

Britain's Winter of Class War

For A General Strike Against Tory Lockout!



British miners

MANCHESTER GUARDIAN



Railway workers demand higher wages.

WORKERS PRESS

11 JANUARY—By imposing draconian measures including a three-day workweek (40 percent wage cut) and massive cutbacks in government spending for housing, schools, hospitals and social services, Britain's Tory government is making perhaps the most concentrated attempt by a capitalist regime since the Great Depression to reduce the living standards of the working masses in an advanced country. These depression-generating policies are justified by Conservative Prime Minister Heath by a supposed "national interest" in crushing the work stoppages by the miners and railwaymen and in maintaining state wage controls. But behind this smokescreen of patriotic rhetoric, the naked conflict between the capitalist government and the labor movement is so obvious, so deep and so explosive that even the American bourgeois press has begun to write about "class war" in Britain.

Economic Boom, Tory Style

This winter of class war comes after a relatively good year for British capitalism. During 1973 the U.K. economy grew at a 6.5 percent annual rate, the highest in capitalist Europe. This boom was partly a result of the normal business cycle, coming after three years of slump. Equally important, however, was the help from a successful state wage-control policy which the trade-union leadership verbally op-

real income of British working people has declined steadily since last summer, the victim of a 10 percent rate of inflation and Tory wage controls.

Britain's uncompetitiveness is an absolute and narrow barrier to economic expansion. Increasing incomes always induce more imports than they generate in exports. Consequently British booms are always cut short by rising balance of payments deficits. And so it is in the winter of 1973-74, with this pressure greatly intensified by the runaway price of oil imports. The highest growth rate in capitalist Europe was accompanied by the largest balance of payments deficit in the world, an estimated \$2.8 billion in 1973 (*Economist*, 5 January 1974).

Common Market Blues

Despite the economic boom, the negative effects of British entry into the Common Market have made themselves dramatically clear to working people. Recent opinion polls show that opposition to membership in the Market strongly outweighs support. With good reason: the EEC's agricultural protectionism is disastrous for a country which imports most of its food; since entry British food prices have risen about 20 percent (*Wall Street Journal*, 18 December).

The elimination of tariffs on goods from Western Europe could only damage Britain's antiquated industries. Contrary to the popular image, Britain is now a net importer of cars and machine tools. More than 50 percent of its imports are manufactures, not food or raw materials. And during 1973, British imports from the rest of the Common Market exceeded U.K. exports to the continent by a third. Britain ran a balance of payments deficit with every Common Market member except Belgium and Ireland!

To compensate for the known economic disadvantage of Common Market membership, Heath was relying heavily on promises of unilateral grants from the rich uncle of the EEC, West Germany. This was to come in the form of a regional fund channeled into dying industrial areas, like the Scottish Clydeside shipyards. The regional fund is a quaint notion whereby ruined industries would be subsidized by the foreign capitalist firms that helped bankrupt them, thereby negating the whole purpose of international capitalist competition.

Under the best of circumstances, German aid to Britain would have been quite limited. And this winter is not the best of circumstances. Facing a recession at home, German Chancellor Brandt adroitly kicked Heath in the face, defying the Common Market over the regional fund. Heath is asking for roughly \$3 billion, the EEC commission is proposing \$2.25 billion, while the Brandt government has refused to pay a penny over \$600 million (*Economist*, 29 December 1973). With major conflicts over oil and the regional fund, this winter's economic crisis may witness the disintegration of the "rich man's club," the capitalist Common Market. It would

continued on page 2



British Prime Minister Edward Heath

posed, but went along with in practice.

1973 also saw a marked decline in strikes, the fewest since Heath took office in 1970, as a result of this passivity of the labor tops. The "industrial peace" was the result of a conscious effort by the union leadership to deflect workers' hostility to the frankly anti-labor Heath government from industrial action into electoral hopes. Bolstering such illusions was the task of the formally more leftist Labour Party program adopted last fall (see "A Left Face for Labourism," *WV* No. 33, 23 November 1973). But as a result of the Labour leaders' do-nothingism, the

**The Rise and Fall of the
League of Revolutionary
Black Workers...4**

**The Leninist Policy
toward
Immigration/Emigration
...6**

Continued from page 1

...Tory Lockout

be a good thing for the international working class.

Tories Lose, Labour Loses

The labor/economic crisis occurs at a time of general disillusionment with the traditional two-party political alignment in Britain. As the liberal *Guardian* (5 January) succinctly put it, "Neither of the big political parties any longer commands much confidence." The unpopularity of the Heath government results not only from the rampant inflation and falling living standards, but also from the ties between the Tory regime (which sanctimoniously preaches austerity in the "national interest") and the most venal, parasitic section of the British capitalist class. If the Heath government is perhaps not quite as totally morally bankrupt as Nixon's, the difference is not great. As a columnist for the *London Times* (18 December) wrote:

"It was not only the bombs which made us willing to accept Churchill's demand for blood, toil, tears and sweat. It was our conviction that when he got them he would not waste them, either by giving them away to the rich or by building follies with them. Our present leaders do not, to put it mildly, carry such conviction."

However, the Labour Party has gained little from the widespread belief that the Heath government is essentially a rip-off operation for the idle rich. Industrial trade unionists, the core of the Labour Party base, do not look forward to a second Wilson government with great enthusiasm. They remember that the first Wilson government (during the late 1960's) attempted to carry out the three most unpopular acts of the Heath government—state wage control, restrictions on trade-union power (through the National Industrial Relations Court) and entry into the Common Market. At the same time, the leftward motion of Labour's working-class base has deprived the reformist party leadership of the bourgeois support it had in the 1960's. At the time, Wilson campaigned as the rational, effective manager in the manner of Willy Brandt. Today he is widely regarded as an unprincipled, and moreover ineffectual, maneuverer trying to straddle the growing gap between middle-class liberal voters and the increasingly militant socialist working class.

On the electoral level, the disillusion with Heath and Wilson has manifested itself in a series of victories in by-elections (to fill vacancies in Parlia-

ment) for the Liberals, the nineteenth-century "enlightened" bourgeois party which lost most of its base with the development of the Labour Party. Equally important has been the growth of the Scottish and Welsh nationalists, the latter in alliance with the Liberals. Outside the electoral arena, there has been marked growth of those political forces to the left of Labour, notably a significant strengthening of the Communist Party (CP) within the unions.

A general disillusionment with the traditional political alignments is usually a good situation for the growth of a revolutionary organization. However, in the case of opportunist elements it can also stimulate appetites for class collaboration in order to "get a piece of the action." It is interesting that at present such tendencies are evident both on the extreme right and in the extreme left of the British workers movement.

The Labour right wing has demonstrated considerable interest in a parliamentary bloc with the Liberals. This is not only because the Liberals may well hold the parliamentary balance of power, but also because they could provide right-wing Labourites with a bourgeois ally to counter the power of the trade unions. During the past year one of the pro-Common Market Labour M.P.s, Dick Taverne, split to form the Democratic Labour Party, a small harbinger of motion toward a right Labour-Liberal coalition.

On the "revolutionary left," the International Marxist Group (IMG), British section of the ostensibly Trotskyist United Secretariat, is pushing for a "broad" unity of all forces opposed to the Tories, no doubt dreaming that this maneuver could catapult it into a major political force:

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

—*Red Weekly*, 31 August 1973

Explicitly modeled on the ill-fated French Union of the Left, such a formation would be a classic "popular front" linking the Labourites, Stalinists and centrists to the Liberals and the no-less bourgeois Scottish and Welsh Nationalists. Such a formation would be a major obstacle to building a revolutionary party, whose political goal is the independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie. The reason Marxists raise the demand of a labor party based on the unions (in the U.S. and other countries where there is no mass workers party) is precisely to break the workers from the bourgeois parties. The IMG's "broad" anti-Tory unity would have exactly the opposite effect.

Miners and Railwaymen Take on Heath

Taking advantage of their increased bargaining power as a result of the oil crisis, the miners, railwaymen and power station operators acted to break through Heath's 7 percent wage limit. Faced with a consistently reactionary government and soaring living costs, the unions adopted the justifiable tactic of a slowdown (where they would still be paid) rather than a full-fledged strike. The miners refused to work overtime and the railwaymen adhered strictly to the contractual and legal safety regulations. It is a telling fact about the real conditions of the British working class that the miners can cripple the economy by only working a five-day week and the railwaymen by refusing to violate official operating standards!

Despite the militancy and strategic importance of the miners' action, the National Union of Miners' leadership, including the CPers, is running it as a localized apolitical wage dispute. The NUM has not opposed Heath's Phase III

wage control in principle, arguing only that the miners should be treated as an exception; and they are now shying away from challenging the government's 7 percent wage increase limit, instead bargaining over "wash-up time" pay.

The miners' basic wage of \$58 to \$83 a week is not even adequate to maintain the existing labor force: 600 miners a week leave the industry for less dangerous, unhealthy and brutal jobs elsewhere. Much higher wages for the miners would be in the rational interests of British capitalism, not only because of their strong bargaining position at present, but simply to attract more labor into what should be an expanding industry, given the present oil supply situation. Thus there is considerable sentiment within the British ruling class to buy off the miners as an exception to wage controls, while hanging tough with the railwaymen and other sectors. It is essential, therefore, for

the attempt of the British ruling class to present an important, but still essentially trade-union, struggle as an insurrectionary conspiracy can only help create the political atmosphere for a revolutionary crisis.

For its part, the Tory government has been giving ominous hints that it is prepared to use a mailed fist against the labor movement. Britain is currently under an official "State of Emergency," declared on November 14 of last year, for the fifth time since Heath came to office. Sections 17 and 18 of the Emergency Powers Act permit a cabinet minister to authorize the armed forces to enter any premises, with whatever means necessary, to implement regulations for the maintenance of electricity and gas supplies, while section 32 makes interference with essential services an offense of sabotage. Another government demonstration of force took place with the massive mobilization of the British Army, com-



KEEP LEFT

Welsh miners march against Heath's Phase Three in December.

the miners, railwaymen and other unions to coordinate their wage negotiations and not permit themselves to be played off against one another.

While it is possible that the miners may eventually be favored in order to break the ominous (for the capitalists) working-class unity, Heath is currently set on crushing the miners. Since it was a mine workers' strike in the winter of 1971-72 which shattered his first attempt at wage austerity, Heath now appears obsessed with showing the miners who's boss; he sees this conflict as a supreme test of his right and capacity to rule. What the Heath government is willing to do to defeat the miners goes far beyond the rational interests of British capitalism. The miners' action has, therefore, created one condition that often paves the way to a revolutionary situation: that is, when the vested interests and actions of a particular regime diverge sharply from the real interests of the ruling class, isolating the government from any popular support.

Tories Play the "Red Scare" Tune

One of the reasons that Heath is obsessed with the miners' union is that it has a strong Communist Party fraction, with public CPer Mick McGahey (head of the Scottish miners) known as the hard-liner in the top leadership. Heath is reported to have told a Common Market gathering in Copenhagen that the Communists are trying to bring down his government. Simultaneously the influential conservative *Economist* is running a campaign against the "red menace" in the labor movement, threatening a police state if the Stalinists and other left-wingers are not curbed by the "moderates." Like Heath's professed determination to fight to the bitter end,

plete with numerous Scorpion tanks, to surround Heathrow Airport last week. Although ostensibly directed against "international terrorists," the extreme measures were interpreted by several observers as a warning to labor as to what might be Heath's answer to a general strike.

What is needed above all else in such a situation is obviously a revolutionary leadership for the workers movement. Yet this is precisely what is most lacking. The fact that the government is being challenged by a union with a strong CP presence is circumstantial (except in the sense that the miners' traditional militancy would incline them toward the Stalinists rather than more traditional Labourite reformists). And the Communist mine workers' leaders are dealing with the situation essentially as a militant wage struggle unrelated to any revolutionary strategy. McGahey goes out of his way to emphasize the unpolitical nature of the overtime ban:

"As far as bringing down the Government we had an all-out strike by the miners in 1972 and there was no talk then of us trying to bring down the Government... Every time there is industrial trouble the Government and press start scratching around for conspiracies."

—*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 5 January 1974

"For this [overthrowing capitalism], you need an ideological struggle and I'm only conducting an economic exercise at this stage."

