enough oil, the American companies will not; they have cut deliveries to France 10-15 percent asserting that the world shortage must be shared equitably (*New York Times*, 26 November). Moreover if the oil shortage precipitates an economic downturn in the rest of Europe, France will be dragged down too even if the Seine were overflowing with oil. The oil boycott reveals the basic dilemma of Gaullism—how to be a great power through diplomatic maneuvering without the economic and military base.

In a sense, the Arab boycott is based on an over-valuation of the strength and independence of European powers. Nothing that Whitehall or the Quai d'Orsay can say will move one Israeli soldier one foot. The Arabs obviously believed that the Europeans and Japanese could pressure the U.S. to change its Near East policy, that the U.S. would rather sacrifice Israel than see its "alliances" strained. This is not true and therein lies the fatal flaw in the "oil weapon."

The present situation is intolerable for all parties involved. The U.S. has had its economy threatened, its alliances weakened, while Arab economic power and policy remain intact. The European neutrals have had their economies damaged, have humiliated themselves diplomatically and the Arabs remain dissatisfied that they can't do anything about Israel. The Arabs have played their highest card, the oil boycott, achieving only diplomatic gains, while ensuring that all the capitalist powers are determined to eliminate their "oil weapon" one way or another. And Israel faces only more diplomatic isolation and more war.

Within the framework of the imperialist system, there are only two ways out of the present stalemate. The U.S. will line up the Europeans behind it in order to smash the Arabs and ensure the oil supply. Or the Europeans will be drawn into a full-fledged alliance with the Arabs leading to direct conflict with the U.S. Without a revolutionary proletarian solution to the Near East conflicts, there can only be one or another kind of imperialist war. ■

Notice

The next issue of **WORKERS VANGUARD**, No. 35, will be dated 4 January 1974.

Continued from page 9

Arab Oil Boycott

Importing nations. This is why Adelman's critics accuse him of living in the 1950's.

Adelman's views are popular among pro-Zionist liberals since they are simultaneously anti-Arab, anti-oil company, anti-Nixon and anti-Gaullist. Basing themselves on Adelman's analysis, a group of prominent pro-Zionist economists recently issued a statement against submitting to "oil blackmail" (*New York Times*, 21 November). The group includes such important Democratic Party advisers as John K. Galbraith, Paul Samuelson and Robert Solow. Expectedly they argue that there is little connection between the energy "difficulties" (they reject the term "crisis") and U.S. support for Israel:

"...they believed the fear of the oil embargo's impact on the American economy was greatly exaggerated and that they saw only a 'limited and transitory' connection between the current fuel shortage and Arab-Israeli conflict."

—*New York Times*, 21 November

The analysis and solutions of these pro-Zionist academics (including four Nobel Prize economists) has a large component of wishful thinking. If the oil companies had invested so as to meet demand without raising prices, if the major importing nations would form a common bloc against the Arabs... then there would be no oil shortage. Well, when pushed against a wall sections of the ruling establishment start believing in miracles. It is ironic and significant that when the workings of the real capitalist economy are not to their liking, even anti-Marxist, "free enterprise" ideologists like Paul Samuelson instinctively grope toward a socialist solution—international economic planning!

However, the working class—which is already being asked to pay the price of the "energy crisis" through layoffs and higher gasoline and heating oil prices—cannot rely on out-of-power bourgeois technocrats to defend it from the oil monopolies. With the oil companies, the government and both pro-Arab and pro-Zionist interests trying to manipulate the "energy crisis" to their own ends, the labor movement must organize to force the opening of the books of the monopolies. "Business secrets" are always invoked by the companies when justifying layoffs, plant closings or price rises. And simply in order to preserve its present inadequate standard of living the working class is forced to demand an end to this "sacred" right of free enterprise—or accept defeat at the hands of the capitalists.

There's Money in the Oil Shortage

To focus solely on different currents within the ruling circles and their academic advisers would give a distorted picture of the contending forces. The interests of the oil companies, which are not the interests of the American ruling class as a whole, are very much a factor in the present "oil crisis." This year's "energy crisis" has been anything but critical to the oil companies' finances.

