

Impeachment Is Not Enough!

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Richard Milhous Nixon is a crook, a liar and a mass murderer. He is also president of the United States. The liberals would like to convict Nixon for destroying the "dignity" of the presidency. However, his peculiar qualities are by no means unheard of among the recent commanders-in-chief of U.S. imperialism. Democrat Lyndon Johnson was hardly a knight in shining armor. Of course, there is a difference: Nixon went too far, and he got caught.

For the bourgeoisie "toofar" means using the same methods of illegal surveillance and sabotage against rival bourgeois politicians which were heretofore reserved for communists, blacks and unionists. The Democrats resented having their Watergate party headquarters treated as if it were the Russian embassy. Another factor causing resentment was the concentration of power in the hands of an arrogant clique of officials whose main qualifications were personal loyalty to Nixon and whose operational practices more closely resemble the Mafia than any impartial administration of the law.

For more than a year, the ruling class has been of two minds on the question of impeachment. On the one hand, most would like to be rid of a chief executive who has discredited the entire Republican Party, the "Washington establishment" and the U.S. government. On the other hand, a drawn-out trial of the president in full view of the public would even further weaken an already badly discredited regime.

By last fall a sizeable part of both the Democratic and Republican leaderships had become inclined toward impeachment or a forced resignation. The "Saturday Night Massacre," in which Nixon dumped Special Watergate Prosecutor Cox, Attorney General Richardson and Attorney General designate Ruckelshaus, was a key factor. Subsequent revelations of the absence of key White House tapes reconfirmed this inclination.

Nixon, however, had resolved to brazen out the affair with a publicity campaign labeled "Operation Candor" designed to mobilize down-home conservatives against the liberals. Since bourgeois politicians respect nothing so highly as success, many drew back from an immediate impeachment drive in order to wait and see if Nixon could pull it off. But a concatenation of findings by legal bodies punched so many holes in White House arguments that "Operation Candor" was quickly abandoned. At present Nixon appears to have given up on staving off impeachment, and is instead trying to delay it and maneuver for position.

The response of the labor movement and various ostensibly socialist groups to the Watergate affair has been highly indicative. The top AFL-CIO leader-

ship, which in the 1972 elections adopted an attitude of pro-Nixon "neutrality," jumped on the impeachment bandwagon in order to extricate itself from the embrace of the sinking administration. The fact that the AFL-CIO has actually put some effort into the impeachment drive is an indication of how worried George Meany is that the union rank and file will remember how he (as well as Woodcock and Fitzsimmons) sat on the government boards implementing Nixon's wage-freezing policies. For Meany/Woodcock/Fitzsimmons support for impeachment is a way of cleaning up their images. What do they care that Vice President Ford is just as reactionary and strongly anti-labor as his boss?

Among the ostensibly revolutionary parties, the pro-Moscow and pro-Peking Stalinists content themselves to tail after Meany. The Communist Party tries to give its support for impeachment the aura of 100 percent Americanism with lengthy references to the Constitution and the "Federalist Papers." The Maoist Revolutionary Union on the other hand tries to give impeachment a "popular" twist with its slogan "throw the bum out." Neither offers a concrete alternative to continued Republican and Democratic rule.

The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party has recently taken up again the call for a labor party (after years of calling for a black party and a Chicano party) and even mentions this demand in some of its Watergate articles. But the SWP's main focus is on a court suit against the government, demanding that the government cease its disruption and harassment activities. A court suit can be a useful secondary means of eliciting information and exposing the hypocrisy of the ruling class and systematic government provocation against all left groups. But to pose the SWP "socialist court suit" as the alternative to Watergate only demonstrates once again these reformists' inability to go beyond bourgeois democracy and pose the need for proletarian revolution.

The SWP apparently feels, like the CP and RU, that impeachment is the answer. In an interview on Watergate earlier this year, SWP national chairman emeritus James P. Cannon remarked about an earlier issue of *Workers Vanguard*:

"A. Do you know what they say on the headline? 'Impeachment is not enough!' (Laughs.)"



ACTUALIDAD ESPAÑOLA

"Q. He has to be hanged by the thumbs, or something?"

—*Intercontinental Press*,
19 January

Apparently for the SWP, impeachment is enough and the swearing-in of Gerald Ford will solve the problems of U.S. workers!

The Spartacist League has pointed out that the labor movement must support a move by the bourgeoisie to impeach Nixon; but in order to get rid of the phony energy crisis engineered by the oil companies and the government; the wage-freezing policies of the Democrats, Republicans and labor bureaucracy; imperialist wars launched by Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon; government disruption of labor and socialist

groups going back farther than the Haymarket Affair of 1886—in short, the real crimes of Nixon and his class, it is necessary to raise a program which leads to the inescapable conclusion that the workers must take power in their own hands. The workers movement must demand new elections in order to put forward a labor candidate counterposed to the program and candidates of the capitalist Democratic and Republican parties, as a step to the formation of a workers party based on the unions. If the bourgeoisie refuses, labor must be prepared to undertake a political general strike to enforce this demand. Dump the Meany, Woodcocks and Millers—Forward to a workers government! ■

Behind AFL-CIO Anti-Nixon Drive—

Meany Pushes Jackson, Wallace / 2

Meany Pushes Jackson, Wallace

No doubt hoping to erase from the memories of U.S. workers the embarrassing fact that it has been one of the key backers of the Nixon administration, George Meany's AFL-CIO machine has taken to the hustings proclaiming its resolve to defeat the top Watergate criminal and perpetrator of runaway inflation. In a special election in a solidly Republican Michigan district, seen by all as a test of whether Nixon's endorsement is truly the kiss of death for any GOP candidate (it was), the campaign of the victorious Democrat Traxler was largely run by local union officials.

By this February the AFL-CIO had already collected more campaign funds than it spent during the entire presidential election year of 1972, some \$5 million, and was going into high gear to raise still more money (*Wall Street Journal*, 10 April). Meany appears to be intent on achieving the great goal of a "veto-proof" (two-thirds Democratic) Congress, as a step toward electing his man Henry (the Senator from Boeing) Jackson as president in 1976.

Meany is not doling out union political funds to just any Democrat, but is very concerned that the "veto-proof" Congress reflect his brand of rigidly anti-communist Cold War liberalism. (A good example of this selectivity is the current primary battle in Ohio for the Democratic senatorial nomination between Kennedy liberal ex-astronaut John Glenn and the more conservative AFL-CIO-backed Howard Metzenbaum.) The McGovern disaster put Meany in a strong position to influence the Democratic Party, while the Watergate scandal gave him the opportunity to use that influence.

Meany's machine is working hard and paying much to reorganize the faction-ridden Democrats along right-center lines, running broadly from George Wallace on the right to Ted Kennedy on the left. Since the Democratic Party is a capitalist party, rather than a reformist workers party, the nation's union chief cannot be party boss no matter how anti-strike, anti-communist and jingoist he is. But at present Meany is undeniably enjoying a certain success as Democratic king-maker and campaign broker.

Rats Leave the Sinking Nixon Ship

The exhausting Vietnam war produced a major split in the U.S. ruling class which extended into the labor bureaucracy. For the Democratic Party, with a constituency including labor, middle-class liberals and blacks, the intense conflict over the war was far more disruptive than for the Republican Party. (This was the main reason for Nixon's election victories in 1968 and 1972.) The polarization over the war issue culminated in the hapless McGovern candidacy, which the pro-war Democrats (and there was no more blood-thirsty hawk than Meany) effectively sabotaged.

The official AFL-CIO pro-Nixon "neutrality" had a dual purpose. First, Meany truly preferred Nixon to McGovern. Secondly, he figured the inevitable ignominious defeat at the polls would strengthen his role in the internal life of the Democratic Party—and he was right.

Immediately after November 1972, the Meany forces in the Democratic Party, headed by Al Barkan, successfully pushed through a purge of the McGovern "New Politics" people. A long article in the *Washington Post* (2 September 1973) commented:

"Barkan, on the other hand, interpreted his mandate from Meany to require that the 'Campus Camelots',

the advocates of abortion and pot and the 'radical blacks', be driven from their places of power."

The Watergate scandal was an unexpected and powerful reinforcement for Meany's strategy. It gave the Democratic Party exceptional electoral possibilities at a time when the petty-bourgeois left-liberal wing of the party was discredited and being systematically rubbed out. But Watergate was by no stretch of the imagination a cause of Meany's "disillusionment" in Nixon. Only a political imbecile could believe that the man who encouraged construction workers to attack antiwar demonstrators was incensed over the "plumbers" breaking into the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychotherapist.

In fact Meany's wholehearted support for the Nixon-Agnew hard line on antiwar dissent was probably a factor in emboldening the President to extend his personal police state apparatus into new and broader areas of political life. Meany has worked closely with the FBI and CIA over the years and believes in no-holds-barred tactics when dealing with opponents, especially "pinkos." Nixon's Watergate antics pale in comparison to the "dirty tricks" dispensed by Meany's American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) in the process of sabotaging left-wing unions around the world. Moreover, Meany doesn't really care whether Nixon is impeached or not since he rightly figures the administration is thoroughly discredited anyway.

The AFL-CIO call for impeachment, on the other hand, was useful in trying to polish up Meany's image, tarnished by almost overt support for Nixon and participation in the government's anti-labor wage-price controls programs. No less obscenely hypocritical than Meany's new-found concern for civil liberties is his attempt to unload the entire burden of responsibility for inflation and falling real wages on Nixon.