—*Wall Street Journal*, 18 December

The Communist Party's reformist "there's-nobody-here-but-us-militant-trade-unionists" line not only blocks any effort to turn the job action into a revolutionary struggle against the bourgeois state, but disorients the miners even on the level of trade-union struggle, since it is crucial to actively mobilize the British working class

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Bi-weekly of the Spartacist League

Editorial Board:

Liz Gordon (chairman)
Jan Norden (managing editor)
Chris Knox (labor editor)
Karen Allen (production manager)
Joseph Seymour

Circulation Manager: Anne Kelley

West Coast Editor: Mark Small
Southern Editor: Joe Vetter
Midwest Editor: Steve Green

Published by the Spartacist Publishing Company, Box 1377, G. P. O., New York, N. Y. 10001. Telephone: 925-8234.

Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.

simply in order to win the desired wage increases.

Heath Opts far Depression Measures

Short of armed force, the Heath government has resorted to the most drastic possible measures to break the miners' job action. It has brought incredible suffering to the entire working class in order to pressure the miners back to work. It imposed a three-day workweek on some 16 million out of Britain's 25 million wage earners, claiming that shortages of coal necessitated such a measure. Unfortunately for Heath, it is hard to falsify the figures for coal reserves (unlike the situation of the oil companies, who have a complete monopoly on information about their supplies). As of late November, British coal reserves were actually *higher* than they were last year and are now even *higher* than when the miners began a seven-week total strike in January 1972 (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 5 January). These facts are so widely known that even the *New York Times* (3 January) had to declare that the three-day workweek was anti-labor and not an energy-economizing measure:

"But Prime Minister Heath appears less interested in maintaining production and full employment than in bringing the pressure of public opinion to bear against the miners. His apparent aim is to defend his wage policy and halt inflation."

The workweek in a capitalist economy cannot be turned off and on like a water faucet. The shorter workweek will reduce market demand, create bankruptcies, produce supply bottlenecks and lead to general economic chaos. With unemployment already over a million, British Steel is laying off 100,000. Even if the Heath government decided to restore the normal workweek tomorrow, declining production would continue.

And the shorter workweek is only part of Heath's depression-generating policies. Believing that a sharp cut in supply would intensify inflation and the balance of payments deficit, the Heath government decided to cut money demand by simultaneously raising taxes and cutting back budgeted expenditures by close to \$3 billion, the most deflationary government budget since the early 1930's. This measure was so reactionary that the dean of Keynesian economists, Paul Samuelson, sent a letter of unbelieving protest to the *Financial Times* stating: "There is no excuse to have a secondary recession, like so many in capitalism's history, just because we must suffer the primary recession from the oil shortfall" (*Economist*, 5 January).

For a General Strike Against the Tory Lockout!

The British working class has today the organizational strength, will and desperate need to defeat the Tories' anti-labor/depression policies. A general strike against the Heath government is the obvious means to carry out this struggle. But a general strike easily poses the question of state power. Given the treacherous, reformist leadership of the Labour Party and the unions, from Wilson to "leftists" like Jones/Scanlon/Murray and even CPers like McGahey, an insurrectionary general strike could only be beaten, producing a historic defeat on the order of the crushing of the British general strike of 1926.

Leninists do not, like the anarchists, endow the words "general strike" with magical powers; we distinguish a one-day mobilization to protest a government policy, for instance, from an insurrection to achieve state power. A general strike in Britain today should have the *limited, defensive* aim of reversing the policies of the Tory government and bringing it down. Should such a strike be victorious, even under reformist leaders and despite their inevitable attempts to sabotage the struggle, it would then open up a revolutionary situation.

Two ostensibly revolutionary organizations, the IMG and the *Chartist*

Bureaucrats Play Games with NY Long Lines Walkout

JANUARY 11—New York City telephone workers went on strike recently for the first time since 1971, as Communication Workers Local 1150, Long Lines (AT&T, overseas telephone), led a six-day walkout in protest against a physical assault on a union steward by a company supervisor. The supervisor struck the steward on December 24 after an argument over grievances against the supervisor; the blood-stained steward was later suspended for leaving work to get medical attention against the supervisor's orders! The same supervisor had earlier fought with another worker, who was also suspended. However, no action was taken against the supervisor in either case.

Such an incident is indicative of the blustering company reign-of-terror on shop floors in U.S. industries, in which supervisors and foremen who perform no productive, useful functions, administer labor discipline for the capitalists. A physical assault against a union representative is, in addition, a direct threat to the whole organization, and no union worthy of the name should have settled for less than immediate dismissal of the supervisor and reinstatement, with pay and clean records, for the two injured workers.

However, this small strike revealed all the weaknesses of the CWA's partial unionization of the phone company (and of the parent AT&T, which runs Long Lines directly), as well as the weaknesses of the most "progressive" wing of the trade-union bureaucracy. Despite the "left" talk of newly-elected Local 1150 President Anthony Candopoulos about defending the "dignity" of the workers, the leadership settled for simply the lifting of the suspension

of the steward (but not of the other worker!) without pay and with no action against the supervisor!

The leadership capitulated to the company's argument that if the worker struck first, as alleged, even under provocation from a violence-prone supervisor with many grievances against him, it was the worker's fault. Furthermore, no effort was made to mobilize the women operators or explain the underlying significance of the issue to them, with the result that most of them, including many union members, scabbed during the strike. (Unlike New York Telephone Company operators, who are in a separate company union, Long Lines operators are organized—about 60 percent at best—by CWA Local 1150). Such a weak response does not bode well for the union's performance in the upcoming national contract struggle in July, in which the company's complete lack of sick leave, which leads to frequent firings, suspensions, etc., for sick and injured workers, just to mention one of many intolerable aspects of telephone-company working conditions, must be corrected.

Main Lesson: Fight Special Oppression of Women, Minorities

The strike underscored the main lesson of the 1971 strike, and indeed all telephone strikes: a leadership which is unwilling to face the revolutionary implications of a struggle against the special oppression of women workers will be unable to defeat the giant telephone monopoly on even the most minor issues. As long as the operators are working, the company is not shut down and can wear down

even a long, 100 percent effective strike of the more militant male craftsmen.

The Local 1150 operators had numerous grievances, which were naturally used as "excuses" for scabbing. No one organized them to come out (not even the union stewards in many cases!), and over the weekend (when craftsmen are normally off but operators work) there were no picket lines, or only token lines. Operators receive far lower pay and more company intimidation than the craftsmen, including victimization for any hint of militancy, and so can less afford to strike. And did the dispute really concern them? Many operators felt that the strike was caused by nothing more than a falling out of drinking buddies. Would the union leadership have shown the same zeal if the supervisor's victim had been a mere operator rather than one of Candopoulos' pals?

It was questions like these which caused the CWA to lose an NLRB election for collective bargaining rights for New York Telephone operators before the 1971 strike and led to operator scabbing on that strike. The union's low reputation among operators is directly related to the leadership's failure to show the slightest interest in defending operators and its complete lack of a program for the doubly-oppressed women workers.

Unlike the myopic CWA bureaucracy, whose main concerns are to get along with the companies and to protect its fat expense accounts, the government is quite attuned to the danger of an explosion of militant action by minority and women workers in the key communications industry. Its "answer" to the widespread discrimination by the phone company is a series of bogus "Affirmative Action Plans." These include a quota system favoring women, blacks and other minorities, and a joint company-government enforcement board. Rather than advance the position of women and minority workers, however, this plan simply creates more pressure on a limited number of available jobs and provides companies with a weapon to break unions by smashing the seniority system. Partially replacing the old company favoritism with a

continued on page 11

group are now calling for a general strike to overthrow the capitalist system. That an insurrectionary general strike is foreseen is made quite explicit in the *Chartist* (December 1973) front page editorial:

"Above all, we will need a bold appeal, made with all the authority of our movement's commanding bodies, to the working-class ranks of the armed forces. . . . Along this road, we can smash Phase Three, defeat the Tories and conquer state power for our class."

To pose the question of seizing state power (i.e., achieving the dictatorship

ary leadership!

If the IMG and *Chartist* see a revolutionary crisis in Britain, Gerry Healy's Workers Revolutionary Party (formerly the Socialist Labour League) has responded to the current situation most passively. After years of screeching that "The Crisis" is at hand, when Britain actually enters its worst economic/political crisis since the 1930's, the Healyites behave routinistically. (Probably they can no longer tell the difference between a genuine national crisis and the normal level of social conflict.) The WRP is very deliberately *not* agitating for a general strike, the only policy that can actually defeat the Tory depression/anti-labor measures (although they mention it in passing as an eventual possibility). Of the WRP's four main demands for the current crisis, one is to join the WRP, and the most radical is factory seizures in the case of plant closures. The Healyites' policies in the current crisis stay carefully within the bounds of militant trade unionism and, perhaps related to Healy's appetites in the miners' union, not too far from those of the CP.

So far the Trades Union Congress has refused to mobilize in support of the miners and railwaymen. This posture can no longer be tolerated by the British workers. The TUC must call an immediate congress of labor to prepare a general strike organized through shop stewards committees for the following demands:

- Victory for the Miners and Railwaymen—Smash Government Wage Controls!
- Smash the Lockout—Restore the Five-Day Workweek and Rescind Budget Cuts!
- Abolish the Industrial Relations Act!
- Britain Out of the Common Market!
- For Immediate Elections to Oust the Tory Government! For a Government of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress Pledged to a Socialist Program of Expropriating the Bourgeoisie!

Labour Party head Harold Wilson



of the proletariat) in Britain at this time indicates either a belief that the Wilson-Jones-Murray leadership of the labor movement can be *pressured* into overthrowing the capitalist system, or that this can be done spontaneously over the head of the recognized leadership of the labor movement. The IMG tends toward the latter approach, displaying a near-syndicalist indifference to the powerful reformist Labour Party/Trades Union Congress leadership. The adventurist line of *Chartist*, on the other hand, reflects its illusion that the Labour Party, as presently constituted, is a potential soviet which could seize state power after electing a revolution-

Corrections

In our last issue (WV No. 35, January 1974) there were two political errors. In the article "Truckers Tie Up U.S. Highways" a call is made for "price control and fuel rationing under the control of the unions, and opening the oil companies' books to workers' inspection." This formulation is doubly wrong, first because it tacitly accepts the oil companies' claims that there is an oil shortage justifying rationing, and secondly because it fails to raise the clearly necessary demand of nationalization of the oil trusts under workers' control.

The second error occurred in the article "RSL Claims Russia Is Capitalist," where the statement is made that: "The fundamental conflict in the USSR today is a *political* struggle between the working class and the bureaucracy for control of the state apparatus." This statement could be interpreted as ignoring the fact that the USSR is a transitional society and therefore subject also to the conflict between the collective property forms and the still-bourgeois norms of distribution, a conflict which is resolved by the development of the productive forces leading to the achievement of socialism. The political conflict between the working class and the bureaucracy is added to this basic contradiction, but does not replace it.

Soul Power or Workers Power?

The Rise and Fall of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

Crippling three major Chrysler facilities in this past summer's wave of wildcats (including the first auto plant takeovers since the historic sit-downs of the late thirties), the Detroit working class has once again demonstrated its capacity for militant action. It was among the largely black work force of these same inner-city plants that the League of Revolutionary Black Workers was born in the late 1960's.

Unlike other black nationalist groups, the League insisted on the centrality of the working class and, in the beginning, seriously oriented toward organizing at "the point of production." The LRBW and its various autofactory groups (DRUM, FRUM, ELRUM) have since disappeared, inevitable victims of their own internal contradictions. But it is important for working-class militants to examine the League and its evolution, which clearly reveal the incompatibility of nationalist and proletarian politics.

Reuther Betrayals Pave the Way

It was no accident that such a group developed in Detroit, where blacks have long been an important element in the auto plants. At first courted by Henry Ford as a counter-force to unionism, the vast majority nevertheless refused to serve as Ford's scabs in the crucial 1940 River Rouge organizing strike.

The increasing population of blacks in the city and the plants after World War II contributed to the pressure on the Reuther bureaucracy to support the early civil rights movement—a movement characterized by the non-violent protest politics of Martin Luther King and well within the framework of Reuther's "labor-Democratic alliance." But despite Reuther's social-democratic past and demagogic "progressive" image, the "red-haired wonder" failed to apply even these minimal liberal capitalist policies to the widespread racism permeating the lower levels of his own bureaucracy.