Since last March prices of domestic crude oil have doubled and profits have

risen almost as much; third quarter profits for Exxon increased by 80 percent, for Gulf by 91 percent and for Mobil by 64 percent (*Oil and Gas Journal*, 12 November). The oil monopolies thus have a stake in maintaining a seller's market, as long as it does not provoke a political backlash. On the other hand, since oil is an important intermediate product, large sections of the bourgeoisie have a stake in cheap fuel and don't like the oil companies.

The oil companies' primary concern during the present crisis is not producing and delivering more oil. It is making sure that the political reaction does not affect their private property rights or the play of "free market" prices. The oil industry has launched a major campaign to ensure that scarce oil is "rationed" through rising prices and not through physical allocation at current prices or by higher sales taxes.

An editorial in the 12 November *Oil and Gas Journal*, the main industry trade journal, has the refreshingly candid title, "Oil Profits Not High Enough...." The *Wall Street Journal*, which unlike the *New York Times* considers the level of next quarter's profits of the major corporations more important than the long-term interests of American capitalism, is championing the oil companies' cause. Its 20 November editorial has the following to say about oil policy:

"...no group of bureaucrats is wise enough to take the place of market mechanisms in curbing wasteful use of resources with minimum economic disruption.... Shale oil for example might become economically feasible if the price of crude oil reaches \$8.50 a barrel, but only if the industry can capture that \$8.50.... The surest way to cut demand and at the same time to maximize production is to free the price of oil and oil products."

In brief, the oil companies tend to exaggerate the oil shortage both in reality and in public opinion; and to utilize the crisis atmosphere to maximize prices.

Again, as with the question of business secrets it is necessary to pose a class program to the "sacrifices" being demanded by the voracious appetites of the ruling class. The demand for the expropriation of the oil companies, without compensation, under workers control is clearly the only real answer to continued victimization at the hands of these exploiters. It is doubly necessary to raise this question today when the bourgeois press is trying to blame the whole oil crisis on a few Arab sheiks and Muslim fanatics, thereby absolving Exxon, Royal Dutch Shell, Texaco, et al of all responsibility.

The Environmentalists Attack

Much of the doomsday reaction to the oil crisis results from the doomsday predictions of the environmentalists. Whenever serious raw material shortages occur, a section of bourgeois ideologists jump to the conclusion that economic growth is absolutely limited by natural resources. The current worldwide economic boom producing sky-rocketing raw material prices has also produced a vocal

school of environmental pessimists.

Environmental pessimism is a classic bourgeois ideology and there is little written today by Dennis Meadows or Barry Commoner that cannot be found in Malthus and Ricardo, who also believed that natural resource scarcity, specifically in agriculture, would lead to zero economic growth. Since zero economic growth under capitalism means zero growth of profits and ever-increasing unemployment, environmentalist austerity cannot be an important political movement. Environmentalism is limited to an academic and journalistic pressure group with a few advocates from the fringes of political power, like Ralph Nader and Kennedy's Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall.

The zero growth professors will have zero political impact... unless they feed into bourgeois economic nationalism. To a certain extent this is now happening. During the current worldwide boom, raw material import prices have risen much faster than that of finished manufactures. Raw material prices have actually doubled within the past two years (*Wall Street Journal*, 14 November). As a result an increasing share of the surplus value generated within the U.S. is going to the owners

excuse for deflating the economy or that both of these are the case. Given Nixon's abysmal "track record" so far this year in mismanaging the economy, there are reasons for assuming the latter.

It is no secret that the Nixon administration has pursued a deflationary policy throughout this year, hoping that rising unemployment, slack capacity and unsold inventories would finally curb inflation. Nixon did not want an absolute economic downturn, preferably a period of minimal growth—the so-called "soft landing." Until last week the Federal Reserve has pursued a tight money policy since spring, leading to ever-climbing interest rates and ever-tumbling new housing construction.

NEW YORK TIMES



UPI



Top: Symbol of National Iranian Oil Company. NIOC may open gas station chain in New York, while Saudi capital invests in North Sea oil. Bottom: cars line up for gas during shortage.

of foreign natural resources, including not only a section of the American bourgeoisie, but also the Persian Gulf sheiks and Latin American juntas.