Senator Henry Jackson

An unsuspecting reader ignorant of the true facts would assume that the AFL-CIO Executive Committee statement condemning the government "stabilization" program meant that the labor tops had opposed Nixon's policies all along:

"Thirty months of the Nixon Administration's so-called stabilization program have proven its complete and utter failure.... The controls program has been unfair, unjust and inequitable from its very beginning in August 15, 1971. Workers' wages, alone, have been held down. Profits, interest rates and prices have sky-rocketed."

—*American Federationist*, March 1974

Reading the union bureaucracy's current anti-Nixon propaganda, one



George Meany

would never suspect that Meany was calling on Nixon to impose state wage-price controls long before 1971; that the union bureaucracy not only supported the 1971 wage freeze and every phase since, but became part of the government's policing apparatus to boot; and that since 1973, when Nixon dropped any pretense at holding down prices, Meany and his colleagues I.W. (No-Strike) Abel and Leonard (Smash-Wildcats) Woodcock, have done everything in their power, including launching physical attacks on union militants, to push wage-cut contracts down the workers' throats.

Meany's United Front Embraces Wallace

Meany's intense efforts to drive the McGovern forces out of the Democratic Party leadership are matched by his desires to bring the Wallace forces in. By combining an appeal to white fears of racial violence with populist demagoguery blaming liberal-dominated "big government" for inflation, taxes and all other evils, George Wallace has developed an unstable and unorganized, but nonetheless considerable, constituency among traditionally Democratic white workers and lower-middle-class elements.

The Wallace movement is a serious obstacle to re-establishing the Democrats' national electoral dominance. So Meany is attempting to line Wallace up behind Jackson in 1976 by bringing him into the Democratic leadership spectrum. Last fall the Meany forces helped elect Mickey Griffin, a Wallace man, to the Democratic National Committee despite strong liberal opposition. Since then Meany has made it crystal clear that he regards Wallace as a legitimate power in the Democratic Party, whose views must be taken into account.

There is a substantial negative basis for a Wallace-Meany tie-up. Both hate reds, hippies and Harvard professors. The Wallace and Meany forces worked effectively together to get rid of the quotas for blacks, women, etc., for the state delegations to the 1976 Democratic National Convention. Meany doesn't like

black militants any more than Wallace does. However, since blacks are an important part of the AFL-CIO membership and Democratic Party constituency, Meany (in contrast to Wallace) must at least make hypocritical gestures toward supporting blacks' rights and interests.

On what basis and for how long the openly racist Wallace and the head of the U.S. labor movement can collaborate is unclear. (One indication: Wallace-run Alabama is a largely non-union state with low wages and an anti-union "right-to-work" law on the books.) What is clear is that the Wallace-Meany "consensus" is directed against black and other racial minorities and can only intensify within the working class the racial hostility which is such a powerful prop to American capitalism.

A Pillar of Cold-War Anti-Communism

Meany's anti-communism is legendary and is solidly rooted in reactionary social values. He was sophistically repelled by the gay and women's liberationists at the 1972 Democratic Convention that he simply walked out. No doubt he risks a heart attack whenever he thinks of the American flag's being desecrated. And his personal clique which runs the AFL-CIO is no less rabid. Meany's main foreign policy advisor, Jay Lovestone, is an ex-Communist Party leader who was so treacherous even Stalin couldn't trust him. Since he was jilted by Stalin and expelled from the CP in 1929, Lovestone has waged a personal vendetta against the Kremlin bureaucracy.

While Meany is crude, sometimes irrational and tends to overestimate the strength of American imperialism, his basic anti-Soviet policy reflects the interests of the bureaucracy as a whole, and that is the source of his strength. To be sure, sharp conflicts occur within the union bureaucracy over concrete issues (e.g., the Vietnam war), just as they do within the ruling class itself. But all wings of the U.S. labor bureaucracy are committed to the interests of "their" imperialism, and that is why Meany's sometime liberal rivals—the late Walter Reuther, or Jerry Wurf of AFSCME and Leonard Woodcock of the UAW today—cannot defeat him or even seriously undermine his authority. To overthrow the Meanyite AFL-CIO bureaucracy the liberals would have to mobilize the ranks, whom they could not be certain of controlling and whose interests and political impulses go well beyond the narrow differences Wurf-Woodcock sometimes have with Meany.

Meany represents, in the grossest form, the central political axis of the labor bureaucracy in this epoch—social patriotism. This is the policy of mobilizing the labor movement on behalf of the imperialist efforts of one's own capitalist class, expecting to gain at the expense of other peoples and to win concessions from a grateful bourgeoisie. The semi-social-democratic Woodcock machine of the UAW, often contrasted to the arch-reactionary Meany, recently presented its own display of social patriotism. Reversing a long-standing policy against economic protectionism, it is now campaigning for quotas on foreign car imports—saying, in effect, that employment for its own members should be at the expense of foreign auto workers.

At the point where Nixon switched his foreign policies from "victory" in Vietnam to détente with Peking and Moscow, Meany broke with the Administration's foreign policy and wholeheartedly embraced Henry Jackson's pure-and-simple sabre-rattling mili-

tarism. Because the Vietnam fiasco generated a broad sentiment for an end to constant confrontations with the "Sino-Soviet Bloc," Meany and the die-hard cold warriors were forced for a period to snipe at the détente from the sidelines. But by skillfully exploiting the issues of Jewish emigration from the USSR and Soviet dissidents, Meany-Jackson won back a certain liberal support for anti-Russian policies. They won support from militarist factions by denouncing the SALT I agreement as leading to a repeat of John F. Kennedy's famous "missile gap" (which, as subsequent reports revealed, never existed) during the late 1950's. Even alter a worldwide nuclear alert during the October Arab-Israel War and the currently booming Pentagon budget, Meany is still attacking the Nixon administration for being "soft on communism":

"I pray every night that Henry Kissinger won't give the Russians the Washington Monument—he's given them every God damn thing else."

—New York Times, 2 April

With the current recession Meany and Jackson can happily combine the call to arms against "totalitarian Russia" with a pitch to end unemployment by producing more planes and missiles. In short, Meany is making a concerted effort to place the government in the hands of the most aggressively militaristic wing of the U.S. ruling class, supported by the forces of domestic social reaction such as Wallace.

The Day of Reckoning

The popular loathing for Richard Nixon, a completely despicable human being in addition to being a reactionary politician, has given Meany's labor-Democratic Party coalition a breather. However, the present and past atrocities perpetrated by the chiefs of the U.S. labor movement will not be forgotten in the current wave of anti-Nixon solidarity. Black workers will not soon forget that the head of the AFL-CIO personally escorted the U.S.' most prominent racist politician into the leading circles of the Democratic Party. And trade-union rank and filers are well aware that it was Meany-Abel-Woodcock who forced them into wage-cutting contracts, despite having verbally opposed Nixon's manifestly anti-labor wage controls.

American workers have nothing to gain from Meany's "veto-proof" Congress in terms of ending inflation or satisfying their needs. Their demands can only be met through militant class struggle on the picket lines, in the streets and in the factories. And since this battle cannot be won by simply demanding higher wages—it is necessary to provide a *political* alternative to the wage-cutting Democratic and Republican parties of big capital—it is the job of revolutionary socialists to take the struggle from its present primitive level to that of a conscious fight to replace the rule of profit by a workers government which would expropriate the capitalist class and dismantle the bourgeois state. Only in this manner, which as a first step involves replacing the present union bureaucracy with a class-struggle leadership of the labor movement, can we ensure that George Meany and his ilk will pay for their crimes against workers throughout the world. ■

RCY RADIO PROGRAM:

"Young Spartacus: A Marxist Commentary"

WHPK, 88.3 FM
(southside Chicago radio station)
Thursdays 6:30 p.m.
CHICAGO

RESIGNATION STATEMENT:

"SWP Is No Place to Be a Communist"

April 8, 1974

SWP
Berkeley, Ca.

Dear Comrade Powers,

This letter tenders my resignation from the SWP [Socialist Workers Party]. For a period of ten years I have been a supporter or member of the YSA [Young Socialist Alliance] and the SWP. I am leaving the SWP because in the last three years it has become clear to me that the SWP is most decidedly un-Marxist, anti-Leninist and non-Trotskyist. For me this appreciation of the SWP (and other parties affiliated with the "United" Secretariat) began when as a member of the Proletarian Orientation Tendency [P.O.T.] I saw the virulent anti-working-class sentiment of the SWP majority—a sentiment so typical of the American petty-bourgeoisie and lumpen-proletariat. The SWP gives the dilettantism, venality and philistinism of the student based petty-bourgeoisie a "Marxist" cover and a Social-Democratic rhetoric; but covers and rhetoric have never changed the fundamental essence of any political phenomena. They only disguise it and thereby render it still more treacherous.

The 1971 SWP convention was a howling caricature of a Leninist convention. Every bureaucratic maneuver, short of physical violence, was used to deprive the legitimate political rights of both the P.O.T. and the C.T. [Communist Tendency]. Once that circus was over the SWP borrowed a page from Stalin's notebook and flooded the Oakland/Berkeley SWP branch and YSA local with a small army of mindless hand-raising hacks who pushed the pro-P.O.T. leadership of the YSA out of the way and replaced them at the helm. This is what Stalin did in order to crush the Zinoviev Opposition's stronghold in Leningrad. Then, borrowing yet still another page from Stalin's greasy notebook, the age limit for SWP members in the YSA was lowered so as to remove more opposition leaders who managed to hang on. This was precisely the way Stalin removed the Trotskyist leadership of the Socialist Youth Corps (the youth group of the Chinese Communist Party) during his betrayal of the 1925-1927 Chinese Revolution.