This situation led aspiring black bureaucrats to set up such opportunist formations as the Trade Union Leadership Council. The TULC was founded in 1957 by a group of lower-level blacks in the UAW apparatus (like Buddy Battle of Ford's River Rouge Local 600) and black labor diplomats like venerable social democrat A. Philip Randolph, whose main concern was simply to garner a bit of face-saving independence from the Reuther machine, while maintaining its liberal politics.

At the same time, the combination of Reuther's hypocritical liberalism and the impotent pressure-group politics of King and the black bureaucrats provided fertile ground for the spawning of more militant black nationalist political currents and organizations. Detroit is the home of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam, the Republic of New Africa (RNA) and the Pan-African Congress; scene of the Black Economic Development Conference and the "Black Manifesto" (April 1969); and battleground for the race riot of 1943 and the ghetto rebellion of 1967.

The 1943 riot was a result of the mass migration of southern whites and blacks into Detroit during the war. Extremely overcrowded housing and the hostility with which the southern poor whites viewed the relative equality which black workers enjoyed in the war-production plants turned the city into a bloody no-man's land for several days. Yet the mass lynchings elicited little more from the UAW than a pious

call to end racial discrimination and to appoint a black assistant prosecutor in the investigation and a self-congratulatory pat on the back that the bloodshed had not entered the plants!

The conflagration of July 1967 was the bloodiest, and one of the last, of a series of anti-cop ghetto riots that buried the liberal illusions of the civil rights movement. This uprising was the product of a combination of circumstances. On the one hand, the "progressive" Reuther UAW bureaucracy and its liberal Democratic "friends in the White House" had done nothing to stem Detroit's recurring massive auto-related unemployment, which during the 1957-58 recession reached 19.5 percent, and topped 15.2 percent at the height of the next recession in March 1961. More damning still was the unemployment figure for Detroit blacks in the same 1961 period—39 percent, and a phenomenal 78 percent for black youth as compared to 33 percent for youth overall!

On the other hand, for the first time in almost two decades large numbers of young blacks were being hired into the auto plants to replace older white workers. Seniority lists at Detroit's Chrysler plants invariably show a gap for the period 1953-1965 or so. Thus, the upsurge in militancy coincided, as in 1943, with rising expectations on the part of the oppressed black minority (now a majority).

As in 1943, the UAW response was hypocritical do-nothingism. After 43 blacks had been killed by cops and National Guardsmen, Reuther offered a union volunteer crew for cleaning up debris on bloody 12th Street—an offer he never fulfilled.

The Black Panthers' acclaim of black lumpen street youth as the socialist vanguard was made ludicrous



Ken Cockrel

DETROIT NEWS

by the reality in Detroit of 60,000 militant blacks working in the strategic center of American industry. The real social power of blacks rests not with the lumpen street-gang that occasionally guns down an isolated cop in the ghetto, but with the worker who can stop the lifeblood of American capitalism.

Recognizing this reality in reaction to the Panther approach, a group of radical nationalists centered around the Wayne State campus and including

Ken Cockrel, John Watson, Mike Hamlin, General Baker and John Williams (among others) coalesced shortly after the rebellion around a community-oriented paper, the *Inner City Voice*. Some among the original *Inner City Voice* group, such as John Watson, had earlier been around the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, while others came from a Maoist background. They were held together by a vague, but militant, determination to create a "black Marxist-Leninist party." Maintaining their adherence to nationalist ideology, they nonetheless saw that black workers occupied a key role in the American economy and the working class. As Watson pointed out in his pamphlet, *To the Point of Production*:

"Our analysis tells us that the basic power of black people lies at the point of production, that the basic power we have is our power as workers. As workers, as black workers, we have historically been, and are now, essential elements in the American economic sense.... This is probably different from these kinds of analysis which say where it's at is to go out and organize the so-called 'brother on the street.' It's not that we're opposed to this type of organization, but without a more solid base such as that which the working class represents, this type of organization, that is, community based organization, is generally a pretty long, stretched-out, and futile development."

DRUM, ELRUM Lead Wildcats

As a result of its orientation, the *Inner City Voice* group reportedly soon attracted a group of young black workers from the Chrysler Hamtramck Assembly plant—Dodge Main. Disgusted with the bureaucratic union politics they had experienced, these workers crystallized around an ICV member in the plant to form the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM). A wildcat over line speed-up in May 1968, involving both black and white workers, resulted in racist disciplinary actions being applied overwhelmingly to the black militants.

The high level of nationalist sentiment among the recently hired young black workers, the isolation of the largely older, Polish bureaucracy and the absence of any other alternative leadership opened the way for a spectacular and rapid success by DRUM in establishing itself as the leadership of the 60 percent-black work force at Dodge. Within six weeks of its first newsletter distribution, DRUM organized a highly effective boycott by the black workers of two nearby bars that refused to hire blacks. Three weeks later, in the crucial pre-changeover period, they led a three-day wildcat which shut down the plant and held a rally of 3,000 workers in the plant parking lot.

Besides calling for reinstatement of seven workers fired in the May walk-out, DRUM demanded an end to union and company discrimination, and demanded, in particular, more upgrading and apprenticeship openings for blacks. It also called, however, for more black foremen and other supervisory personnel and launched an attack on the "racist" seniority system.

Such demands can hardly be expected to lead to united working-class struggle against capitalism. Demands to change the skin color of the companies' disciplinary personnel implicitly assume that the brutal realities of capitalist exploitation can be changed by a few reforms. Instead, revolutionaries who seek to take the struggle

beyond such pitiful reforms would vigorously protest cases of racial discrimination, while calling for the elimination of company supervisory personnel from the shop floor and for workers control of production. (Incidentally, the auto companies have since hired large numbers of black foremen without changing one iota the oppressiveness of the plants.)

Similarly, while militants must oppose racially and sexually discriminatory aspects of existing seniority systems, and call for a sliding scale of wages and hours to provide jobs for all, they must also recognize that seniority systems are a primitive form of job security that must be defended. And although class-conscious workers must pay special attention to the needs of the more oppressed sections of the proletariat, they would seek to unite blacks and whites by simultaneously raising demands which directly benefit all workers.

Despite the demands' nationalist inspiration, a number of white workers did support the walkout. But the DRUM leadership consciously avoided organizing them. "No attempt was made to interfere with white workers.... Most of the white workers reported to work after they saw that it was safe for them to go through the gate. Those who stayed out did so for various reasons. Some believed in honoring picket lines, and a few were sympathetic" (*The South End*, 23 January 1969).

Though the UAW responded with heavy red-baiting (which led DRUM to deny that it was indeed communist!), the wildcat resulted in the reinstatement of five of the fired seven (an



Ron March

RPM

open DRUM supporter and founding ICV member was not rehired). In addition, DRUM's reputation was firmly established; it continued publication of a weekly newsletter, went on to consolidate its support into an organizational structure in September and shortly decided to run a candidate for union office.

Taking advantage of a special election for trustee of Dodge Local 3, DRUM ran Ron March in a campaign designed to demonstrate "DRUM power and black solidarity," on such demands as:

"1. The complete accountability to the black majority of the entire membership...."

"3. Advocating a revolutionary change in the UAW (including a referendum vote and revive the grievance procedure)...."

"5. A refusal to be dictated to by the International staff of the UAW...."

—DRUM Newsletter No. 13

March barely lost in a runoff election to the candidate of a temporarily unified bureaucracy, after initially beating

out a field of 21 candidates. In a later election for vice-president, the in- and out-bureaucrats again blocked to support Andy Hardy (current Local 3 president), who defeated the DRUM candidate by 2,600 to 1,600.

Word of DRUM's audacity spread to other plants and even outside the industry. ELRUM was formed at Chrysler's Eldon Avenue Gear and Axle plant in late 1968, and less important groups arose at Detroit Forge (FORUM), Jefferson Assembly (JARUM), Mack Avenue Stamping (MARUM), Ford River

and Nigger Executive Board," ELRUM's solution "to break up this union-management partnership" was "to obtain BLACK representation," as though the problem were the lack of "blackness" (i.e., nationalism) of the sellout bureaucrats.

Concretely, this meant running a slate which included Jordan Sims (now Local 961 president and co-chairman of the reformist United National Caucus) for committeeman, and later supporting the opportunist Sims (though he cautiously refused to accept their

by Blacks acting in their own interests. We believe that this can best be accomplished through a League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

"...Those Brothers and Sisters who are interested in a truly militant organization that is dedicated to the cause of Black labor and Black liberation should contact the League of Revolutionary Black Workers now."

—Spear, Vol. 1, No. 1

But the inability to square a nationalist orientation with the realities of class struggle in the plants and the decline of plant-related activity, plus pressure in that direction from a section of the leadership, led to an increasing emphasis on the black worker's role in the community:

"Black workers have the ability to deal with the overall problems that exist within the black community.... CHRY-RUM will be concerned not only with problems that exist inside the plants but problems that exist inside our community—the Black Community. The first two projects that CHRY-RUM has undertaken are the International Black Appeal and Parents and Students for Community Control (control of our school system)."

—CHRY-RUM, Vol. 1, No. 1

The abortive IBA was conceived of as a black alternative to the United Foundation—a charity fund to be supported by "communities of the black and poor." This is the logic of community control: the poor supporting the poor!

Detroit had recently passed a school decentralization measure setting up regional school boards (which were to become centers of strike-breaking activity in the recent DFT strike). In response, the League's front group, Parents and Students for Community Control (PASC), demanded that regional boundaries be redrawn so that blacks would exercise a majority in most districts. Black worker-student-faculty committees would then be elected to ensure such things as community kitchens and the "teaching of skills that have longevity and are marketable." A PASC slate was run in the regional school board elections based on that program.

The League simultaneously developed a base in several ghetto high schools. Its Black Students United Front apparently had no working-class orientation whatsoever. In an illustrative campaign against the suspensions of several students disciplined for taking part in a "revolt" at militant Northern High School in September 1969, it called for a total amnesty for all disciplined students and the removal of cops from the school, but also demanded "that all pictures of whites be removed from Northern High School and be replaced with pictures of our own heroes... [and] the Nationalist Flag of Unity (Red, Green, Black) be raised each morning" (*Inner City Voice*, February 1970). While the League gave its community-control campaign some "working-class" rhetorical flourishes, its basic appeal was to black nationalism. And, like the nationalist demand for black foremen, it simply oriented to changing the trappings (the flag!), without attacking the essence of the racist, anti-working class educational system.

Defense of Black Militants

The other major arena of the League's non-plant work, and the most successful, was a series of major legal defense campaigns. The campaigns, conducted in a highly political manner and propagandized in the plant newsletters, were largely under the control of Ken Cockrel, whose extensive use of white radical legal assistance was viewed with disdain by the more "honky"-baiting elements in the organization.

The first major case was the New Bethel incident: several members of the black separatist Republic of New Africa were indicted for allegedly murdering two cops during a police attack on a RNA meeting at the New Bethel church in March 1969. Cockrel mobilized a large staff of sympathetic liberal lawyers and supplemented the successful

courtroom defense with massive demonstrations in the black community and open-air "People's Courts" staged in downtown Detroit. Later that year, LRBW also led the campaign against the attempted extradition of RNA head, Robert F. Williams to North Carolina.

James Johnson, an Eldon worker who killed two white foremen and a co-worker, was successfully defended by Cockrel on the grounds that the pressure of the assembly line and the continual racial harassment had driven Johnson temporarily insane. The Labor Defense Coalition, a League front, was able to mobilize Coleman Young, John Conyers and other black liberals (not to mention the Guardians, a black policemen's association) against police harassment and U.S. Senate surveillance of the League. In a fine example of adaptation, the League demanded not the dismantling of the police, but rather its reorganization to "concentrate its efforts on organized crime and the heroin traffic in Detroit" (*Detroit News*, 4 May 1971)—a demand even the black cops could easily support!

"White-Skin Privilege" and All-Black Unions

It was the key programmatic points of "white-skin privilege" and separatist dual-unionism which were the focal points of DRUM's approach to the plants. The strong support they elicited resulted in large part from the condition facing the newly hired black youth. Besides the gross negligence of safety standards and the massive speed-up, they were confronted by older, conservatized racist white workers, an all-white management, and a ponderous, isolated, heavily white bureaucracy dominated by cold-war anti-communism. The "progressive" Reuther bureaucracy had no response to the dramatic increase in speed-up which greeted the black new-hires and was of course hostile to the nationalist currents circulating in the ghetto. Being unfamiliar with the UAW's relatively more radical and democratic past, new black workers were presented with a view of the union as a hostile, white-controlled apparatus allied with the company. The response was a widespread nationalist hostility to the union itself rather than class-struggle opposition to the sellout bureaucracy.