Both for military-strategic and economic-profitability reasons, there is growing sentiment within the American ruling class that a smaller national product containing a much smaller fraction of imported raw materials would be in its interest. While the zero growth advocates will never achieve political power, an alliance of environmentalist austerity with national economic isolationism could produce policies disastrous for the American working class.

Is the Oil Crisis an Excuse for Nixon Deflation?

Nixon's cutbacks in oil consumption appear excessive in terms of the imports reduced by the boycott. Nixon's latest policies are aimed at a current reduction of 1.7 million barrels a day, with more cuts to come. This is slightly more than the reported 1.5 million barrels of imported Arab oil. Some of the Arab oil will be made up by other exporters; Iran and Indonesia have pledged to increase oil exports to the U.S. and some Arab oil is filtering through the boycott (*Wall Street Journal*, 19 November). Gulf Oil President Bob Darley has stated that U.S. reserves are adequate to maintain current consumption levels through the winter, despite the loss of Arab oil, and still have a stock of 55 million barrels on April 1st (*Wall Street Journal*, 19 November). One is forced to conclude either that serious oil shortages would have occurred this winter regardless of the boycott, that Nixon is using the Arab boycott as a politically convenient

tion and home-appliance sales. Social security taxes have been raised and if Nixon wasn't so totally unpopular, he would undoubtedly try to raise income taxes. Nixon's oil austerity program may partly be a politically expedient alternative to even higher interest rates, raising taxes or cutting government expenditure.

Even without the help of Nixon and widespread oil shortages, the American economy was headed for a bad year in 1974. The rate of economic growth fell from 8 percent in the first quarter of 1973 to 3 percent in the third quarter (*Economist*, 24 November). In the 20 July *Workers Vanguard* we predicted, "It is fairly certain that the value of output will decline by late this year and that the physical volume of output will decline in the early and middle months of 1974." Nixon oil policies, whether or not justified by the extent of physical shortages, make this prediction virtually certain. Should the economy turn down, an unlimited supply of oil would not in itself overcome it.

It is clear that the ruling class will now seek to blame any layoffs, further inflation, in short any source of economic discontent on the oil boycott. General Motors, which normally shuts down for a period during the winter and whose record sales of last year were clearly unsustainable, says it is closing down several plants for a week because the gasoline shortage has reduced sales of larger models. No mention that price inflation and record high interest rates might dampen auto sales. It is important that revolutionary Marxists try to prevent the rampant economic discontent being deflected from the capitalist system and its defenders and channeled into chauvinist hostility toward "Arab aggression."

The Middle East: Proletarian Revolution or National Genocide

Speaker: DAVID EASTMAN
Spartacist League

Saturday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.
Second Unitarian Church
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CHICAGO

Forum

Battle in the USec

in fact generally due to their marginal social weight and/or predominantly petty-bourgeois composition.

According to the USec Majority document:

"It is through the combination of unity in action and political differentiation that the goal of transforming the bulk of the forces of the new vanguard into a level capable of qualitatively modifying the relationship of forces with the bureaucratic apparatuses can be attained. It is through this combination that the ability to lead much broader mass struggles and more advanced forms of mass self-organization than in the past can be won...."

To the extent that this "theory" is pure impressionism, it contains a kernel of reality. In the years since about 1968, the advanced capitalist countries have certainly witnessed the partial radicalization of strata of young and minority-group workers, sections of the petty bourgeoisie (particularly the students, always a volatile and politically unstable social grouping) and currents moving left from social democracy, New Left Maoism, Stalinist and Pabloist organizations, etc. In this period the Spartacist League in the U.S. has grown more than sixfold, predominantly, though not exclusively, from such strata. But for us, the attempt to intersect these transient opportunities and polarize and recruit from these strata is a tactic (which we, like Trotsky, label regroupment) and not a "strategic" substitution of these volatile and politically unformed strata for the conscious vanguard itself. Most important, any orientation toward revolutionary regroupment must have at its core the intransigent defense of the Trotskyist program rather than, as with the Pabloists, being a cover for abandonment of the fundamental principles of the Fourth International.