These and subsequent unprincipled organizational maneuvers whose name are legion, while foul and disgusting in their own right are merely the superficial manifestations of the political decay of the SWP. For some ten years the SWP blocked with capitalist politicians in the anti-war movement. In order not to "alienate" these treasured allies, the SWP's line in the anti-war movement was not to defend Vietnam because it was a workers' state. Instead the SWP called for withdrawal of U.S. troops using pacifist and liberal rationale; for example, arguing that the U.S. armaments money could be better spent by improving conditions in the U.S. In addition, the nationalist call of "Self-Determination for Vietnam!" was raised by itself. The problem with this is that both the Stalinists in the North and the U.S. puppets in the South are themselves genuine Vietnamese. Thus during the entire anti-war movement the SWP never raised the call for political revolution in the North, nor for an extension of the revolution in the South. Pity the frail and self-defeating parameters of reformism!!

While falling into the pit of "classless" nationalism in Vietnam, the SWP plunged headlong, consciously and actively into the twin mires of Black and Chicano nationalism. The most ludicrous element in these feckless ven-

tures was the SWP's conception of the territorial solution for the blacks and Chicanos. For blacks, the SWP simply (if that is the correct word) called for *self-determination on a non-territorial basis*, i.e. a federated string of "independent" black ghettos from coast to coast. While Stalin modestly confined his aims to building "socialism in a single country," the SWP sought to build black capitalism in various parts of scattered cities. In the case of the Chicanos, the SWP lent credence to and actively agitated for the idea of an "independent" Atzlan, whose boundaries no one knows or guesses with any proximity. Setting up the "independent" state of Atzlan would of course mean expelling the majority of population in that area which would mean the forceful displacement of the white, black, and Indian working-classes, in addition to the seizure of land from Mexico. The above are only some of the ludicrous elements of the anti-Marxist approach of the SWP on the national question. The most serious was to equate Lenin's call for self-determination for oppressed nationalities with the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalist ideologies, which begin by calling for an independent nation-state and end by calling for and actively suppressing working-class struggles, as in Bangladesh. Lenin sometimes called for self-determination, but he never supported nationalism.

Like self-determination vs. nationalism, like women's liberation vs. feminism. Revisionism and reformism are never confined to one question or one slogan. Feminism like nationalism begins by calling for "independence" and ends by actively working against proletarian struggles. It is for this reason that the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921 passed a thesis on the question of women which stated in part "The Third Congress of the Comintern confirms the basic proposition of revolutionary Marxism, i.e., that there is no 'specific woman question' and no 'specific women's movement,' and, that every sort of alliance of working women with bourgeois feminism... leads to the undermining of the forces of the proletariat, delaying thereby the triumph of the social revolution and the advent of Communism, and thus also postponing the great hour of women's ultimate liberation. Communism will be achieved not by 'united efforts of all women of different classes' but by the united struggle of all the exploited."

The SWP turns its haunches toward the revolutionary period of the Comintern, and its face toward bourgeois politicians and petty-bourgeois political scoundrels. Pity the poor Comintern! It only had theoreticians like Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, and Radek who hated feminism. The SWP is graced with the likes of Lund, Waters, Stone and Reed who think that feminism and Marxism are not only compatible, but are necessary for each other!

These are only some of the reasons why I feel that the SWP is decayed beyond hope. I broke formally from its politics in my two contributions for the last two conventions. The documents of the R.I.T. [Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency] which was framed up and expelled from the SWP, [and] which I am in solidarity with, point the way back to Trotskyism. I leave the SWP with no regrets other than the fact that the mis-education that the SWP has given me, as well as others, simply stood in the way of my seeing the decay, wretchedness, and total bankruptcy of this party earlier.

For nearly a year now I have been sympathetic to and a supporter of the Spartacist League. The guffaws and the

derision of the fake Trotskyists of the SWP when the name of SL is mentioned merely affirm in my mind the general correctness of its views. In this light, it is interesting to note that the big bogey of the SWP is so-called "sectarianism and ultra-leftism." The SWP rarely, indeed if ever, expresses its fear of becoming reformist or opportunist. If both are evils of the Marxist movement, and they indeed are, why does the SWP only aim its fire on one danger? It is because the SWP is reformist and opportunist, and in fact what it generally considered "sectarianism and ultra-leftism" are the twin consciences of revolution which haunt it. This too explains the omission and falsification of a true and complete history of the SWP. To cite one example; the current pacifist interpretation of the 1939 anti-fascist rally at Madison Square Garden in N.Y. City. The real and correct nature of that demonstration can be found in the then organ of the American Trotskyists, *The Socialist Appeal* in the issues of February 28, 1939 and April 28, 1939. A revolutionary party is proud of its history, and a party proud of its history does not falsify or misplace the pages of its history!

With the Spartacist League, I have followed the debate within the barely-United Secretariat. The contributions to the discussion testified grimly to the general confusion, and worse, utter revisionism of these ostensible Trotskyists, some of whom with two and three decades in the movement should know better. But gray hairs don't make a revolutionist. The I.T. [Internationalist Tendency of the SWP, supporters of the European majority of the USec] reflects this condition by its inability and unwillingness to characterize the SWP as reformist or even centrist. With its kaleidoscopic heterogeneity, the I.T. reveals further confusion and unprincipledness with its practice of *triple* recruiting, i.e., join one of the cliques of the I.T. to change the I.T. which is in opposition to the SWP.

The time is over-ripe for the rebirth of Trotskyism. If like all revolutionary movements it must start with a handful of revolutionists, then so be it! With Lenin, we can inscribe on our banner, "Better Fewer, But Better!" The SWP is no place to be a communist!!

Forward to the Rebirth of the
F[ourth] I[nternational]!!!

A.G.

P.S. For all of those mindless hand-raising hacks who voted for Gerry Clark's expulsion on the wild and disproven charge that he was at the Spartacist League summer camp, let me offer the following for your delectation. Comrade Clark was not there. I can say that with the utmost assurance because I was there. And, might I add, the Spartacist League's theoretical abilities stand in such shining and stark contrast to those abysmal anti-historical non-sequiturs which in the SWP pass for "theory," that my attendance at the SL summer camp removed any doubts from my mind of which organization represents the future of Trotskyism and which represents betrayal of working-class struggles.

cc: SL

RCY/Socialist Forum Debate

DE LEONISM vs. LENINISM

*The Strategy for Socialist Revolution
The Party, the Trade Unions and the
Nature of Socialist Society*

Friday, 26 April
Washington Square Methodist Church
135 West 4th Street

New York

French Elections:

Not Mitterrand, But A Workers Government!

OCl Embraces Popular Front

PARIS—The sudden death of President Georges Pompidou on April 2 has given French popular frontism a new lease on life. The forces which make up the "Union of the Left"—the Communist Party, Socialist Party and bourgeois Left Radicals—together polled 42 percent of the vote in the March 1973 legislative elections. In the presidential elections coming up on May 5 and 19 (the latter being a runoff in case no candidate receives an absolute majority on the first round) they stand to increase their share of the ballots due to a sharpening of the class struggle in the intervening months. But whether it increases its vote totals or even wins the election, success for the popular front in no way means a victory for the working class.

Of course, the bourgeoisie does not as a normal matter of course call on workers parties to administer the affairs of the capitalist state—even when the workers parties are as crassly reformist as the French CP and SP, and even if they are committed to a class-collaborationist coalition with bourgeois parties. One of the main preconditions for the formation of a popular front and its coming to power is the political bankruptcy of the traditional capitalist ruling parties.

This is the case in France today. Gaullism is a form of bonapartist rule in which the forms of parliamentarianism are maintained but effectively limited by the power of a strong executive, in order to negate the influence of the two fifths of the electorate which votes Socialist and Communist. DeGaulle was able to raise himself above the influence of the various parties as a result of a powerful personality, close ties with the military and general agreement within the bourgeoisie that he was the only alternative to governmental chaos (as under the Fourth Republic) or bringing the CP into the regime. Pompidou was able to continue, in a weakened form, the Gaullist tradition of

a strong state, largely through wily maneuvering.

But while M. Jacques Chaban-Delmas enjoys a certain popularity with the UDR (Union for the Defense of the Republic, the Gaullist party) and sections of the petty bourgeoisie, he is hardly a powerful authoritarian figure in the tradition of the late General. In fact, he was for some time a Radical Socialist and a minister in the governments of Mendès-France and Mollet during the 1950's. As prime minister between 1969 and 1971, he gradually lost effective control of the cabinet and had to resign in the wake of several government scandals.

Moreover, the French bourgeoisie is not of one mind these days. Increased pressure due to its worsening position internationally has led to significant divisions in the French ruling class. In the wake of Pompidou's death, the leaders of various competing interest groups have been viciously elbowing each other for room at the top of the heap of Gaullist candidates. Thus Chaban-Delmas and Giscard d'Estaing represent differing views on European integration, relations with the U.S. and the possibility of coalition with the center forces in France. To this splintering of the Gaullists now is added the candidacy of the arch-conservative Royer, who has in the past led a campaign against abortion and introduced a bill re-legalizing factory apprenticeship at the age of 14 in place of schooling.

In any case, were legislative elections to be held now, the UDR and its allies could at best achieve only a razor-thin majority of the vote. (Of course, the undemocratic districting might still ensure them a substantial majority of seats.) In brief, the election of Chaban-Delmas or Giscard d'Estaing would not represent a victory for Gaullism, but rather a return to the weak governments of the Fourth Republic.