For the consciously nationalist League leadership and the guilt-tripping white New Left, which also embraced the theory, "white-skin privilege" was nothing but a cover for evading the difficult task of uniting the entire proletariat around a revolutionary program. Rather than seeing the struggle against the rampant chauvinism among white workers as an integral part of the strategy for socialist revolution, they wrote off that section of the working class as an "aristocracy of white labor which gives white labor a huge stake in the imperialist system, and renders white labor unable and unfit to lead the working class in the U.S." (LRBW General Program).

Consequently, DRUM and ELRUM actively discouraged militant white workers from following their leadership, and, at times, lapsed into the crudest race-baiting and ethnic slurs. The DRUM constitution explicitly "denied [membership] to all honkies due to the fact that said honkey has been the historic enemy, betrayer, and exploiter of black people." It went on to state its main task as:

"Getting rid of the racist, tyrannical, and unrepresentative UAW as representation for Black workers, so that with this enemy out of the way we can deal directly with our main adversary, the white racist, owners of the means of production."

DRUM forsook a serious struggle for leadership in the UAW and attempted instead to substitute itself for the existing organizations of the class which encompassed the masses of black, as well as white, workers. By offering itself as a revolutionary alternative to the UAW it was caught, as well, in the organizational bind of attempting to satisfy the needs of a conscious revolutionary vanguard and those of a

continued on page 9



NATIONAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (DETROIT)

League of Revolutionary Black Workers pickets UAW Solidarity House

Rouge (FRUM), Cadillac Fleetwood (CADRUM), the Detroit News (NEWRUM), United Parcel warehouse (UPRUM) and other places.

The Eldon plant, in particular, is crucial to Chrysler's entire operation, supplying parts to all of its assembly plants, and is part of the vital Lynch Road complex which includes the Detroit Forge and Plymouth Assembly. ELRUM launched itself by organizing a mass rally in front of the Local 961 union hall in January 1969, demanding that the union act on the many unresolved health and safety grievances.

The firing of two militants who participated in the rally, and the local president's agnostic response, led to a wildcat the following week with an expanded list of demands, similar to those raised by DRUM, including "the removal of the non-English speaking witch doctor we have at present and replaced with a Black doctor" (*The South End*, 10 February 1969). This second action resulted in the firing of a large number of workers, of whom 25 were not reinstated.

By May, Eldon was again shut down in a two-day wildcat organized by the Eldon Safety Committee, "a loose coalition composed by ELRUM, Eldon Wildcat (a small syndicalist group) and several discharged union officials" (*Radical America*, March-April 1971). The wildcat, which resulted in the firing of three ELRUM militants, was a response to the death of a young, black forklift driver and the mounting pile-up of safety violations.

Though the ELRUM newsletter pointed out that it was betrayed by those "Uncle Tom" union officials and ignored by "Our Uncle Tom President

support) in his bid for local president in 1970. This turn of events came from DRUM's (and ELRUM's) admitted emphasis on:

"electing an all Black slate... we have always been handed this slate or that slate none of which represents the best interest of Black Workers. We all remember how we used to go to the polls with a hand full of slates trying to pick out all of the black candidates... We were forced in many instances to vote for stone cut throat pollacks, known white racist, and head scratching Uncle Toms because we had no alternative candidates."

—DRUM leaflet, February 1970

From the Plants to the "Community"

Based on the apparent strength of DRUM and ELRUM after the initial wildcats and the obvious attractiveness of the DRUM concept to other black workers, yet seeing the need to transcend the isolation of individual plant caucuses, the ICV cadre moved to organize the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in early 1969. The impetus behind the League's formation led to conflicting notions within the leadership: whether to expand into the community or orient toward a pan-plant, pan-industry workers' organization.

Reflecting its success and base in the plants, the League introduced itself as follows:

"DRUM, FRUM, and ELRUM are organizations of and for the super-exploited, over-worked, last-hired, first-fired, sick and tired Black workers of Detroit. These organizations are dedicated to the development of unified, disciplined, and effective action

The Leninist Policy Toward Immigration/Emigration

What should be labor's policy toward immigration and emigration, a hotly-debated subject in the late nineteenth century and early decades of this one, is once again becoming a controversial issue. Thus the current Zionist campaign demanding that the Soviet Union permit the mass emigration of Jews to Israel, and the close connection between unlimited Jewish immigration and Zionist attempts to expel even more Palestinian Arabs from their homeland, were highlighted by the current round of hostilities in the Near East.

The subject of immigration has traditionally been a sharp dividing line between the national-exclusionists, reactionary or reformist, and internationalist revolutionaries in the labor movement. Thus it was not only the openly right-wing Gompers leadership of the American Federation of Labor that opposed immigration around the turn of the century, but also the reformist leadership of the Socialist Party under Victor Berger. For instance, in 1907 the SP leadership called on socialists to "combat with all means at their command the willful importation of cheap foreign labor calculated to destroy labor organizations." They were opposed at the 1908 SP convention by Debsian left wingers such as Berlyn from Illinois who protested all racially and nationally discriminatory immigration quotas, while pointing out that "equality for all men regardless of race can only be accomplished by the Socialist Party."

The same situation prevails today, as the German government of Social-Democratic Chancellor Brandt is "sending home" hundreds of thousands of Turkish, Yugoslav and Italian workers as a result of the economic downturn. In France, Algerian, Spanish and Portuguese workers are likewise threatened with deportation. But when the proposed Fontanet circular, which would require deportation of foreign workers when laid off, was issued in late 1972 it was supported by the reformist Communist Party. And in the U.S. thousands of Mexican workers in the Southwest have been subject to mass roundups and deportations by government officials. Instead of vigorously protesting this virulently anti-labor measure and calling for full citizenship rights for Mexican workers, the "radical" Chavez leadership of the United Farm Workers called (until April of last year) for support to the Rodino Bill, which would fine employers who hire foreign workers! Such reformist policies, while supposedly "protecting jobs" of native workers, actually divide the working class and give invaluable aid to the bourgeoisie.

Such situations underline the need for a precise understanding of the Leninist position on the questions of emigration and immigration. Communists must come forward as the most consistent foes of every manifestation of chauvinism and social injustice. The failure of ostensible socialists to fight for democratic rights enables bourgeois liberals, and even outright reactionaries, to attain a popular following by exploiting the just desires for individual liberties, national rights, etc.

Obviously, the right to transfer from one nation-state to another is such an individual democratic right. However, if exercised on a sufficiently large scale the right of immigration may impinge on the right of national self-determination, which is also a democratic right. While being the con-

sistent supporters of democratic rights, an essential part of the socialist program, Leninists must avoid falling into the trap of advocating some utopian scheme of "rational," "egalitarian" capitalism. The competing claims of conflicting democratic rights cannot generally be resolved within the framework of capitalism, but only through a socialist revolution creating the material and social basis to protect and extend the democratic rights of all the oppressed. Until the achievement of socialism eliminates the age-old problem of scarcity, it will not be possible to abolish the state, and therefore borders and immigration laws.

The Right of Individual Emigration

In contrast to immigration policy, the right to emigrate has less often been controversial in bourgeois society because most governments have not normally tried to deny it. Despotic regimes in backward nations (e.g., tsarist Russia) have generally encouraged emigration as a means of easing political discontent and surplus labor. The only states that have consistently attempted to prevent potentially large emigration are Stalinist Russia and Eastern Europe. And the Stalinists' anti-emigration policies have been heavily exploited by imperialist apologists, especially regarding the "Berlin Wall" and currently, the Zionist/anti-communist campaign to "Free Soviet Jewry."

There are two major reasons for the anti-emigration policies of Stalin and his successors. Surrounded by hostile capitalist powers, the Stalinist bureaucracy believed that Russian emigrés, even if primarily motivated by personal economic interest, would tend to act as an anti-Soviet pressure group. And secondly, administering a planned economy the Stalinists have generally believed they could effectively use all available manpower, in sharp contrast to the capitalist countries. (This belief is not entirely justified, as the Soviet Union continues to suffer from significant disguised rural unemployment.) The massive destruction of World War II, in which some 20 million

Soviet citizens died, further strengthened the bureaucracy's concern about labor shortages, particularly the depletion of the young male population, the most likely source of emigrants.

The Stalinists' systematic disregard for and denial of individual liberties is a complete perversion of the Marxist program for the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is, moreover, a perversion which enables the imperialist bourgeoisie to rally popular support against "Russian totalitarianism," and is therefore an important indirect blow against proletarian state power. Leninists support individual democratic rights, including that of emigration, for Soviet citizens, except where their exercise is a direct danger to the dictatorship of the proletariat. At present this means, for example, that emigration from the USSR should be prohibited only where there is a bonafide danger that military intelligence would be transmitted by the individual involved. (In other circumstances, such as sharp economic difficulties or military mobilization, even a total ban on emigration, or a ban for particular sectors such as trained personnel, may be necessary.) For example, questions could be raised about permitting Leopold Trepper, a Soviet intelligence chief in Europe during World War II, or Andrei Sakharov, father of the USSR's H-bomb, to emigrate. We unconditionally defend the USSR militarily against Western imperialism, despite its Stalinist leadership; and we do not know how much useful military intelligence the manifestly pro-Western Sakharov, for instance, might be able to give the Pentagon. But how can we accept the right of the criminally myopic and callous Stalinist bureaucracy, which jails not only socialist opponents for the slightest critical remark but even, on occasion, will jail simple tourists taking pictures on the street, to judge?

"Free Soviet Jewry?"

The bloc between Zionists and anti-Soviet American reactionaries maintains that the "head tax" restriction on Russian-Jewish emigration to Israel is a manifestation of bureaucratic

anti-Semitism pure and simple. Although the ethnic oppression of Jews in the USSR is real, the restriction on emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is also a reflection—distorted through the stranglehold of the bureaucracy—of a legitimate concern: the need to preserve the resources expended on the education of potential emigrants and to prevent the drain of trained professionals and intellectuals.

This consideration is not unique to the deformed workers states. The considerable flow of doctors and other technically trained personnel from the backward to the advanced capitalist countries (the so-called "brain drain") is one of the most subtly destructive effects of contemporary imperialism. The USSR certainly has the right to prevent the resources it has expended on the education of individuals from being dissipated via emigration.

What is equally important, however, is that restrictions on the emigration of educated personnel be democratic—that they not involve bureaucratic favoritism or national/ethnic discrimination. Thus unskilled Russian Jews should be permitted to emigrate from the USSR on the same basis as anyone else, while *all* Soviet graduates of academic and technical schools should be required to work a certain number of years in the USSR before having the right to emigrate.

At the same time, the bureaucracy's fear that young, educated Soviet citizens would flock to the capitalist West if allowed to do so is a fitting testimony to the moral bankruptcy of the Stalinist regime. A revolutionary workers government, enjoying massive popular support and pursuing internationalist and socialist policies (as opposed to the short-sighted nationalism of the parasitic bureaucracy) should have little difficulty persuading its educated youth not to sell themselves, regardless of the price, to the stockholders and militarists of the capitalist states. The revolutionary enthusiasm which should motivate these young people, however, can only be recreated in the Russian people in the course of a political revolution which shakes off the leaden hand of the bureaucracy



Portuguese workers en route to Germany: Gare de l'Est, Paris.

ELIE KAGAN



Immigrant workers demonstrate in France.

MAGNUM/GILLES PÉRESS

and restores the proletarian democracy of Lenin's Bolshevik regime.

"Open the Borders"?

Unlike the right to emigrate, which the American ruling class is now so piously proclaiming (while conveniently "forgetting" that during the 1950's it was a major felony for a member, or former member, of the Communist Party to even apply for a passport!), the "right" to immigrate has always been a conflict-ridden issue in bourgeois society. From the anti-Chinese riots in the U.S. in the late 1800's to the anti-Algerian riots in Marseilles, France, in August 1973, the bourgeoisie has always used racial prejudice and national chauvinism to divide the working class. (While immigrants are usually unorganized and largely defenseless—a principal reason why the bourgeoisie likes to use imported labor in the first place—this is not always the case: witness the militant strikes by Turkish workers in the West German Ruhr area last September and the demonstration by 10,000 North African workers in Marseilles on December 17 protesting the bombing of the local Algerian consulate.