For the USec opportunists, the "new mass vanguard" is only the latest in a long succession of Pabloist nostrums, beginning with "entrism sui generis" and including notably "the Red University," which have as their core the attempt to wield social forces other than the conscious and organized industrial working class as a "blunted instrument" of revolution. The "new mass vanguard" is only a reformulation of the Ligue Communiste's previous catchphrase, "from the periphery to the center," which postulates that the mobilization of marginal and petty-bourgeois social layers can magically "grow over" into support within key sections of the proletariat itself.

SWP Bemoans Class Collaborationism

The question of popular frontism was raised by a May 28 letter to the Ligue Communiste's Political Committee from the SWP's Political Committee dealing with the 1973 French elections. The letter is a masterpiece of sober Trotskyist orthodoxy in criticizing the Ligue's adaptation to the French CP-SP-left Radical Union de la Gauche, which the SWP letter characterizes as "a projected electoral bloc with bourgeois forces, the ultimate goal being a coalition government."

In its reply dated June 14, the Ligue PB is reduced to all the standard evasions: the SWP is turning principle into "dogma," the SWP is not taking into account the "concrete circumstances" in France. The Ligue insists:

"We have said that the Union of the Left was not, and could not have been, a new edition of the Popular Front, even if its program, like that of the Popular Front of 1935, was a program for reforming bourgeois society."

It goes on to explain that the objective circumstances have changed since 1935 so that today the Union of the Left leaders are forced to pose (in an admittedly reformist manner) the transition to socialism by stages:

"They do not say that because they want to; they say it because not only the present social crisis but especially the temper of the masses during this crisis place the question of the transition to socialism on the agenda as a concrete task of the day...."

Truly these people are the legitimate heirs of Michel Pablo and his "new world reality," whereby the impact of the irreversible revolutionary process was such that "Stalinism can no longer betray."

But the real irony resides in the SWP's cloaking itself in sanctimonious orthodoxy, its lecturing the Ligue for its manifest appetite for class collaborationism, despite the fact that since 1965 the central domestic thrust of the SWP has been class collaborationism par excellence in the antiwar movement. This total political liquidation into a series of class-collaborationist antiwar front groups began early on—as both sides in the current fight would like to forget—with the slogan "Stop the War Now," which in no way even implied a demand for immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. Tailing the leftward motion of the antiwar movement, the SWP moved to the social-patriotic "Bring Our Boys Home Now" (the USec Majority—which now gently suggests that propagandistic activity in support of the victory of the other side might have been a good idea—passed this one without demur at the time).

It was only when the bourgeois-dominated antiwar movement had gotten defeatist enough for the SWP's NPAC to manage to corral not merely the usual motley collection of pacifists, Stalinists and miscellaneous petty-bourgeois types but, at long last, a bona fide labor bureaucrat, Victor Reuther, and a real live United States Senator, one Vance Hartke, that the SWP graduated to even the demand "Out Now." But at no time did the SWP attempt to organize opposition to the war on an anti-imperialist, class-struggle basis. And now the SWP's Joe Hansen can criticize the Ligue's popular frontism in France—about as well as for example Gus Hall (in a period of Cuban/Russian friction) could lecture Castro about the virtues of a Leninist proletarian perspective.

More Irony

In the absence of any pole of authentic Trotskyism, the current USec faction fight is centrally characterized by irony. Irony number one is the SWP's Internationalist Tendency. The old Proletarian Orientation Tendency began in 1969 by condemning the SWP majority for tailoring Ernest Mandel in refusing to seek to apply the Transitional Program in the labor movement. Today most of the PO leaders are organized into the IT and its West Coast counterpart and uphold the USec Majority whose principal spokesman is, lo and behold, the old PO bugbear Ernest Mandel.

Although SWP-loyalist and deliberately agnostic on questions of program, the old PO had one strength: an impulse toward recognizing the centrality of the organized working class in social revolution. It was this impulse which led the PO into opposition to the SWP leadership. Now the core of the PO is again in opposition, having embraced for this purpose the USec Majority's central strategy of petty-bourgeois guerrillaism and the "new mass vanguard."

The IT is an unprincipled conglomeration, leftist within the SWP spectrum, of some elements resisting the clear degeneration of the SWP into reformism and others bent on pursuing new revisionist appetites which entail the total negation of Trotskyism. An excellent example is the USec Majority position on Vietnamese Stalinism, justified by the argument—which conveniently permits opportunist adaptation to the "anti-imperialist" rhetoric

of the Maos, Castros and Ho Chi Minhs so popular among the radicalized petty bourgeoisie—that Stalinism is "a unique historical phenomenon," i.e., unique to the Soviet Union.