Upsurge in Labor Struggles

A second precondition to the formation of a popular front and its elevation to power is increasing labor unrest which threatens to break through the limits of capitalism. This, too, is pres-



François Mitterrand

ent in France today. Since the drawn-out and immensely popular strike at the Lip watch factory last year, French strikes have been increasingly marked by the formation of rank-and-file strike committees uniting militants of the different labor federations, occupations of factories and agitation for demands such as a sliding scale of wages (full cost-of-living), to be determined by union, not government, figures. There has also been a minor strike wave, with a continuing walkout by coal miners in Lorraine and local strikes among shipyard workers at St. Nazaire, auto workers at Le Mans and electronics workers in Moselle (*Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 13 April).

Furthermore, the labor unrest has extended into areas which in the past have not been significantly affected by strikes. The walkout by bank clerks in Paris (in which the various ostensibly Trotskyist groups have all been active)

has spread to a large number of banks (causing considerable financial disruption in the process); striking workers have rejected a partial capitulation by the banks and are sticking to their original demands. In addition, the workers at the stock exchange have struck, forcing the Paris bourse to close down.

These strikes are taking place in a situation in which the French government has been unable or unwilling to halt runaway inflation—12 percent in 1973 and expected to be well over that figure this year—but also unable to entirely pass the burden onto the backs of the working class. While the strike settlements and deals made by the union bureaucrats have been far short of what might have been achieved under revolutionary leadership, they have not been crushing defeats that would dampen militancy; nor have they meant a significant loss of purchasing power (in contrast to the U.S., where real wages fell



Valéry Giscard d'Estaing



Jacques Chaban-Delmas



Union marchers protest inflation in Paris last December.

WV PHOTO

by more than 4 percent last year). On the contrary, the obvious disarray of the French bourgeoisie (like its English, German and Italian neighbors) has only spurred on labor militancy.

Mitterrand: a Right-Wing French Allende

On the left, Francois Mitterrand is the single candidate of the left parties. While he is the first secretary of the Socialist Party, he is also the standard bearer of the popular-front Union of the Left and its "Common Program." This program not only promises to maintain the bourgeois state, but even the present anti-democratic Gaullist constitution! Under it, nationalizations would be restricted to approximately 40 companies, mostly banks and insurance companies, *with* compensation naturally.

Moreover, it contains an explicitly anti-communist clause, which was used by the first popular-front government in the late 1930's to repress the Trotskyists. It reads: "Movements which use armed violence or which call for its use will be forbidden in conformity with legislation established in 1936." Although ostensibly directed against the fascists, this clause guarantees that in an armed confrontation with the bourgeois police and army, it is the capitalists who will have all the guns.

As we wrote at the time of the legislative elections last year:

"The 'Common Program of Government' is a gloved hand extended to the bourgeoisie by the main workers' party, the CP; it is a *bourgeois* program of reforms which preserve the essential framework of capitalism. Tomorrow the gloved hand will become the mailed fist of repression as the CP uses the bourgeois state apparatus to smash striking workers who thought the 'Popular Union' would be *their* government."

— "New Pop Frontism in France," WV No. 17, March 1973

Mitterrand occasionally makes a formal bow in the direction of socialism. Speaking before a special congress of his party on April 8, he remarked: "We will not put the word socialism in our pocket. Socialism is synonymous with liberty." He reaffirmed the Common Program but also defined his own five-point electoral platform: "freer men, a fairer society, a stronger currency, a more fraternal people and a greater French presence" (*Le Monde*, 10 April). Putting his commitment to the maintenance of capitalism even more bluntly, Mitterrand stated in an interview with C.L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times* (17 April), "I am not a Marxist.... I certainly wouldn't betray NATO."

For its part, the Communist Party

was quick to offer its own assurances of "responsible" behavior. Georges Marchais, general secretary of the CP, went on the state radio to announce that "The Communist Party formulates no unreasonable demands. It represents a force without which it is not possible to realize the necessary transformations but it does not thereby have pretensions to a hegemonic role" (*Le Monde*, 12 April). And to show its good faith, the CP-controlled CGT labor federation hastened to cancel the traditional May Day demonstration for fear that the "ultra-left" might use the occasion to disturb the "social peace" just before the elections.

Hard on the heels of the Chilean defeat, the bureaucratic leaders of the French proletariat are preparing to run the same course. Handcuffed by his bourgeois allies as well as by his own deep-dyed reformism, Allende was only able to infuriate the bourgeoisie and could not expropriate it as a class. His vacillation paved the way for the victory of a brutally reactionary bonapartist counterrevolutionary military dictatorship. Told to rely on the "democratic traditions" of the military, the masses were left unarmed (both physically and politically) in the face of the September coup. The class treason of the Chilean CP and SP led directly to the slaughter of thousands of workers and left militants.

Allende's version of the popular front was, relatively speaking, a rather left-wing one. True, it was "born from the struggle of the masses" as its fake-Trotskyist apologists are fond of pointing out (so are all popular fronts). Yet the popular front is not an expression of that struggle but rather a last-ditch attempt by the bourgeoisie to stave off revolution—by drawing the mass reformist workers parties into the administration of the capitalist regime at a time when the capitalist parties can no longer maintain order alone. Its task is to deflect the working class from the struggle for power.

Not all popular fronts end in bloody coups such as marked the end of the Allende regime. The more insipid French popular fronts of 1936-38 and 1946-48 were replaced through a simple process of ministerial reshuffling. This would likely be the end of a Union of the Left government as well. But it nevertheless marks a significant defeat for the working class. As soon as the 1936 popular-front government came to power it broke the massive general strike; and its demise led straight to the fascist Vichy regime. Likewise, the collapse of the post-war popular front led to a ten-year period of governmental instability and ultimately to the 1958 Gaullist coup. To call for a vote for Mitterrand is to prepare a repeat

of this history of betrayal.

Mitterrand and Marchais want to close their eyes to reality. Immediately after the Chilean coup, Marchais went on radio to announce that "Chile is not France" (*France Soir*, 13 September 1973). Now Mitterrand takes to the air waves to declare that there is no danger of a right-wing coup d'état if he is elected president because, unlike the Chilean army which "everybody" thought was democratic but wasn't, the French army "truly is" democratic (12 April ORTF transmission). The French left refuses to recognize the lessons of history ("it was different then," they claim), thereby preparing the working class for an insidious trap.

Fake Trotskyists Tail Pop Front

A number of "far-left" organizations, including the supporters of *Rouge* (newspaper of the ex-Ligue Communiste, which recently announced its reconstitution as the Revolutionary Communist Front, FCR, at a meeting on April 10), "Revolution!", *Pour le Communisme*, Alliance Marxiste Revolutionnaire and the Maoist La Cause du Peuple are panting pitifully after the sellout left bureaucrat from Lip, Charles Piaget, in the hope of convincing him to become the "single candidate" of the far left, just as Mitterrand is the single candidate of the "traditional left."

Piaget is a typical example of the "militant" trade-union bureaucrat who can lead struggles, but in the end capitulates to the employers (see "Lessons of the Lip Strike," WV No. 42, 12 April 1974). Piaget himself has declared that he is not a Marxist and he belongs to explicitly Catholic organizations within the Catholic-oriented CFDT labor federation. But the "far left" is not having much success getting Piaget to run: his own party, the PSU (United Socialist Party), has refused to allow him to run since it is now busy traipsing after Mitterrand and the Union of the Left.

The Revolutionary Communist Front (ex-Ligue, ex-"supporters of *Rouge*") has announced that if Piaget does not run it would instead put forward Alain Krivine on the first round and support Mitterrand on the second. The FCR explains away its support for class collaboration by claiming that the Union of the Left is not *really* a popular front, because the Communist Party has "hegemony" and the Left Radicals are an insignificant force.

These fake Trotskyists throw out class analysis of the popular front, a coalition of workers parties with the direct representatives of sections of

the bourgeoisie, and appeal instead to the mystical "dynamic." If the majority of the bourgeoisie were trying to impose the Union of the Left in order to dampen the class struggle, the UL *would* be a popular front, they concede; but since the rank and file are trying to impose it against the will of the bourgeoisie, it merits support. (Of course this means that the Spanish and French popular fronts in the 1930's were not popular fronts either.)

Thus the "Revolutionary" "Communist" Front openly asserts that the illusions of the workers, not Marxist analysis, determine its political line. Krivine, speaking at the Mutualité on 10 April, characterized the FCR position as saying to the workers, "we prefer Piaget, but on the second round, if you want to vote for Mitterrand, we'll vote with you." At the same time, Krivine concedes that if the Union of the Left candidate is elected, "the power will remain in the hands of the bourgeoisie."

The OCI: "Not Just a Stupidity, but a Crime"

The last time around, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), another ostensibly Trotskyist group in France, ran several candidates against the Union of the Left on the first round, while voting elsewhere and on the second round only for the CP and SP candidates. It sharply criticized the Ligue Communiste (now FCR) for voting for all the candidates of the Union of the Left (on the second round); this was, the OCI said, capitulation to the popular front.

The OCI is now supporting Mitterrand on the first round. This is simultaneously a qualitative *betrayal of Trotskyism* and a logical extension of its earlier policy. What attitude should revolutionaries take if the single candidate of the popular front is a member of one of the workers parties? "Vote for him," says the OCI—and thus all opposition to class collaboration becomes purely formal. In practice the OCI is lined up alongside the Stalinists and social democrats and together with the left bourgeoisie.