Faced with the myriad of protectionist immigration restrictions thrown

up by capitalist regimes and the use of national chauvinism as one of the most important means of fighting socialist influence in the working class, some left militants have gone beyond the demand of opposing all racially and nationally discriminatory immigration laws to raise the general call for unlimited immigration, with the slogan "Open the Borders." (This demand was briefly raised by the Los Angeles SL local during part of its generally exemplary campaign in support of the farm workers. It was also mentioned indirectly in an article on the UFW grape boycott in WV No. 30, 12 October 1973). Viewed solely in terms of individual immigration, this is a proper demand.

However, on a sufficiently large scale, immigration flows could wipe out the national identity of the recipient countries. The impetus for massive population transfers exists due to the extreme poverty of many Asian, African and Latin American countries compared with the advanced capitalist countries. A Harlem welfare mother probably has ten times the income of a Haitian slum dweller. Fidel Castro caught the situation precisely when, in commenting on the mass exodus of the Cuban middle class to the United States, he asked how many poverty-

stricken millions from, say, Brazil would take the same route if given free air passage and a hundred dollars a week when they got to Miami? If, for example, there were unlimited immigration into Northern Europe, the population influx from the Mediterranean basin would tend to dissolve the national identity of small countries like Holland and Belgium. More generally, unlimited immigration as a principle is incompatible with the right of national self-determination; to call for it is tantamount to advocating the abolition of national states under capitalism.

In reality, of course, long before immigration would actually affect national identity, a chauvinist reaction, penetrating even into a traditionally pro-socialist working class, would cut off further inflows. This is demonstrated by the experience of Britain in the late 1950's/early 1960's. One of the unexpected by-products of the dissolution of the British empire was that the Commonwealth populations continued to possess British citizenship. This formal right, when combined with the Tory policy of encouraging immigration, led to a significant population inflow from the Caribbean and the Indian subcontinent throughout the 1950's. Set against a background of economic stagnation, a widespread anti-immigrant reaction set in, highlighted by the Notting Hill (London) race riot of 1958 and the election of a racist Tory in the traditionally Labour Midlands district of Smethwick in 1962. Facing a widespread popular "backlash," the Tories passed the racist-exclusionist Immigration Act of 1962, while the Labour Party equivocated.

While the national consequences of unlimited immigration usually focus on the advanced countries, such a policy would also be a threat to the national self-determination of certain backward states. Global "open borders" would increase capital penetration by the propertied classes of the wealthy countries into backward nations. In the nineteenth century, population transfers were an important factor in the expansion of certain imperialist countries into adjacent backward areas—the English into Ireland, the French into Algeria and the American Anglos into northern Mexico (now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California).

A reintroduction of unlimited immigration would again result in the geographical expansion of the major capitalist nations. For example, an "open" U.S./Mexico border would not only induce impoverished Mexican laborers to flood the U.S. labor market, becoming an unprotected pool for capitalist superexploitation, but would also lead to well-financed American "colonists"

buying up Mexican enterprises and real estate. (This already occurs to a certain extent, despite vigorous efforts by the Mexican government to prevent it. Ironically, probably the most vigorous opposition to open U.S./Mexican borders would come from Mexico, whose northern border strips are already functionally part of the Texas and California economies.)

Manipulated Immigration and Zionist Expansion

An illuminating example of how unlimited massive immigration can wipe out the national existence of the native population of even a backward country is the case of Israel. The pre-World War II Zionist campaign for the mass emigration of European Jews to Palestine was explicitly based on the calculation that, on a sufficiently mass scale, this emigration would lay the basis for the establishment of a "Jewish homeland" in a territory that was already somebody else's homeland. (And today the infamous Israeli "Law of Return" provides for unlimited immigration of Jews throughout the world—a law which is closely tied to Zionist drives to push ever more Palestinian Arabs from their lands.)

It is true that what was required to bring this nationalist scheme to fruition was the Nazi holocaust and the contemptuous refusal of the Western powers to provide asylum to the Jewish refugees from Hitler. The migrating population consisted in its vast majority of desperate individuals with no other place to go, rather than ideological Zionists. From the individual Jew's point of view, the only real alternative at the time to unlimited Jewish immigration to Palestine was Nazi extermination or, later, European DP (displaced persons) camps. Nevertheless, in their totality these individuals constituted a de facto aggression against the national rights of Arab Palestinians. To have called for "open borders" in Palestine during the period from 1918 to 1948 meant to endorse the destruction of the Palestinian Arab nation by Zionism and to guarantee the local ascendancy of bourgeois nationalism over proletarian socialism in the Near East for several generations, as the more or less inevitable result of massive immigration.

What, then, was the solution for the Jews? Before Hitler's ascension to power the common answer of European socialists, even of the reformist Second International which included the Zionist "socialists," was assimilation. This was also the dominant historical trend, as Zionism was an entirely marginal political movement limited largely to a section of emancipated, but not assimilated, East European Jewish intellectuals. (Even in the Slavic countries Zionism was not dominant in the Jewish ghettos. The nationalist-tinged reformist Jewish Socialist Bund in Russia and Poland was strongly anti-Zionist.)

A common pre-World War II definition of a Zionist was a Jew seeking to convince a wealthy Jew to finance sending a third Jew to Palestine. Moreover, the Zionists colluded actively with the imperialist powers (including Nazi Germany) to prevent the emigré Jews from entering and settling in the other countries of Western Europe and the U.S. During the 1930's and 1940's, the Trotskyists (as well as some liberals and reformist-socialists, most prominently the Jewish Bund) waged a campaign to open the U.S. borders to European Jewish refugees. The Zionists, however, who are today weeping crocodile tears over the fate of Russian Jews, were among the chief opponents of this demand.

"Free Israeli Jewry"?

Having pulled in the homeless survivors of the concentration camps, who had nowhere else to go, the Israeli Zionists found that Western Jews (even the Zionists among them), while passively sympathetic to Israel, had no intention of going there. Moreover, the 1950 Law of Return had an unanticipated

continued on page 8



L'explosion qui couve depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles

ON NE PEUT PLUS SUPPORTER CETTE INVASION

disent les habitants des quartiers submergés par les Arabes

Minute, right-wing Paris daily, attacks immigration. Headline says, "We can't stand this invasion."

Marseilles, c'est la capitale de la violence. Depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles, les incidents violents sont quotidiens. Les Arabes, qui ont pris le contrôle de la ville, ont fait de Marseilles une ville de violence.

Marseilles, c'est la capitale de la violence. Depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles, les incidents violents sont quotidiens. Les Arabes, qui ont pris le contrôle de la ville, ont fait de Marseilles une ville de violence.

Marseilles, c'est la capitale de la violence. Depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles, les incidents violents sont quotidiens. Les Arabes, qui ont pris le contrôle de la ville, ont fait de Marseilles une ville de violence.

Marseilles, c'est la capitale de la violence. Depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles, les incidents violents sont quotidiens. Les Arabes, qui ont pris le contrôle de la ville, ont fait de Marseilles une ville de violence.

Marseilles, c'est la capitale de la violence. Depuis l'assassinat de Marseilles, les incidents violents sont quotidiens. Les Arabes, qui ont pris le contrôle de la ville, ont fait de Marseilles une ville de violence.

Continued from page 7

... Immigration/Emigration

pated effect, bringing in large numbers of Near Eastern Jews, particularly from Morocco and Yemen, who took advantage of the law in the hopes of partaking of Israel's higher standard of living. (Predictably, these "black" Jews provoked a racist reaction from the Israelis of European extraction.)

Still looking for more skilled immigrants and lacking sufficient population to realize its grandiose expansionist aspirations, the Zionist ruling class of Israel has zeroed in on the several million Jews in the Soviet Union as the last major available pool of manpower for large-scale immigration. Moreover, this Zionist campaign to encourage Russian Jews to emigrate to Israel and to pressure the USSR's rulers to permit their exit has won a certain amount of support from the U.S. bourgeoisie, particularly from right-liberals anxious that the "détente" not be permitted to liquidate cold-war anti-communism. (It has also been somewhat successful with the Russian authorities who, avidly vying for Western trade credits, permitted more than 30,000 Jews to emigrate to Israel last year—continuing right through the October war, although the USSR was supporting the Arabs!)

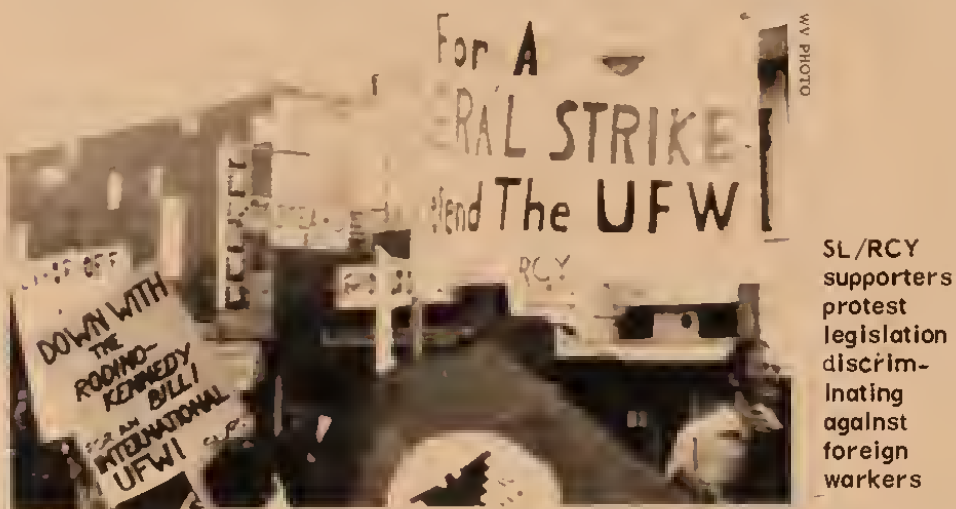
As communists we say to Jews of the Soviet Union: remain in the USSR and work for a political revolution to destroy the parasitic stranglehold of the Great-Russian chauvinist, anti-Leninist bureaucracy! Before Stalin succeeded in wresting power from the

with the Nazis in order to get Hitler's permission to "save" a few thousand well-connected Jews for secret emigration to Palestine. What they are really concerned with is providing cannon fodder and skilled manpower for the clerical-militarist-expansionist Zionist state.

Utopian Socialism vs. Leninism

As Leninists we understand that democratic rights, while an important part of the socialist program, are subordinated to proletarian class issues and in any case cannot be fully attained outside a socialist framework. In the epoch of imperialist decay working-class revolutionists become the only consistent fighters for democracy. But "consistent democrats" are not thereby socialists—any more than are "consistent nationalists," such as the Zionists. Raising democratic demands to the level of principle *independent* of the class struggle leads at best to confusion and utopianism, and at worst can actually become counterposed to the struggle for socialist revolution.

When faced with the growth of separatist sentiment—manipulated by native counterrevolutionaries and foreign fascists—among the Ukrainian peasants in the late 1930's (reacting to Stalin's virulent Great Russian chauvinism and the brutal forced collectivization), Trotsky counterposed to the agitation of Ukrainian nationalists the slogan of an independent *Soviet* Ukraine.



soviets and the Bolshevik party, the Russian workers' republic under Lenin and Trotsky was the only place where Jews could use their capacities toward satisfying the needs and just aspirations of all the world's working people. Among the cadre of the Bolshevik party there were many of Jewish extraction, who along with the rest of the party built the first state which in practice, and not just on paper, fought racial and national discrimination, while granting national self-determination to all the oppressed peoples of the Russian Empire.

Israel, on the other hand, is a death trap for Jews. Its Zionist ruling class has nothing to offer Hebrew workers but the perspective of, at best, an endless cycle of national war and the eventual likelihood of defeat at the hands of the numerically far superior Arabs. To the anti-communist Zionist propagandists who are so eager to "Free Soviet Jewry," we have a simple question: why, if you are so concerned about the welfare of Russian Jews, have you never called on the U.S. government to admit Jewish refugees or emigrants?