Irony number two is the English IMG. Nobody has given a better empirical characterization of the rotten hypocrisy of the SWP than one Clarissa Howard, a leading spokesman of the IMG (reprinted in *SWP Internal Information Bulletin* No. 3, June 1973). But what is the IMG? The IMG gives unconditional support to the right wing of the IRA, preferring the Provisionals' militant terrorism to the Officials' fuzzy reformist projection of Green/Orange class solidarity against the English occupation of Northern Ireland.

And the IMG has just precipitously moved from condemning the British Labour Party as a capitalist twin of the Tories to calling for the unity of all political elements against the Tories—and this moreover in the context of an upsurge in electoral support for the decrepit bourgeois Liberal Party! Beneath the brittle ultra-leftist shell of the IMG is revealed the thinly-disguised hoary reformist scheme of a Liberal-Labour coalition.

Irony number three is the Canadian split. One need merely examine the fruits of the USec supporters', the League for Socialist Action (LSA), maneuverings within the Waffle Caucus of the New Democratic Party. It is clear that the pro-SWP Canadian leadership made a complete botch of the first real opportunity in decades, with the result that some of the left Waffle and some of the former LSA entrists now find themselves in the RMG, aligned with the USec Majority.

But the LSA leadership policy which apparently resulted in these defections was precisely a resolute faithfulness to classical Pabloist deep entrism, the concept of pressure-group work for step-at-a-time polarizations. In order to escape the LSA's orthodox Pabloist entrism tactics, the Canadian leftists have run to the USec European Majority, which accepts the whole methodology of Pabloist tailism, applied however in a different period. These European heirs of classical Pabloism now wish to give only retrospective approval to "entrism sui generis" while frolicking in the greener pastures of the "new mass vanguard."

For the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

But the real irony is a bitter faction fight in which all contenders claim the banner of Trotskyism while among all of them no characteristic pole of authentic Trotskyism exists. And this vacuum is no accident. As the history of the Spartacist tendency shows, Hansen and Frank have a real unity at least in the prompt and savage expulsion of bona fide revolutionary Marxists wherever they appear, hoping to deform or destroy them but in any case to get them out of the way.

However much the USec contenders may complain of current violations of democracy, appeal to the guarantees of the original 1963 "reunification" or lecture one another about a federated concept of internationalism, the real test came early, with the SWP's 1963-64 expulsions of the Spartacist tendency for its "disloyal" political views and with Pierre Frank's contemptuous hands-off refusal to consider our 1965 appeal to the United Secretariat.

In a disgustingly hypocritical letter, which thoroughly exposes the current complaint by the USec majority against "SWP federalism" as a fraud, and appears doubly ludicrous in the light of the "Barzman letter," Pierre Frank replied to our appeal:

"...we call your attention first of all to the fact that the Fourth International has no organizational connection with the Socialist Workers Party and consequently has no jurisdiction in a problem such as you raise; namely, the application of democratic centralism as it affects the organization either as a whole or in individual instances."

—Marxist Bulletin No. 4

The USec's trump card has always been the line that even if it's very bad

indeed, it's "the Fourth International." The ostensibly Trotskyist forces (by no means numerically insignificant relative to the totality) which have stood outside the USec are well aware that this claim is nonsense, but within the USec the myth is prevalent and has two effects: not only to discourage tendencies from struggling for clarity as soon as they perceive the organizational implications, but also to reinforce political weaknesses in those who do eventually leave, leading them into eccentricities (such as the "Fifth International" position of the former Leninist Faction of the SWP, part of which is now calling itself the Class Struggle League) which if consistently followed do constitute a break from Trotskyism. This enables the USec to frighten the next wave of potential oppositionists with the horrible example of what happens to those misguided leftists who leave the fold.

One of the little ironies enlivening the fight within the SWP is that there are not one but two myths, and these are in contradiction: "if you leave the SWP you have no future"; and "if you leave the 'Fourth International' you have no future." What are the naive and the uncommitted to do now that the SWP and the "Fourth International" seem to be leaving each other?