The OCI presents its election position in a front-page editorial headlined: "For a Government of Workers Parties, We Must: Sweep the UDR [Gaullists] from Power; Win All Demands, Assure the Victory of the First Secretary of the Socialist Party, F. Mitterrand." The headline by itself is a whole program. The statement by the OCI continues:

"We say: Mitterrand, supported by the CP, is the candidate of the Union of the Left, of the Common Program, of the five 'urgent' measures proposed to the government by the parties of the Union of the Left. We have no reason to support the Common Program or to weaken our criticism of the Union of the Left. But we have even less reason to aid Chaban, Giscard or Messmer.... We have always made a distinction between workers' organizations (CP and SP) and bourgeois parties.... We call for votes for Mitterrand, first secretary of the Socialist Party."

— *Informations Ouvrières*, 10-18 April

Thus the OCI calls for a vote for Mitterrand, "first secretary of the Socialist Party," while nimbly avoiding calling for a vote for Mitterrand, "candidate of the Union of the Left"—as if the two could be magically separated. In fact, they cannot be separated, either in reality or in the minds of the working class. Standing on his own, Mitterrand could be correctly described as the OCI itself described him in 1967, a "bourgeois parliamentary combinationist" (*La Vérité* No. 536, February-March 1967). Running simply as a candidate of the Socialist Party he must be treated as the representative of a reformist workers party, that is, a party which is simultaneously bourgeois and proletarian. But as candidate of the Union of the Left, a bourgeois popular front, this contradiction is suppressed in favor of the dominant bourgeois element. To pretend otherwise only serves to build dangerous illusions among the workers.

The OCI editorial concludes with

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New Jersey Ford Elections:

Red-Baiting Falls Flat

Militant Slate Gets 10%

The incumbent slate headed by Joseph Reilly and Bernie Jackson swept into office for another two years in elections at UAW Local 906 (the Ford assembly plant at Mahwah, New Jersey). Reilly's "Brotherhood of 906" topped its chief rival, the United Action Committee, by a better than two-to-one vote, dumping UAC supporters out of two top-officer positions and many committeemen posts. This included Dave Gardner, the vice president and top UAC vote-getter, whose firing by the Company last summer made him the focal point of an abortive wildcat strike.

However, a significant portion of the opposition vote went to three young militants who considered the UAC opportunist and ran on an explicit class-struggle program. Their demands included nationwide strikes against layoffs, expropriation of the oil and auto industries, a general strike to oust Nixon and force new elections and for a workers party based on the trade unions. The three, Lisa Diamond, Richie Bradley and Ron Painter, organized the Militant Solidarity Com-

mittee and ran for convention and sub-council delegations.

Despite the fact that none of them had ever run for office previously, they averaged ten percent in an unusually heavy (80 percent) voter turnout. Equally significant, the MSC candidates received between one third and one half the number of votes as the leading UAC candidates for the post. Diamond and Bradley received 467 and 341 votes respectively for convention delegate (compared to 925 for Aaron Resnick, the top UAC contender and former president of Local 906); Painter received 239 votes for sub-council delegate.

Company Involvement in Smear Campaign Exposed

The most sensational issue of the many-faceted campaign was the exposure by the Militant Solidarity Committee of direct collusion by Ford's Labor Relations Department in a vicious red-baiting campaign aimed at discrediting the opposition slates. Leaflets signed "United American Patriots"—a group with no openly acknowledged members in the union—had mysteriously appeared on Company bulletin boards during the campaign, slandering opposition candidates and supporters.

Lisa Diamond of the MSC was accused of being "trained by Soviet, Cuban and Viet Cong Communists on how to disrupt and overthrow the United States Government." Kitty Kroger, a supporter of the UAC, was accused in another leaflet of having tried to subvert the U.S. Army in Germany during the Vietnam war and labeled the "Tokyo



Left, Joseph Reilly. Right, Dave Gardner.

Rose of West Berlin"; Sandy Richardson, another UAC candidate who later was elected alternate committeeman, was implicitly accused of membership in the October League, a Maoist group.

The Militant Solidarity Committee exposed Ford's collusion by proving that in addition to appearing on Company bulletin boards and next to time clocks, the "UAP" leaflets had been produced on the same typewriter used for Labor Relations information sheets. An MSC leaflet issued just prior to the voting demonstrated this dramatically by reproducing a sample Company handout next to one of the smear

sheets, and including blowups of key letters indicating similar deformations in the type face (see the reproduction of a section of the MSC leaflet on page 9).

The similar type was verified as coming from the same machine by a professional document analysis firm. The MSC also immediately filed an NLRB suit against the Company for interference in a union election. This revelation was a serious embarrassment for Reilly and Co., since incumbent officers had been seen passing out the smear sheets.

The UAC was undoubtedly hurt by the Reilly group's well-practiced expertise at slander and red-baiting. In addition to the "Patriots" leaflets, the members were greeted by a mass of leaflets distributed throughout the plant, including many signed and unsigned slander sheets supporting the incumbents. One of these showed a cartoon of noted oppositionists gathering at the home of the recording secretary, a UAC supporter, to listen to surreptitious tape recordings of executive board meetings! No one ever offered any proof to substantiate this charge of impropriety.

Oppositionists Respond

The UAC, however, was certainly vulnerable to charges of bureaucracy since it in no way separated itself from run-of-the-mill business unionism. Despite demagogically including a few "radical" planks in the UAC platform, its officer and former-officer supporters (including an ex-Local president) behaved no differently

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Elections in Chicago UAW Harvester Local

CHICAGO, April 19—More than any other U.S. union the United Auto Workers has the responsibility to provide leadership for a working-class response to the second Nixon recession and the phony "energy crisis." Sharper hit than any other section of the industrial workforce by the wave of layoffs, auto workers are currently at center stage of the domestic class struggle. This situation sharply poses the question of what kind of leadership the UAW must have not only to defend its membership, but to point the way forward. With a convention coming up in June the UAW provides an opportunity for militant opposition groups to put forward their programs in elections for convention delegate.

In Local 6, representing International Harvester's Melrose Park plant outside of Chicago, thirty-five candidates on five separate slates are running for eight convention delegate seats. The Local has a militant tradition as well as sharp internal political divisions. In the last Local elections Norman Roth, a supporter of "Labor for Peace" and the Communist Party-backed "Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy" (TUAD), defeated Dick Egan, the red-baiting, racist incumbent, with whose ex-supporters he now shares the Local leadership.

The right wing has now regrouped under the anti-communist shop chairman Bob Stack, leaving Egan out in the cold. While Stack's "Defense Coalition" red-baits Roth, Egan eagerly splits the right-wing vote by denouncing Stack's slate as "opportunist" and "vigilantes." This might leave a clear field for the opportunist Roth and his Solidarity Caucus were it not for his left-wing competition!

Stalinist Brand of Labor Reformism

Typical of the type of trade-union reformism the Stalinists support, Roth is the perfect liberal. He opposed the Vietnam war, favors impeachment of Nixon and eulogizes Martin Luther King in his column in the Local 6 paper. Roth has also come out for opening the



Tractors waiting in shipping lot of Melrose Park International Harvester plant.

books of the corporations, an end to wage controls and an end to labor participation on Nixon's wage-controls boards. He presents nice-sounding lists of reform demands to the Local in the guise of general program and writes articles in *Labor Today* (the TUAD newspaper) advising militants on how to deal with bureaucracy in their union meetings.

But at the same time, Roth stays fully within the bounds outlined for him as a member of the tightly monitored Woodcock bureaucracy. How are UAW members to express their outrage over wage controls, for instance? Not through strike action, Roth suggests they write their congressmen! Furthermore, he calls for "genuine" price and profit controls ("like there were during World War II," says Roth—has he forgotten the fraud of war-time controls, in which inflation soared ahead of frozen wages?).

Roth soft pedals his differences with Woodcock, as over the last contract, by restricting opposition to a few verbal gestures and presenting the International position as a fait

accompli. Woodcock's latest atrocity, "dealing" with layoffs through pleas for government handouts and quota limitations on imports, is characterized by Roth as "a start."

Most importantly, Roth's agreement with the CP's "anti-monopoly coalition" (otherwise known as supporting "lesser-evil" Democrats) keeps him in the same capitalist political ball park as Woodcock. Once this political "principle" of picking and choosing among capitalist politicians is established, differences on trade-union policy necessarily become minor differences of emphasis—how much and when to apply "pressure" for crumbs from the ruling class. Roth, with an eye on ensuring his bureaucratic future, has already announced his intention to endorse Woodcock's re-election at the convention!

Fake-Left Syndicalists

A contradictory grouping to the left of Roth's Solidarity Caucus, but existing in a symbiotic relationship with it, is

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Protest Labor Department Snooping

LATE FLASH (Chicago, April 21)—It was announced today at the monthly meeting of UAW Local 6, Melrose Park International Harvester, that an agent of the U.S. Labor Department has recently demanded all records of the Local. After being turned down by the executive board, the government agent then obtained a court subpoena for these documents. The purpose of the subpoena and the government's snooping was not revealed at the meeting. (However, there are rumors of pressure coming from the International to clamp down on the "radical" positions taken by the Local in recent months.)

As a result of the revelations of government prying into the affairs of the union, the Militant Action Slate reportedly presented the following resolution which was passed at the meeting:

- "A) To condemn the government interference into the internal affairs of our Local Union and,
- "B) To commit our Local to work to repeal the Labor-Management Reporting Act and all other laws which enable the government to interfere in the internal affairs of our union."

Rather than relying on the courts and lawyers, a national effort must be launched to inform the UAW membership and mobilize it to fight this ominous government attack. As a necessary first step it is the obligation of the Local 6 leadership to fully inform its own ranks of the threat posed by this Labor Department action.