The U.S., of course, has a higher standard of living than Israel, and it is clear Jews are safer in any real sense in this country than they are in Israel, where Russian immigrants are immediately sent to occupy Arab land on the West Bank and/or drafted into the army. The answer is simple: the Zionists are no more concerned with the fate of Russian Jews than they were with the millions who were led to the gas chambers by the cooperation of the Jewish Agency

Recognizing that the right of self-determination remained valid under a workers state, he insisted that revolutionary socialists must *oppose* any movement for national liberation which did not stand on unconditional defense of the economic gains of the October revolution.

Some leftists, in addition to supporting unrestricted immigration as an absolute democratic right, view it as a positive solution to world poverty. For example, Paul Foot, a member of the British International Socialists, writing in the mid-1960's on the question of immigration projected the desirability of a multi-national, multi-racial Britain based on unlimited immigration. This is merely a variant of utopian egalitarianism—the belief that a just society can be established by sharing out the currently available wealth. Leninists, in contrast, understand that unlimited immigration and the destruction of national frontiers will become a reality only under socialism, as a result of the abolition of material scarcity.

In reality, the economic resources do not now exist to satisfy the material aspirations of mankind, and a policy of worldwide leveling would only intensify conflicts between the working masses of various countries. Rather than utopian dreams of unlimited immigration as an immediate political demand, what is both needed and possible is a campaign for real international labor solidarity. This can begin with joint union action against U.S.-owned corporations to raise the wages of foreign workers in the same industries

Continued from page 12

Australia...

imposition of overall price controls (excepting incomplete ones for very short periods) is not possible under a bourgeois state as the varying relationships between different prices are essential to the exchange of commodities within the framework of capitalist property relations and thus fundamental to capitalist accumulation. General "price controls" by the bourgeois state do *not* represent a reform in the interests of the working class, but merely an excuse to impose some sort of control over wages. Real control over prices can be achieved only when the anarchistic mechanisms of capitalism in which production is for private profit are replaced by rational economic planning for the welfare of society as a whole, planning which is possible only with social ownership of the means of production. The precondition for this is proletarian revolution.

Price control—a reform that is desirable, achievable under a workers state, but only a reformist charlatan's gimmick under capitalism—is essentially an "anti-capitalist structural re-

to U.S. scale and, in relevant industries, the formation of truly international unions. Likewise, instead of calling for the utopian demand of "open borders," labor must demand full citizenship rights for *all* foreign workers—a demand whose justice is independent of capitalism's ability to grant it, but which would be part of the fundamental laws of a workers republic.

What communists have to say to the impoverished masses of the backward countries is that the answer to their desperate social conditions does not lie in an individual ticket to the U.S. or Western Europe, but rather in an international socialist revolution which is the necessary precondition to the economic reorganization of human society through freeing the productive forces from the fetter of private ownership.

Full Rights for Foreign Workers:

That we do not advocate the principle of unlimited immigration as an immediate political demand certainly does *not* mean that we support the immigration policies of bourgeois states. The immigration policies of bourgeois governments do not simply defend legitimate national rights, but are neces-

form" of the kind advocated by the revisionist Ernest Mandel of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International". These fake "price controls" have been too discredited by the recent experiences of Britain and America to be espoused by centrists such as Mandel's Australian agents in the Communist League (CL), who call for a "No-No" vote. What the CL has ignored is the fact that the reformism of the CPA and SPA in calling for a "Yes-No" vote is but a consistent application of the Mandelian method.

For a Class Struggle Programme to Fight Inflation

Although effective price control is possible only in a workers state, the struggle against price rises can be, the Healyite Socialist Labour League (SLL) notwithstanding, a very important element in mobilising the working class against the capitalist state. Furthermore this is an area in which the proletariat has interests in common with oppressed sections of the petty-bourgeoisie which can be mobilised behind the working class. It is not enough to stand before the class and simply cry that Whitlam's referendum is an attack on trade unionism. Says the SLL in their statement on the referendum: "What is the alternative to Whitlam?... The only tendency in the labour movement

must demand that *all* immigrants and foreign workers are entitled to immediate and full citizenship rights. Since the bourgeoisie is not about to permit equalization of the conditions of the working masses, we must also fight against every instance of discrimination against foreign workers—against wage discrimination, for the right to strike and join unions, against deportations, etc.

Of particular urgency in the U.S. today is a vigorous campaign on the part of the labor movement, not for such chauvinist measures as deporting foreign scabs, but for full citizenship and trade-union rights for the Mexican farmworkers in the Southwest and other workers currently facing government harassment and deportations (such as the tens of thousands of Haitian and Dominican workers in the Northeast). In the case of the (predominantly Mexican-American) United Farm Workers, we call for an international UFW, organizing farmworkers in Mexico (a large percentage of whom produce for the U.S. market in any case) to achieve wages equal to those of unionized agricultural labor in the U.S.

Finally, while large-scale immigration is inevitably affected by economic factors at the present level of devel-

Lenin on "Frontiers"

"What does the 'method' of socialist revolution under the slogan 'Down with frontiers' mean? We maintain that the state is necessary, and a state presupposes frontiers. The state, of course, may hold a bourgeois government, but we need the Soviets. But even Soviets are confronted with the question of frontiers. What does 'Down with frontiers' mean? It is the beginning of anarchy.... Only when the socialist revolution has become a reality, not a method, will the slogan 'Down with frontiers' be a correct slogan."

—V.I. Lenin, "Speech on the National Question," April 1917

sarily chauvinist and oppressive. It would be impermissible, for example, for a communist parliamentary fraction to vote for any immigration quotas, even "liberal" ones, in a bourgeois parliament. Instead, they would vote against all racially and nationally discriminatory immigration quotas, pointing out that the real answer to concerns about "protecting jobs" is united international working-class action and socialist revolution.

It is, moreover, obligatory for communists to fight for the rights of all immigrants and foreign workers, whether or not in the country legally. The labor and socialist movements

opment of productive forces, the question of specific groups of refugees, prisoners, etc., is purely political. Thus, for instance, we are (except for the fact that Castro doesn't want them either) militantly unenthusiastic about the former Batista prison guards, drug dealers and anti-communist émigrés whom the U.S. government accepted with open arms. In contrast, the entire labor movement has a direct interest in vigorously demanding that the U.S. extend the right of political asylum to the trade-union and socialist militants who are imprisoned and threatened with execution by the bloody junta in Chile! ■

The Fourth International's Transitional Programme—valid in all its fundamentals today—called for "... *committees on prices*, made up of delegates from factories, trade unions, co-operatives, farmers' organisations, the 'little man' of the city, housewives, etc." These committees must not be based on illusions that the state can control prices, nor that their own demands to themselves control prices can be met under capitalism. They must be organised on a programme of: a sliding scale of wages (so they go up with prices); open the account books of business; and nationalisation of industry without compensation under workers control. As the Transitional Programme says, "By this means the workers will be able to prove to the farmers that the real reason for high prices is not high wages but the exorbitant profits of the capitalists and the overhead expenses of capitalist anarchy." (The small farmers Trotsky uses as an example of the oppressed sections of the petty-bourgeoisie are no longer a significant stratum in Australia.) The struggle of the working class and its potential allies against high prices must be led beyond the boundaries of capitalism to proletarian revolution.

The reformist Socialist Workers League, which gives lip service to Trotskyism, criminally transforms the call of the Transitional Programme for committees on prices into a classless, single-issue campaign subordinating the working class to petty-bourgeois protest politics. The SWL holds up as a model for an "anti-inflation" movement last May's meat boycott in the United States (*Direct Action*, November 9, 1973), a self-defeating and completely bankrupt tactic cynically used by the "progressive" wing of the American labour bureaucracy to lobby President Nixon for... a more "equitable" wage-price freeze! The SWL also provides a clear example of the tailist politics of Pabloism in the workers movement when the same issue of *Direct Action* engages in apologetics for the "Socialist Left" in the Victorian ALP: "Real opposition [to the wage freeze] is coming from the Labor movement including some of the leaders of the Victorian Socialist Left of the ALP and ourselves..." We find that this "real opposition" consisted of tacking an *addendum* to the Socialist Left's "Yes-No" position calling for a cost-of-living escalator—which even Whitlam has occasionally endorsed! The SWL's Pabloist methodology leads it to adopt the role of a left pressure on the Socialist Left, which is—apparently—supposed to become the instrument of proletarian revolution. In reality the SWL simply serves as a left support to the union bureaucracy.

The working class needs not left-wing apologies for the treachery of the labour lieutenants of capital, but an alternative political leadership openly based on a programme adequate to the tasks of the proletariat, a transitional programme beginning with the day-to-day, immediate demands of the class and leading inexorably to the dictatorship of the proletariat, the overthrow of capitalist property relations as a whole. Revolutionaries must create an opposition within the workers organisations clearly based on such a full programme of struggle against capitalism, as the only real alternative to the policies of Whitlam/Hawke. ■

This parochial outlook resulting from the absence of a program to unite the entire class eventually facilitated

Though the split of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in June 1971 concerned the question of merging with the newly-formed Black Workers Congress, it was a result of the longstanding tension inherent in the League's contradictory "pro-working-class" nationalism. The League had not effectively struggled for programmatic clarity to begin with, and the factional lineups clearly reflected the different sections and appetites in the heterogeneous organization. The faction favoring the maintenance of a separate identity for the League consisted of the worker cadre and those leadership elements involved in the early plant

This orientation is as far removed from the motivation which initially attracted black workers to DRUM as is

continued on page 10

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continued from page 9

Soul Power...

the Mayor's desk in Detroit City Hall from the assembly lines at Dodge Main. Their nationalism was a raging reaction to the racism of the bureaucrats and the bosses and a violent disappointment in the apparent apathy of their white class brothers. The pro-BWC faction somewhat accurately accused the other wing of "contending that in essence all League activity should be focused upon Dodge Main and Eldon plants, [and posing] a reformist, economist program that opposed the anti-imperialist line of the BWC with a mass line of 'Black Workers Unite'."

Though it still called for community control, the pro-LRBW wing was motivated by a workerist impulse which nonetheless recognized the BWC's anti-imperialist emphasis as a liquidation of class interests into a classless front:

"A calling for everyone to struggle against imperialism subsumes one's own struggle to the majority to the extent that the specific form of our struggle is overlooked and we end up for example with anti-war demonstrations as the prime form as opposed to organizing Black people around concrete conditions."

—Split documents, pro-LRBW position.

The pro-LRBW wing alternative was "zeroing in on the plant settings with the appropriate use of the Marxist-Leninist method" and "building the mass base of Black workers around proletarian consciousness." Its nationalist line was that "the removal of capitalism does not stamp out racists," and thus, blacks must have "the revolutionary right to self-determination and secession after capitalism is smashed." This position, and the general identification of these elements with Maoism, led a number of them to join the latter-day third-period Stalinists of the Communist League. Of the other faction, only Mike

Hamlin was to remain active in the BWC, now closely connected with the right-Maoist Revolutionary Union.

The splintered League left behind a twofold legacy in Detroit: on the one hand, a nationalist-tinged social-democracy-in-embryo (manifested in the complementary appetites of Ken Cockrel and Jordan Sims), and, on the other, a hard nationalist semi-syndicalist cadre embedded in the inner-city auto plants.

Cockrel's pro-BWC position in the split was designed to propel him into a more acceptable milieu for his political appetites. Already, through the Labor Defense Coalition (which he took with him out of the League) and his earlier legal defense work, Cockrel had established ties with white radicals like "Marxist" Judge Justin Ravitz and black liberals like Coleman Young. After his brief stay in the BWC, Cockrel's LDC initiated the anti-STRESS campaign, with its watered-down version of community control of the police.

Cockrel's changing rhetoric is a barometer of his adaptability in pursuit of personal ambitions: his earlier black workerese ("Dig the whole characterization that black people give jobs man: it's a 'yoke,' it's a 'hang,' it's a 'slave'..." [*Our Thing is DRUM*]) gave way to "responsible radical"-sounding declarations of the need "to use the 1973 municipal elections to take power and use that power in the interests of the people." This in turn gave way to a diplomatically neutral, back-handed support for Democrat Coleman Young when Cockrel realized he personally had no chance of winning a mayoral election at this time: "of all the individuals being talked about as being 'electable,' Coleman Young comes closest to an individual with whom we could work." (*Groundwork*, July 1973).