To the serious would-be Trotskyists in the SWP/USec we say: do not be goaded by the manifest revisionism of those close at hand into embracing its ostensible opponents; do not be tricked by the smooth point-scoring which conceals on both sides a fundamental abandonment of Trotskyism. The United Secretariat is not the Fourth International, and the advanced disintegration of the International Committee and the deep cleavage of the USec represent not an inglorious end to Trotskyism but a most promising condition for its rebirth. Toward this rebirth the authentic revolutionary Marxists must proceed with determination, rooted in Trotskyist principle, to seize the opportunity while the revisionists stand revealed and in disarray. ■

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REVOLUTIONARY
LITERATURE

WORKERS VANGUARD

A Falling Out Among Thieves—

Renegades from Trotskyism Battle in the USec

The so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" is currently preparing for its "Tenth World Congress" with a series of national conferences held in each country by the USec's affiliates and sympathizing groups. These national conferences are in accordance with the recommendations of the United Secretariat adopted unanimously on September 19 with the apparent intention of forestalling a split between the International Majority Tendency and the "Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency" led by the USec's fraternal U.S. associate, the Socialist Workers Party. The September 19 recommendations specified an agenda for the "World Congress" of "the world political situation"; Latin American perspectives (Argentina and Bolivia); European perspectives (the "new mass vanguard") and "the statutes of the Fourth International." The recommendations prohibit disciplinary actions against supporters of either side and grant voting rights at the "World Congress" to all USec sections and sympathizing groups. They also urge that "the united moral authority of the Fourth International be brought to bear" to reunify those national sections in which there have already been open splits between the supporters of the two sides.

The September 19 recommendations seem to constitute an attempted détente, giving at least the appearance of seeking to avoid an immediate split prior to or at the "Tenth World Congress." There is a certain objective basis for such an attempted pull-back. A year or two ago, with characteristic over-optimism, both the would-be reformists of the SWP wing and the petty-bourgeois centrist extremists of the USec Majority wing thought they smelled the chance for real influence and even power through the pursuance of their composed lines. In Argentina, the USec Majority-sponsored PRT's "military arm," the ERP, was waging an all-out guerrilla campaign against the military government. In contrast, the SWP-endorsed Moreno group (currently the PST) had thrown itself into electoral politics in one of the flimsiest "bourgeois-democratic" edifices ever.

The French Ligue Communiste, mainstay of the international Majority, was saturated with enormous illusions about its early prospects in France. And toward Allende's Chile (although both sides had little actual support within the country) appetites ran rampant. (The SWP's Jack Barnes labors under the misfortune of having said on April 26 that the situation in Chile was "likely to provide [the workers] with a period of relatively favorable conditions to carry on the class struggle. ... As a by-product of this revolutionary class struggle, they can win significant concessions from the ruling classes, including greater democratic rights on the political arena.") With both sides believing that they were on the track of the conquest of power,



Marshalls at July 1971 NPAC meeting attacked SL and PL supporters protesting presence of Senator Hartke, UAW's Victor Reuther at the mike.

the freedom to pursue their appetites unconstrained by dissent from factional opponents seemed an urgent necessity.

Only a few short months later, the illusions of instant success stand shattered. The Ligue, having undertaken an adventurist confrontation with the French police in connection with protesting a fascist rally, promptly found itself formally dissolved. The bourgeoisie flicked its little finger and Allende's "Chilean road to socialism" was only a memory. In Argentina, Perón is the uncontested master, with the terrorists and legalist-electoralists alike existing only on the evident (and increasingly problematical) suffrage of the bonapartist regime. These sharp blows, demonstrating that power was still far away, rendered more abstract the clash of perspectives between the two sides.

Compromise Doomed

Yet the collapse of these grandiose expectations appears to have been unable to halt the momentum of the sharpening confrontation. As the exchanges and characterizations indicate, the conflict had already reached a point more consistent with open opponents than a clash of tendencies within a common organization. Thus the discussion was envenomed when the SWP leadership intercepted and published the now-infamous "Barzman letter" of May 15, an extremely embarrassing item which graphically demonstrated the extent of collaboration between the USec Majority and the "Internationalist Tendency" within the SWP, and among other things attributed to a Ligue leader the position that the international Majority is "the real place for discussion, the real international."