RMG Cops Out of Toronto Debate

TORONTO—On April 13 a public meeting was held at the University of Toronto by supporters of the international Spartacist tendency on the question of the Trotskyist program vs. Pabloist revisionism. The meeting had originally been organized as a debate between the Spartacist League and the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG), but, in an unprecedented display of political cowardice, the Political Committee of the RMG backed out of the debate in a letter dated April 5. The RMG's attempted cancellation followed hard on the heels of a lengthy political confrontation between RMG and SL supporters in Vancouver at the end of March.

The RMG had agreed to the Toronto debate nearly a month in advance, on the subject of the RMG's choice: the central programmatic questions facing the international movement. Yet the April 5 letter stated: "We feel it was an error to agree to such a debate in the form proposed. . . . Debates on the level of abstracts have little meaning if not linked to practice. To accept such a debate was our mistake but it is also very much one that the SL recurrently makes."

In a display of consummate hypocrisy, the letter noted: "We are sure that the debates with the SL and the RMG will continue in public forums and it would be hoped increasingly in common areas of intervention." In fact, the RMG leadership has sought at all costs to seal off its supporters from any contact with the SL in "public forums" or "common areas of intervention."

In February the RMG leadership went so far as to cancel its co-sponsorship of an SL-initiated demonstration in Toronto in support of striking British miners. This cowardly step made it crystal clear that any internationalist responsibility that the RMG might feel toward the British class struggle was far outweighed by the need to avoid contact between RMG supporters and the SL. And after seeking to pull out of the scheduled debate, the RMG then put its members under discipline not to attend either the debate itself or the SL public meeting on Chile.

The rationale offered by the RMG, that the "SL is not yet firmly established in Canada and is only beginning to express itself on questions of concern to the Canadian left," is a blatant example of nationalist parochialism. Those who accept the RMG at its word would have to conclude that issues such as the international Trotskyist movement, the British miners' strike and the Chilean coup are not supposed to be "questions of concern to the Canadian left."

Seizing on every possible justification for backing out of the debate, the RMG letter retreated into simple know-nothingism: "... comrades of the RMG are just now beginning to receive copies of texts that have been out of print or not available outside the FI [the RMG is here referring to the so-called "United Secretariat of the Fourth International," the revisionist rotten bloc led by Ernest Mandel which has little in common either organizationally or politically with Trotsky's Fourth International]. We have, after all, been an FI group for less than two months and these things take some time normalizing. To guarantee the fullest possible generalization of the knowledge of RMG comrades of such experiences as Ceylon, the 1953 split, the 1963 reunification, Pablo, etc., we are sure that you would agree that the norm should be that all comrades in the RMG and Red Circles should have access to all possible documentation—not only that of the SL."

Certainly, comrades of the RMG, we of the SL are only too glad to agree with you that it would be desirable if RMG members read the basic documents of the international organization with

which they are supposed to be in solidarity. We think it strange however that these documents, which have been analyzed in the pages of *WV* for the benefit of our readers, do not seem to be available to your members. Being "an FI group" seems to convey rather dubious advantages.

In fact, the organizational ineptness of the RMG as coyly portrayed in its letter really strains the imagination: "A small revolutionary group never quite catches up with its organizational needs—especially one as new as the RMG." So young and yet so cynical! The barrage of justifications adduced for the RMG's pull-out leaves one wondering why this organization does not simply give up and go home—not simply from the scheduled SL debate, but from politics in general.

Following the RMG's desperate attempt to withdraw from the debate, the SL distributed a leaflet, "What Is the RMG Afraid Of," which announced that the SL, at least, would show up to debate and that any RMGers with the courage to defend their organization's politics would be given equal presentation time; RMG speakers from the floor could have twice the speaking time of anyone else!

Accordingly, the meeting was held, with only a few members of the RMG daring to show their faces but with ample attendance by the RMG's periphery from the Red Circles. The presentation was given by a leading member of the Spartacist League of Australia and New Zealand on behalf of the international Spartacist tendency. She explained that the historical roots of the United Secretariat/RMG method lie in the development in the early 1950's of a liquidationist revisionist current within the Trotskyist movement, exemplified by Michel Pablo.

Characterizing Pabloism as "the theoretical justification for a non-

revolutionary impulse based on giving up a perspective for the construction of a proletarian vanguard in advanced or colonial countries," she concentrated on three key areas exposing the liquidationist essence of Pabloism: "entrism *sui generis*," which meant the dissolution of the Trotskyist nuclei into the mass Stalinist and social-democratic parties, with the perspective of pressuring the reformist leaderships to the left; the theory that the "epicenter" of world revolution had shifted to the colonial world, a rationalization for tailing "progressive nationalists" like Ben Bella in Algeria and for hailing the Yugoslav, Chinese and Cuban leaderships as having established healthy workers states without the intervention of the class-conscious proletariat led by a Trotskyist vanguard party; and the current theory of the "new mass vanguard," a disparate layer of militant young workers and others which, according to Mandel, possesses the "ability to intervene in the class struggle in its own right, to take political initiatives here and there, to take leadership of the mass workers' struggles. . . ."

The discussion period included debate on the Lip strike, which the United Secretariat upholds as "exemplary"; Cuba, about which an RMG member remarked that "one could debate" whether or not it was a deformed workers state, but "we can all agree" that what it lacks is institutions of workers democracy; press policy and the need for a polemical press which can intervene in all aspects of social struggle; and the rotten bloc nature of the United Secretariat. But the high point came later in the day with the reading by an RMG member at the Chile forum of his resignation from the RMG in solidarity with the authentic Trotskyism of the international Spartacist tendency. ■

RMG Discovers Dimitrov

The Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) of Canada apparently knows so little of Trotskyism that without turning a hair it has embraced the infamous "theoretical" heritage of Stalinism. Over the apparently trivial issue of academic ultra-rightist apologists at the University of Toronto, the RMG has come out for a revamped version of the infamous "united front against fascism" propounded by Dimitrov, as a mouthpiece for Stalin, at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1935.

To be sure, the RMG does not acknowledge its debt to Dimitrov in its statement, a long letter to the University student newspaper (*The Varsity*, 4 March 1974). But the parallelism of the argument is clear. After presenting a generally correct analysis of fascism as the last resort of the capitalist class to physically smash the mass organizations of the working class, the letter at last gets to the crux of the matter:

"Concretely, for the present, we propose the setting up of a coordinating committee of all antifascist forces to do the following: 1) conduct political propaganda to educate about the importance of the question, its present and future implications, to absorb the lessons of past tragedy and to prepare to combat the future threat of fascism." [our emphasis]

The letter also proposes the united defense of left meetings and "active opposition to the dissemination of fascist ideas."

Now what can this possibly mean? What kind of animal is "a coordinating committee of all antifascist forces" which can "conduct political propaganda" and "prepare to combat the future threat of fascism"?

Lenin and Trotsky were vigorous

opponents of the idea of "pure democracy." They tirelessly explained that behind the forms of bourgeois democracy stands the state, whose function is to defend bourgeois property against the working class either by parliamentary rule backed by the repressive state apparatus or, if necessary, through the mobilization of fascist gangs to physically smash the mass organizations of the working class. Thus the fight against fascism cannot be separated from the fight for proletarian state power. Over and over again Trotsky insisted that the choice was socialist revolution or fascist barbarism: no alliances with "democratic" imperialism, no "People's Front" against fascism, but the independent mobilization of the proletariat for the conquest of power.

"But," the RMG will reply, "what are we to do in the meantime? We cannot immediately organize the working class to take power. We recognized in our letter that 'in the longer term it is the working class, acting independently of the state, which will decide if fascism is defeated in the historical sense'." So the RMG recognizes the need for proletarian independence "in the longer term" while calling immediately for . . . what? For a classless committee of "all antifascist forces" to "conduct political propaganda" and "prepare to combat the future threat of fascism."

Just what kind of political propaganda can such a classless committee conduct except classless liberal propaganda which can only retard the development of class consciousness among the proletariat? How can a classless grouping "absorb the lessons of past tragedy" when the lesson of past trag-

Militant Rejects Pabloism

Political Committee, Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG):

I hereby resign from the RMG. For some time I have characterized the leadership of the RMG and its "Fourth International" as centrist. Those of us who broke from the reformism of the LSA to the RMG and positions of the European Majority of the "United" Secretariat left unexamined the methodological and historical roots of the LSA's reformism. I have come to understand that what I have seen as the reformist errors of the LSA and the centrist errors of the RMG are deeply rooted in the Pabloist revisionism of the hopelessly divided "United" Secretariat.

Pabloism continues to be characterized by the search for a substitute for the class-conscious proletariat to make the socialist revolution and the consequent failure to maintain an independent Trotskyist vanguard party. Capitulation to insurrectionary, nationalist, petty-bourgeois guerillaism, adaptation to non-proletarian "vanguards" whether of the "new mass" or student or now "broad vanguard" type, liquidates the irreplaceable role of the proletariat and its Trotskyist leadership.

To be a Leninist one must proceed as Trotsky did in the formation of the Fourth International, that is from the objective historical needs of the international proletariat *programmatically expressed*, not from the given mentality of the class at a given moment. The Fourth International then does not exist organizationally despite the claims and posturing of those representing the forms of its degeneration and rotten-bloc limitations. It must be reborn as the democratic-centralist world party of socialism on a firm programmatic basis.

The task of building an authentic Trotskyist party in Canada and the world cannot be postponed. Having achieved fundamental programmatic agreement with the political positions of the Spartacist League/US I intend to work in sympathy with the international Spartacist tendency. In doing so I stand on all the basic documents of the SL/US and urge all others in the RMG who seek to find the way from centrism to authentic Trotskyism to look to the Spartacist League.