At a time when both bourgeois parties stand increasingly exposed as being unable to satisfy the most minimal needs of the working class, Cockrel is grooming his base in preparation for diverting the dissatisfaction of Detroit's largely black proletariat into the snare of a homegrown social democracy.

The logical complement to Cockrel's city-hall social democracy is, of course, a slicker, blacker, more palatable bureaucracy in the UAW. The fragile position of the present bureaucrats was revealed by the fear with which they viewed the relatively small LRBW caucuses, as well as their panic during the recent Mack Avenue Stamping Plant sitdown, the River Rouge shootout and the UAW's desperate maneuvering to shove the 1973 contract down auto workers' throats.

The League's failure to build a principled opposition to that bureaucracy, not to abandon the existing mass workers organizations but to struggle within the UAW for a united movement of class-conscious black and white workers, opened the way for demagogic reformists like Jordan Sims. Sims, now president of Eldon Local 961, saw the futility of the League's separatist line, and then opted for joining the bureaucracy rather than fighting it. In the recent Chrysler negotiations last September, Sims voted for the grossly sell-out contract before claiming he had been "duped" into it.

Neither the minimally economist demands that Sims' United National Caucus puts forward in its role as the respectable "left" opposition to the Woodcock leadership, nor the shop-floor economism of DRUM's earlier "mass line," can advance by one iota the political consciousness of workers—black or white! This is not to deny that there are differences. Whereas many of the original LRBW cadre were apparently driven by a revolutionary impulse, Sims is driven by something much more mundane—a thirst to replace the presently isolated, ineffective Woodcock bureaucracy with a more streamlined machine, better capable of serving as the "labor lieutenants of capital."

The other legacy, the League's semi-syndicalist, "third-world" nationalism, as expressed by the pro-LRBW faction, now finds itself

supporting the Communist League while clandestinely buried in the inner-city auto plants. Subjectively revolutionary instincts notwithstanding, its members will find no revolutionary solution within the framework of the CL's reformist Stalinism. Once more, they will be confronted with many of the contradictions that wracked DRUM and ELRUM early on.

There may be a militant impulse behind rejection of the Moscow-line Stalinists' pipedreams of a "peaceful road to socialism" and Martin Luther King-style pleas for interracial harmony. But the CL's Peking-brand of peaceful coexistence and crackpot-nationalist theory of a "negro nation" in the Deep South (with a majority of "white negroes"!) are no better.

Only by breaking sharply with the petty-bourgeois politics of trade-union reformism and Stalinism and adopting the proletarian program of Trotskyism can subjectively revolutionary black worker militants contribute to overcoming the crisis of proletarian leadership which is today the decisive roadblock to socialist revolution. In struggling to build a unified Leninist vanguard party based on the Transitional Program and to rebuild the Fourth International destroyed by Pabloist revisionism, it is now possible to lay the bases to replace the symbiotic duo of petty-bourgeois black nationalism and reactionary white racism with proletarian internationalism.

For a United Vanguard Party and Class-Struggle Union-Caucuses

The membership of the League was certainly motivated in good part by militant opposition to the pro-company bureaucracy of the UAW and by a desire for a proletarian strategy for black liberation, as opposed to the Panthers' idolization of "brother-on-the-block" lumpen elements. But this is not to ignore the pernicious honky-baiting and anti-white pseudo-nationalism which were also an integral part of the LRBW—and to which so much of the left accommodated or prostrated itself in a pathetic attempt to tail alter the popular petty-bourgeois current of the moment. As Lenin remarked repeatedly, it is the task of the proletariat "to combat nationalism of every kind" ("The Right of Nations to Self-Determination," 1914).

Unprincipled tailism is not the way to win and educate solid communist cadre, capable of leading the masses to victory over capitalism by successfully combatting all forms of reformist false consciousness, among them nationalism. Among the tasks of the Trotskyist vanguard, rather, is to state clearly the responsibilities of socialist militants who claim to stand for Marxism-Leninism and the historic interests of the proletariat.

The "black question" is one of the most difficult, and at the same time strategically most important, problems for U.S. communists. Its solution requires an uncompromising fight against white chauvinism and the myriad forms of special oppression of minority workers and an equally consistent struggle against the bourgeois ideology of nationalism, even in the most "proletarian" guise. The latter is no academic question.

Black workers are a doubly oppressed section of the U.S. proletariat, forcibly segregated at the lowest levels. Consequently, their liberation will come about only through socialist revolution and common struggle with white workers under the leadership of a unified vanguard party. The concept of a separate black nation in the U.S. not only lacks an objective basis in the class struggle and political economy of the country, but actually plays into the hands of those whose answer to social conflicts is race war—the inevitable result of which would be the massacre of thousands of blacks and the triumph of white racism. More than any other social group, minority working people have a direct interest in working-class unity.

In the factories, even with the pres-

ent level of widespread racial discrimination, separate organizations of black workers would be a hindrance rather than an aid to class unity. Instead, the best guarantee for a struggle against racial discrimination is uncompromising hostility to any form of labor reformism. Thus the SL's call for trade-union caucuses based on the full transitional program, rather than opportunist lowest-common denominator "militant" formations pushed by various fake lefts, is of particular importance for black worker militants.

Though their concerns are not limited to the fight against racial discrimination, such caucuses are a much more effective weapon in securing even immediate gains for specially-oppressed minority workers than reformist formations organized around the single issue of racial oppression—which is what the League's caucuses (DRUM, ELRUM, etc.) effectively became. On the other hand, to the extent that DRUM demands such as ending unemployment through a shortened workweek, organization of workers militias for self-defense and a general strike against the Indochina war were intended seriously to pose a *revolutionary* alternative to the bureaucracy (and not some reformist mishmash), then clearly it can only be harmful to divide supporters of such a program on racial lines.

The struggle against white racism and special oppression of minority workers will depend on winning the working masses to understand the need for a class-struggle program on all questions facing the labor movement, and on posing the struggle against special oppression in a manner that strengthens class unity instead of setting one part of the class against another. Thus a class-struggle trade-union caucus would call for ending unemployment through a sliding scale of wages and hours and for an end to all discriminatory practices in hiring and upgrading.

On the other hand, while struggling within the unions for the elimination of all racial, national and sexual discrimination, such a caucus would vigorously oppose taking the union to court, i.e., calling on the bourgeois state to arbitrate disputes within the workers movement. It would raise demands which emphasize the international character of labor's struggle for emancipation (labor strikes against imperialist wars, against protectionism, full citizenship rights for foreign workers, for international strike action) and fight for its program on an explicitly political basis. Thus in opposition to the bureaucracy's policies of begging for crumbs from the capitalist parties (Democratic and Republican) and petty-bourgeois nationalist calls for a black party (which—witness the 1971 Gary convention—end up tailing after black Democrats), we call for a workers party based on the unions to fight for a workers government.

While the Stalinists occasionally pay grudging lip service to Marxist principles when it does not interfere with their reformist maneuvers, their trade-union work is uniformly characterized by simple union militancy. As Trotsky correctly remarked, the purpose of raising transitional demands is to make a bridge between the present consciousness and needs of the masses and the socialist program of the revolution. In the epoch of decaying capitalism, when successful reformism is impossible, the trade unions will either be won to revolutionary leadership standing for the Transitional Program or they will serve as instruments of the bourgeoisie in crushing the workers movement and obliterating those gains already won by labor through bitter struggle. Just as worker-militants must transcend narrow trade unionism, so must revolutionists among the specially oppressed social strata transcend the special-interest pressure group strategy—which offers no real solution to their felt oppression—and embrace a socialist world view, which alone provides a consistent strategy for a unified fight against capitalist exploitation and oppression. ■

SL/RCY Public Offices

BAY AREA

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

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

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

BOSTON

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

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

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

NEW YORK

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

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

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

REVOLUTIONARY
LITERATURE

Continued from page 3

...Long Lines

new form of preferential treatment, it provides the company with a weapon to break the union by creating newlayers, owing their advancement to the company-government deal, who view the union as dominated by white, male job trusting.

"Human Communication" with Scabs... On a Class-Struggle Program?

A class-struggle program against discrimination begins with defense of the rights of the employed workers, opposition to divisive quotas which accept the job market as determined by the capitalists and solidarity with strikes against scabbing. Any support for the government's union-busting "Affirmative Action" schemes, particularly coming from ostensibly revolutionary organizations such as the social-democratic International Socialists or the Maoist Revolutionary Union, is a betrayal of elementary labor solidarity against the bourgeois government. (Another example of such bleeding-heart liberalism came during the strike when, misled by Maoist conceptions that the most oppressed workers are necessarily the most revolutionary, some radicals in Local 1150 organized as the "Bell Workers Action Committee" of *Strike Back*, supported by the Harpers Ferry Organization made excuses for women scabbing. They called for "human communication" with operators as they crossed the picket lines, even opposing the elementary defensive measure of union fines for all strikebreakers!)

A class-struggle program would include the demand for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, in order to open up jobs in all levels. Furthermore, demands for massive wage hikes in the lower-paid categories, to help equalize wages in the industry; for free 24-hour child care under workers control; and equal access to all job training must be raised. Fairness in hiring and upgrading, on a plant-wide basis from date of entry, should be ensured through union control of employment, including a union hiring hall.

The key to implementing such a program is the question of leadership. The militant-talking Local 1150 leadership, however, has shown no improvement over the record of the pro-company Beirne machine in the International. Candopoulos' verbal enthusiasm (in an interview with *Workers Vanguard*) for "dignity," an end to discrimination and a labor party (in the future!) did not prevent him from supporting Beame for New York mayor and basing his plans not on the mobilized strength of the workers, but on Democratic politicians—who "will be backing us all the way"—despite their miserable anti-labor records. Reportedly, the local meeting which decided to strike also decided to dispense with specific demands against the company, since these would deny "flexibility" to the leadership in the negotiations. This can only mean "flexibility" to dispense with the workers' interests, which is what happened in the strike, giving rise to complaints that the whole action was a misadventure from the beginning.

Victory in the strike would have required full mobilization of the membership behind specific demands of obvious interest to the entire member-

ship. The real issues go beyond the personal grievances of the two workers and the question of who struck first, which confused many members. All company supervisors must be eliminated from the shop floor, to be replaced by productive, non-disciplinary union lead workers. Factory and shop committees, with the power to strike production units (buildings, shifts, etc.) must be set up to handle grievances and draw into struggle the most oppressed workers. More than just redressing the immediate grievance, these demands would directly challenge the company's "right" to organize production as it sees fit and thus lead to a struggle over the fundamental question of who will rule in industry, capital or labor.

Such a struggle goes far beyond shop-floor grievances and requires above all an alternative leadership to replace the present sellout Meany/Beirne labor bureaucracy. This requires the formation of a national cau-

FREE ON REQUEST
Spartacist League leaflet

"Support the Strike at Long Lines"

write to:

New York Spartacist League,
Box 1377, GPO,
New York, N.Y. 10001

cus based on a class-struggle program for the CWA. A militant leadership would wage a struggle for workers control of production throughout the industry, in which the workers committees would examine the books and records of the company, exposing profits, maneuvers and back-room deals to full public inspection. This would enable the communications workers to launch a campaign to tear the so-called "public" telephone monopoly out of the hands of its avaricious private owners, by nationalization under workers control. The necessary complement of such demands is, of course, a call for a workers government to replace the rule of capital, so that the labor of workers can truly serve the interests of society rather than simply swelling the profits of the giant corporations. ■

BASIC TROTSKYISM

CLASS
SERIES

Jan. 21 The Founding of the Fourth International

Feb. 4 The Struggle for the Fourth International in the Post War Era

BAY AREA

For information call: (415) 653-4668
or 655-5175 or 763-4510

ILWU Militant Fights Blacklist Firing

Systematic purging of reds and militants is a regular feature of life in West Coast warehouses, as employers hope to repress any militant response to their speed-up and productivity schemes before it starts. One recent case promises to focus the fight against rampant blacklisting of militants in the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). Bob Mandel, prominent anti-war leader of the 1960's (one of the "Oakland Seven"—leaders of the militant but adventurist attempt to shut down the Oakland draft induction center), and a full member of ILWU Warehouse Local 6 since 1970, was "terminated" from his job in an obvious political firing in December.