Naturally the SWP charged the USec Majority with having created a "secret faction," but also in effect accused the European leaders of bad faith dating

back to the original "reunification" whereby the USec was formed in 1963. In its statement of August 17 the SWP-led grouping formally declared itself a faction struggling to oust the USec Majority leadership. The list of signatories to this declaration indicates strong support in the U.S., Canada and Argentina and some lesser support in fifteen other member or supporter sections.

The rather more political reply by the "IEC Majority Tendency" countered by charging the SWP and its international co-thinkers with violating the rights of USec Majority supporters in the SWP, publicly attacking the USec leadership and line, seeking to prevent the holding of the "World Congress" and having a federalist conception of the International. The document appends an expanded list of signatories centering in France and England, but with considerable representation for Israel, Spain, Sweden and the U.S. as well as some support in ten other affiliated or sympathizing groupings.

In six countries (Peru, Argentina, Australia, Mexico, Canada and Spain) the USec sections are already split into publicly competing groups politically allied to the two sides. More significant than the mere fact of six splits is the fact that these encompass almost every country where USec-Majority and pro-SWP wings have polarized over a period of more than a few months. The notable exceptions are England and the U.S.

In England, the SWP's tendency seems to have simply separated itself out while preserving a formal unity, standing aloof from the rest of the faction-ridden International Marxist Group. In the U.S., the oppositional IT and a more cautious grouping on the West Coast remain within the SWP, with the IT teetering on the brink. Thus it is not that "some" splits have taken

place in particular countries; rather, *the split on the national plane is essentially an accomplished fact.*

Particularly galling to the SWP leadership must be the Canadian situation: the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière has just experienced the third and final pull-out of USec Majority supporters, all now congregated in the Revolutionary Marxist Group. The Canadian movement has historically been the SWP's playground; thus the emergence of a USec Majority group as an open competitor in Canada is, if not goring the SWP's ox, at least stepping on its tail. In parallel fashion, the SWP had some success in the USec Majority's backyard, helping to rip to pieces the USec's promising Spanish group.

"New Mass Vanguard"

The hot issue of the dispute continues to be Latin America: USec Majority advocacy of exemplary guerrillaist extremism vs. SWP-style legalist-reformist "party building" (see "Guevarism vs. Social Democracy in the USec," WV No. 23, 22 June 1973). However, debate in recent months has also elaborated differences on popular frontism and the European USec leadership's new "strategy" of the "new mass vanguard." According to the Draft Political Resolution of the IEC Majority submitted in September, the "new mass vanguard can be characterized in most succinct fashion as the totality of forces acting independently and to the left of the traditional leaderships of the mass movement." This so-called "layer" is thus a purely eclectic false category defined negatively as whatever manifestations of radicalism are not under the hegemony of the reformist mass organizations (Stalinist or social-democratic workers parties, trade unions, etc.). Their "independence" is

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- This subject index covers those issues of *Workers' Action* (Nos. 7-10) which were produced in New York City, thus reflecting a shift in editorial perspective from previous editions of this publication. *Workers Vanguard*, which incorporated the *Workers' Action* publication, is indexed by subject from issue No. 1 through the end-of-year issue of 1973 (No. 34).
- The fullest listing is by **SUBJECT**. Names, personalities, organizations mentioned in articles are usually not listed separately. No article is listed twice; refer to cross references for guidance in locating particular articles.
- Entries relating to foreign countries are listed under geographical headings, and not necessarily under any other subject heading. Unless listed separately for some unusual reason, all foreign political organizations are listed under appropriate geographical heads; U.S. political organizations are listed under their organizational names.
- Trade-union articles are listed under the name of the occupation, e.g., **AUTO WORKERS**, **MINE WORKERS**, **PHONE WORKERS**, etc. Articles dealing with trade-union policy, history, etc. will be found primarily under **LABOR: GENL.** and **LABOR: MARXIST HISTORY**.
- Articles dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict and directly related countries and issues (e.g., Egypt, Palestine) will be found under the major subject head: **NEAR EAST**.
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