Peter M.

Chile Today

Mistakes of the MIR Prospects for Revolution

Speaker: Judith Sinclair
SL Central Committee

Friday, 3 May
Embassy Auditorium
9th Street and Grand Avenue
7:30 p.m. — \$1.00 donation

LOS ANGELES

edy is precisely the need to fight for working-class independence even from the "progressive," "anti-fascist" sections of the bourgeoisie?

No, comrades of the RMG, we cannot look to committees of "all anti-fascist forces" to draw the real lessons of the triumph of fascism in Germany, to tell the truth to the working people. Nor, apparently, can we look to the RMG. ■

Demos Defend Chilean Militants

SAN FRANCISCO—In the face of the Chilean military government's recent move to begin mass trials and renewed executions of political prisoners, more than 100 people joined a protest picket and rally on April 10 in front of the Chilean consulate here. Sponsored by the Committee to Defend the Endangered Chilean Militants (initiated by the Spartacist League), they called for the release of all political prisoners held by the junta, focusing in particular on leaders of various socialist organizations, including Bautista Van Schouwen and Alejandro Romero of the MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement), Luis Vitale of the PSR (Revolutionary Socialist Party, section of the United Secretariat), and Luis Corvalán of the Communist Party.

Endorsements for the demonstration were received from several radical, socialist and labor organizations, as well as a number of union officials and prominent left liberals. Among the endorsers were: Acción Democrática; AFSCME Local 1695; Bob Arnold; Dave Aroner, Northern Regional Director, Social Services Union Local 535, SEIU; Paul Chown, United Electrical Workers (UE) Local 1412, International representative; Class Struggle League; Emergency Committee to Defend Democracy in Chile; Charles Garry, lawyer for the Black Panther Party; Harry Ibsen, President, Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 9415; International Socialists; Professor Richard Lichtman; Militant Action Caucus of the CWA; New America Movement; Bob Rayby, Recording Secretary, Amalgamated Transit Union Div.

192; Al Richmond, former Communist Party leader; *Socialist Revolution*; Socialists for Independent Politics; Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth; Tim Twomey, Secretary-Treasurer, Hospital Workers Union Local 250; Lloyd Vandever, Secretary-Treasurer, UE Local 1412; Northern California chapter, Vietnam Veterans Against the War; and Waterfront and Warehouse Workers for Justice in Chile.

In accordance with the norms for a genuine united front, the Committee made no attempt to impose a common political line on participants beyond the stated purpose of defense of the endangered militants and invited all groups and individuals to bring their own signs and literature. The SL/RCY raised the additional slogan of "No Deals to Sacrifice the Far-Left Militants in Order to Save the Chief Traitors of the Popular Front."

While demanding the release of all prisoners of the junta, including the "constitutional officers" who opposed the coup and 53 of whom are now being tried by a military tribunal, revolutionists must place special emphasis on the cases of militants of groups like the MIR which stood to the left of the popular-front Unidad Popular coalition. In addition to having been virtually ignored by the U.S. left until a series of demonstrations initiated by the Spartacist League brought their case to the attention of the public, MIR prisoners were further threatened by the possibility of a deal between the Russian bureaucracy and the Chilean junta, whereby the junta would release

demonstration in Vienna, Austria on April 4, sponsored by the Committee to Support the Chilean Resistance. The OBL (Austrian Bolshevik-Leninists) marched in a block with signs proclaiming: "For the victory of Proletarian Revolution," "Freedom for Romero and Van Schouwen and for All Political Prisoners," "Down with the Military Junta, For Proletarian Revolution in Chile."



OBL PHOTO

several prominent UP leaders (including CP-head Corvalán) but not the MIR militants.

Speaking at the rally a San Francisco longshoreman reported the resolution passed by ILWU Local 10 last November which calls for boycotting "all goods and cargo to and from Chile until such a time that the junta or government in Chile restores full rights to the trade unions, their membership and leaders..." He noted that since implementation on the resolution was left to the International leadership,

nothing had been done. (The SL set up a picket line in front of a Chile-bound ship in the Bay Area last month, and sympathetic ILWU dockers halted work until a business agent arrived on the scene and ordered them back. However, while a call for a total embargo of goods to and from Chile was a correct and necessary step in the immediate aftermath of the coup, today it cannot substantially aid efforts to overthrow the junta. Instead, a more selective boycott tactic should be used, such as halting all military goods bound for Chile.)

A speaker from the Militant Action Caucus of the CWA noted that Local 9415 president Ibsen had endorsed the demonstration on paper, but in the union meeting he had ruled out of order a MAC motion demanding that the CWA break all ties with the AFL/CIO's American Institute for Free Labor Development. The AIFLD is at this moment helping the reactionary junta to set up company unions. Moves by militants in union locals across the country to demand an end to support of the scab AIFLD operation are a useful and concrete means of expressing opposition to the counterrevolutionary military dictatorship and solidarity with embattled Chilean unionists.

The speaker for the Spartacist League noted the absence from the demonstration of the Communist Party, which prefers to rely on the Kremlin to work out a deal with the junta rather than mobilizing support for a united defense of all prisoners of the military butchers. Also noticeably absent were the Socialist Workers Party and the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) which it leads. The SWP and USLA apparently fear that defense of the MIR, which stood to the left of the UP coalition, would alienate them from their liberal and Stalinist friends. (The latter, however, are now refusing to support SWP co-thinker Vitale.)

The speaker noted that after years of denouncing the SL as "sectarian" for refusing to enter the SWP's popular-front antiwar coalition (NPAC), these fake Trotskyists seem to be having considerable difficulty explaining (even to their own membership) why it could not endorse a simple and urgent defense demonstration. Ironically, one of the reasons this issue was causing problems for the SWP was the broad labor support for a defense campaign focused on labor/socialist leaders (in contrast to the USLA campaign concentrating on intellectuals who might be sympathetic to bourgeois liberals in the U.S.). So the SWP must either participate in real united-front defense committees initiated by the "sectarian" SL (something it seems determined to avoid) or find itself isolated. ■



WV PHOTO

CWA militants protest union support to the AIFLD, Meany's scab operation that is currently aiding the Chilean junta to set up company unions.



WV PHOTO

Demonstrators at San Francisco rally to defend endangered Chilean militants.

For Proletarian Revolution in Chile!

The article "Chile After the Coup," in WV No. 42, 12 April 1974, includes the following sentence: "The task of the hour is to begin the political preparation for a workers and peasants revolution, not some kind of 'people's revolution' to restore bourgeois democracy!" While the phrase "workers and peasants revolution" was intended as an extension of the call for a "workers and peasants government," the extension would logically imply the formation (as the result of the revolution) of a "workers and peasants state," a concept which is completely anti-Marxist. It is possible to have a workers and peasants government of a workers state; in fact, this existed in the early months of the Russian Revolution when the Bolsheviks governed in coalition with the Left Social Revolutionaries. But a "workers and peasants state" implies a stage intermediate between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat, with a new property form which is neither capitalist nor collectivist.

The confusion results from the fact that the phrase "workers government" and "workers and peasants government" is also used as a transitional formulation for the dictatorship of the proletariat. But the use of a formulation for pedagogical purposes must not be allowed to introduce fatal confusion on the crucial question of the class character of the revolution. The correct perspective for Chile is a proletarian revolution in which the working class leads the peasantry in overthrowing capitalism.

Support Workers Vanguard!

Subscription Rate Increase

Effective May 1 the annual domestic subscription rate for the biweekly *Workers Vanguard* goes to \$5.00 per year, up from the present \$3.00. To assure immediate mail circulation of the paper, we have for some months mailed it at the First Class rate of 16 cents a copy instead of at the much slower Third Class rate, costing only about 6 cents a copy. The post office has now raised our cost for First Class mailing to 20 cents a copy (i.e., \$4.80 per year)!

At the same time, we have now begun to prepare for the publication of a *WEEKLY Workers Vanguard*. This will involve considerable expense in new equipment and the like.

We do not lightly project this increased frequency. Our anticipation for the next period is one of sharply increased class struggles. This consideration, taken together with the Spartacist League's strongly enhanced role within the labor movement, demands increased frequency in our press as a necessary means to give added impact to the role of the revolutionary Marxists. The working people need the paper that *Workers Vanguard* is.

To strengthen our financial situation in preparation for the *WEEKLY* we are compelled to increase our present subscription price to one more usual for a paper of our size and frequency. Moreover, to augment our general circulation and financial basis we are shortly undertaking a sustained increase in the single copy sales of *Workers Vanguard* across North America.

Postal regulations are such that once we have the *WEEKLY*, rapid mail circulation is much less expensive. In the meantime we cannot guarantee that so long as we remain a biweekly, we will be able to maintain our mailing at the fast, expensive First Class rate. But short of surrendering our progress toward the *WEEKLY*, we will.

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Continued from page 6

New Jersey Ford...

than any other aspiring office seekers. Its formal program included a call for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay and union control of hiring, in addition to the usual vague list of pious promises (fight layoffs, end discrimination, union democracy, etc.), but these points were quickly forgotten in the scramble for offices. UAC leaflets tended to consist of a welter of sheets supporting various individuals on the slate, but the UAC made no joint response whatsoever to the red-baiting.

The MSC, in contrast, fought to expose the red-baiting as a pro-Company tactic which was being used by the incumbent bureaucrats to promote their candidacy by attempting to obscure the real issues. A statement issued by the Reilly slate had explicitly endorsed the witchhunt charges of the "UAP": "They are true! KROGER, DIAMOND, RICHARDSON and others of their kind do not care about their

ment and Big Business politicians. That is why we are seen as enemies by those UAW leaders, like Woodcock and Reilly, who have sold out the membership... we fight for a program of united and determined class struggle against the might of the corporations."