Blacklisting prevents a worker from getting off probation (90 days) on any job in a Distributors' Association warehouse (most warehouses are in the Association). Mandel has been a victim of the blacklist since 1971, when he was one of the leaders of a petition campaign in Local 6 for a strike in solidarity with the longshoremen's strike of that year. Since then, he has been fired or "laid off" before the end of the probation period from at least 15 warehouses—every warehouse in which he worked. In the most recent case, he was "laid off" despite the fact that he had been there longer than some others and the company has made subsequent attempts to hire other workers.

Blacklisting, often under the direct inspiration or control of the government, is nothing new on the waterfront. In the post-World War II anti-communist witchhunt, reds and militants were screened from the Sailors' Union of the Pacific. During the Korean War, a similar "security" screening combed fully 10 percent of the ILWU membership from waterfront jobs (of these, 65 percent were black). Still in the hands of Stalinist Communist Party supporters despite the anti-communist purge of the CIO, the ILWU leadership remained fair game for government persecution. Five attempts to deport President Harry Bridges were made over 21 years, and in 1953 the union was forced to lead a three-day general strike in Hawaii to protest the Smith Act conviction of its chief Hawaiian leader, Jack Hall.

Having made its peace with capitalism even before World War II, and collaborating with imperialism during the war, the Bridges leadership survived the McCarthyite persecutions by selling itself to local employer interests. Bridges signed away the rights of the membership to resist waterfront "productivity" schemes in two five-year contracts. Today, militants who are fired for fighting grievances on the job or defending earlier victims, get only perfunctory "defense" at best, while the real effort of the leadership goes to conciliating employer abuse of

the probation period and ensuring "uninterrupted" production.

Mandel's case coincides with two grievances over similar cases, each involving former shop stewards who have been victimized throughout the industry for militant activities as stewards. One, a CP sympathizer, led a series of work actions culminating in a work stoppage, and the other, supported by the Maoist Revolutionary Union, combatted a dangerous health condition in a chemical laboratory organized by the local. The bureaucracy's response to these typical blacklist cases has been stalling and foot-dragging: in the case of the CP sympathizer, a vote at a membership meeting was required to get the leadership to file a grievance on his behalf; in Mandel's case, a grievance has yet to be filed.

Mandel is an outspoken member of the union who, among other things, recently advocated the "hot cargo" (refusing to handle) treatment for struck lettuce and grapes, in support of the California farm workers' strike, and similar treatment for goods going to or from Chile after the reactionary coup by army officers toppled Allende's popular-front regime. The latter point has been especially embarrassing for CP supporters in the union and the union leadership, since the latter were uncritical of Allende's conciliation of the army. Anxious to preserve their "respectability," the ILWU leaders wish to play down serious struggle against the military junta, particularly sharp class struggle—such as hot cargo—which would directly involve them. Asked in an interview why he was being persecuted, Mandel responded:

"I fought for the elimination of the probation period, and for the right to strike against layoffs and bad conditions, for workers control, etc., but in the long run, it is because I call—as at the last union convention—for such things as a workers party and a workers government."

A leaflet on the blacklist signed by Mandel and four other workers has appeared, and the group is circulating a petition demanding action on the three blacklist cases. As the leaflet, "Defend the Union—Smash the Employers' Blacklist," points out, "By allowing the employers to screen out whoever they see fit, the blacklist undermines the hiring hall and opens the door to an all-out attack on the union."

Mandel and other workers are attempting to form a united-front committee which would fight for action in defense of all blacklist victims. Such a committee should allow full expression of different points of view, which is essential for the maintenance of workers democracy. Every union member has an interest in supporting such a committee and smashing the employers' blacklist. ■

RCY FORUM

Britain's Winter of Class War

Speaker: JOSEPH SEYMOUR
SL Central Committee

February 2, 7:30 p.m.
place to be announced

for information call: (212) 925-5665

New York

Trade Union Tactics and the Transitional Program

Speaker:
CHRIS KNOX
Labor Editor, *Workers Vanguard*
Tuesday, January 22, 7:30 p.m.

Yale University
William L. Harkness Hall
Room 115
Corner of College and Wall Streets

Phone workers interested in a class-struggle program for CWA should contact the Militant Action Caucus (MAC) of Oakland Local 9415. The Militant Action Caucus spearheaded the successful drive against Amendment 19-2C (which would have given local bureaucrats a free hand to expel from the union virtually any oppositionist) at the last CWA convention. MAC's program includes points against discrimination, unemployment, and government intervention, and for workers control, a workers party and workers government. MAC publishes a regular paper, *Militant Action Report*. Samples on request.

MILITANT ACTION CAUCUS, Box 462, El Cerrito, California 94530

WORKERS VANGUARD

Australian Labor Government's Wage/Price Controls Referendum Defeated

To the surprise of the public opinion pollsters and the government, Australian voters decisively turned down the dual referendum on price and wage controls in early December. Some 66 percent rejected wage controls, while 56 percent opposed price controls as well. This decisive "No-No" vote represents a sharp defeat for the Australian Labor Party government led by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. Whitlam has aspirations to "rationalize" Australia's capitalist economy through a technocratic program of state economic controls. His models are Social Democrat Willy Brandt's coalition government in West Germany and Harold Wilson's Labour government in Britain during the late 1960's. However, unfortunately for the aspiring technocrats of the reformist social-democratic and labor parties, they must still contend with the militant reaction of their working-class base.

While the leading capitalist newspapers, the Australian and the Age, supported the ALP government, calling for a "Yes-Yes" vote, the Liberal Party called for opposition to federal control, preferring direct confrontation with the unions to Whitlam's maneuvering and apparently desiring to leave the question of economic controls to the state governments where they and the Country Party hold power. However, Australian workers (even in ALP strongholds) voted strongly against both wage and price controls because they were convinced, correctly, that even price controls would simply be an excuse for de facto wage controls. That

this was the case was made clear by Prime Minister Whitlam who had declared: "...if the people of Australia give us the power to control prices and if our efforts to contain inflation within reasonable limits then fail, we shall receive the full cooperation of the trade union movement in restraining wages and income" (quoted in Direct Action, 27 September 1973). Bob Hawke, head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, was not quite so categorical (if only because he could be more easily unseated by an outburst of militancy from the union ranks), but also made clear his support for "voluntary" wage controls: "We give you the assurance that our wage claims will be reduced if the Federal Government controlled prices," he declared on September 20 (ibid.).

We are reprinting below the article, "No to Whitlam's Prices and Wages Fraud," from Australasian Spartacist No. 5, 5 December 1973, published by our comrades of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand. In it they draw attention to the fact that the "Yes-No" (i.e., "yes" to price controls, "no" to wage controls) campaign of the various Statist groups tailed after the trade-union bureaucracy and served only to create illusions in the possibility of reforming capitalism. Of the groups mentioned in the article, the SPA is the pro-Moscow Stalinist party in Australia, while the SWAG is composed of Mao enthusiasts and the CPA affects an "independent" Stalinist stance sympathetic to the ultra-reformist policies of the Italian Communist Party.

NO TO WHITLAM'S PRICES AND WAGES FRAUD

Under a pretense of a programme to preserve the popular standard of living, Whitlam's government is preparing for exactly the opposite—inflation "controlled" at the expense of the working class.

Whitlam: Fake "Price Controls" and a "Voluntary" Wage Freeze

The two referenda Whitlam is sponsoring—supported by a section of the bourgeoisie—are presented as an effort to gain federal government powers over prices and wages. In fact, however, they are a duplicitous "public relations" exercise: the price control power is being sought only to make more palatable to the working class a policy of "voluntary" wage controls. The incomes control proposal is merely an attempt to placate the less "enlightened" capitalists, who will accept the marginal impositions of the fake price controls on their sectional interests only if these are coupled to the threat of more direct forms of state wage control than that now exercised through the "arbitration" system. That the incomes control question is wholly a fraud is demonstrated by the fact that Whitlam has admitted that the power to control prices will probably include the power to control the price of labour—wages—in any case.

Labor Government Carries Out Capitalist Policy

A general and openly state-enforced wage freeze would pose dangers which Whitlam and the predominant elements in the ruling class see as unnecessary at the moment. They hope instead to buy for the trade-union bureaucrats (with the mirage of price controls) the poli-

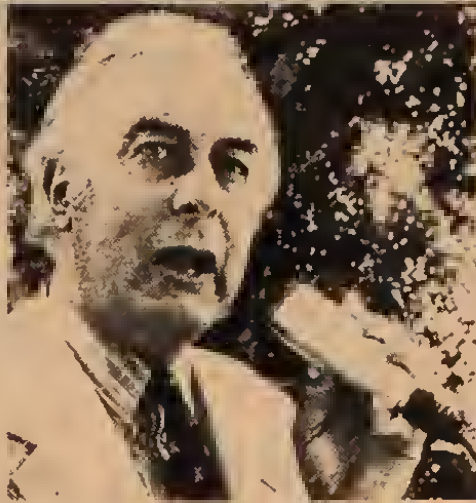
tical credit to force "voluntary" wage controls on most of the working class. At a time when the working class is weakened by higher unemployment levels (for example, in next year's expected recession) the ruling class will attempt to impose a tougher policy, with



Australian Ford workers strike last summer.

more stringent and direct wage controls. Doubtless they would like some clear legal powers in reserve for this situation, but they could almost certainly find a way without any constitutional change.

The referendum fraud is lent some credibility by Whitlam's quarrel with the openly anti-working-class Liberals. This quarrel merely reflects a difference in tactics within the ruling class between those like Snedden, who believe that it is already time for direct con-



Left, Prime Minister Whitlam. Right, trade-union chief Hawke.



THE NATIONAL TIMES (AUSTRALIA)

frontation with the organisations of the working class, and those who want to postpone the social and political turmoil which would result from such a confrontation. The more "liberal" capitalists (such as those who control the Australian) have a policy of wherever possible fooling the working class instead of fighting it. They see the Labor Party, with its contradictory character, as the best steward of capitalism at this time, its leadership completely committed to capitalism on the one hand, and its working-class base subject to limited but real control through the trade-union bureaucracy, on the other. In the pro-capitalist betrayers of the Whitlam/Hawke ALP leadership, the bourgeoisie finds ready tools for defending their profits and their rule in society.

The falling-out between Whitlam and Hawke represents only a minor episodic clash between the zeal of the Whitlam government in promoting capitalist interests and the self-interest of the central union bureaucracy. They are agreed on the desirability of token price controls as a tool to deceive the workers, but Hawke declares that Whitlam is going too far with his incomes control proposal. Hawke is scarcely interested

wages powers as to alienate the trade unions; and Hawke and the union bureaucrats he represents have long accepted wage controls in another guise.

Fake Lefts Cover for Hawke

Whitlam is given all the flexibility he wants by his referendum: he promises nothing about the application of the powers. The workers are not even being asked to vote for a reform under the illusion that Whitlam will carry it out. And he has further covered himself by saying that even the exercise of federal powers over both prices and wages cannot end inflation. So much for the "revolutionary" pretensions of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), and Socialist Workers Action Group (SWAG), who call for a "Yes-No" vote to give Whitlam powers over prices—so that he has, as a SWAG leaflet puts it, "no excuse not to fight inflation." The policies of the CPA and SPA are the reflection of their leaderships' role as the reformist "left wing" flank of the trade union bureaucracy. SWAG's position is simply one link in the chain of capitulation resulting from their orientation toward the fake lefts of the Victorian labour movement: setting out merely to tail Socialist Left types, they are now eager to fall in step behind the central bureaucracy led by Hawke.

The CPA's campaign for a "Yes" vote in the prices referendum exposes the reformist, social-democratic core behind their pseudo-radical rhetoric—their programme limited to the struggle for reform within the framework of capitalism. Of course, for the CPA "...it is no simple legislative matter for a class battle is involved in which people must become active, and new, socialist values be brought to the fore." (Eric Aarons, "Importance of Price Control", Tribune, October 23-29, 1973) That is, for the CPA the class struggle is reduced to a constitutional referendum, and "socialist values" to a legalistic deceit. The CPA's amorphous "action" and petty-bourgeois "values" are just a camouflage to hide their parliamentary cretinism.

"Price Control" Under Capitalism—Reform or Illusion?

The CPA tries to hide the fact that "The official struggle of the government with high prices is only a deception of the masses." (Trotsky, in the Transitional Programme) Even if their referendum were not a complete fraud, the

continued on page 8