Foreign Workers and Layoffs

The MSC received particularly heavy support from the large French-speaking Haitian minority in the plant. Haitian immigrants to the U.S. are currently the victims of government deportation efforts, and MSC candidates were the only ones to raise demands against the deportations, for full citizenship rights for all foreign workers, union literature in French and Spanish, etc. The MSC also stood out as the only slate to distribute French and Spanish translations of all its leaflets.

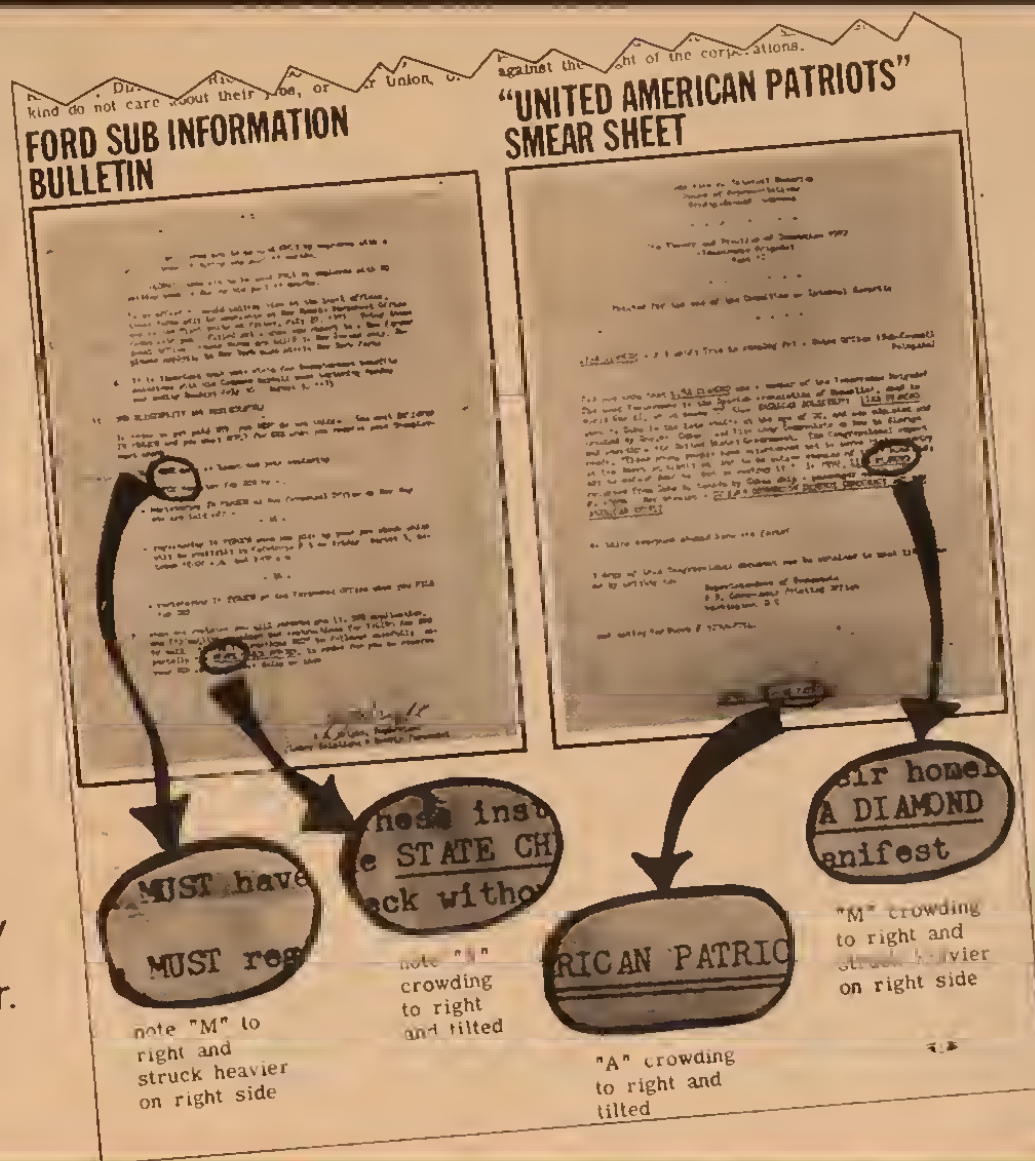
Despite the heavy flood of red-baiting and slander in the campaign, reports indicate that it was the unemployment situation which clearly determined the outcome of the vote. In the face of repeated layoffs and the "energy crisis," the 1950's-style McCarthyism of the "UAP" was unable

was timed perfectly for Reilly, followed months of uncertainty, partial layoffs and temporary plant closures during the "energy crisis" drop in auto sales. The announcement meant that another Ford plant in Kansas City would not be changed over to small cars, with the result that workers there would suffer, but such facts mean nothing to Reilly or the UAW tops in Detroit.

The essence of parochial trade unionist misleadership such as Reilly's or the UAC's is that each group of workers should attempt to get whatever the capitalist system can afford to give them (but no more than this) even at the expense of other workers. Thus when Reilly "negotiated" the Company's changeover announcement, he appeared to be doing a "good job." The UAC immediately became irrelevant, since its entire program was simply an unsubstantiated claim that it could do a better job: using methods no different than Reilly's, it could somehow get "more." The vote for the MSC, on the other hand, was a vote to change the methods and the nature of the "job."

Since the election, it is rumored

Militant Action
Committee
leaflet exposé:
Smear attacks
were typed
on Company
typewriter.



jobs, or their union, or this Country. ... Remember, they are our enemies!" The leaflet went on to tell members not to vote for anyone on either opposition slate because of this. In its leaflet exposing the smear sheets' origins, the MSC responded:

"We in the Militant Solidarity Committee are enemies... of the profit-hungry Ford Motor Company. We are enemies of the corrupt anti-labor Nixon Govern-

ment and Big Business politicians. That is why we are seen as enemies by those UAW leaders, like Woodcock and Reilly, who have sold out the membership... we fight for a program of united and determined class struggle against the might of the corporations."

Reilly, however, was able to pass off as a victory for his administration the fact that the Company had announced during the campaign its intention to change the plant over to small cars with a promise of full employment (and overtime) to commence after the elections. This announcement, which

that of the UAC's five successful candidates (all committeemen or alternate committeemen), three are already disassociating themselves from the "Committee" with which they ran. The UAC, in any event, immediately ceased to exist once the voting was over, except for the usual "struggle" in the courts, which will no doubt include suits against the union. (Kroger issued a leaflet threatening a libel suit against the union leadership.) The MSC rejects taking the union to court as an unprincipled maneuver which brings the bosses' state into the workers movement.

For a group based solely on individual desire for office, electoral failure is always fatal. MSC spokesmen, on the other hand, are unperturbed by their failure to win any offices and declare their intention to consolidate their election campaign—which they consider to be a victory for their program—into a permanent, on-going caucus as soon as possible. However, in the long run, victory can only be achieved by extending such caucuses to other locals and building a class-struggle opposition throughout the UAW, a goal to which militants such as those of the MSC must dedicate themselves.

WORKERS VANGUARD

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French Elections...

formulations which come astonishingly close to an explicit "stages" theory of revolution:

"The leaders of the CP, the leaders of the SP, Mitterrand, proclaim the politics of the Common Program. But, in the present situation, Mitterrand's election is a necessary stage on the road of the struggle against capitalism and the bourgeois state. This fact must be recognized: the victory of Mitterrand opens the period of the liquidation of Gaullism and the institutions which Gaullism imposed on the bourgeois state....
"... With the defeat of Chaban, Giscard, Messmer, etc., the liquidation of the bonapartist system whose downfall is on the agenda is, without any doubt whatsoever, the first condition for advancing on the road of the struggle for a new government, a true 'popular government'...."
—*Informations Ouvrières*, 10-18 April

This story is not new. Quite clearly the OCI is saying that even though the Union of the Left is a popular front, the Gaullist UDR is nevertheless the "primary" enemy. So—vote for the popular front! How many erstwhile Bolshevik organizations have sunk into the reformist swamp while singing this tune? The OCI's position on the current French elections is not a question of abstract theory, but a very concrete betrayal of the working class. It could well mark a decisive turn toward absorption into the mainstream of French labor radicalism: from the contradictions of centrism to a formal right-

for the defense budget). At that time Trotsky wrote:

"No matter how much the centrists babble about the 'masses' they always orient themselves to the reformist apparatus. Repeating this or that revolutionary slogan, Marceau Pivert subordinates it to the abstract principle of 'organic unity' which in action turns out to be unity with the patriots against the revolutionists. At a moment when the life-or-death question for the revolutionary masses is to shatter the resistance of the united social-patriotic apparatuses, the left centrists consider the 'unity' of these apparatuses as the absolute good, which stands above the interests of revolutionary struggle....
"Yet Pivert clutches at Zyromsky, who clutches at Blum, who in turn together with Thorez clutches at Herriot, who clutches at Laval.... The condition for the victory of the proletariat is the liquidation of the present leadership. The slogan of 'unity' becomes under these conditions not only a stupidity but a crime. No unity with the agents of French imperialism and of the League of Nations."
—"For Committees of Action, Not the Peoples Front," translated from Pierre Broué, editor, *Le mouvement communiste en France* [our emphasis]

In an effort to answer objections from its own militants, the OCI is fond of citing Trotsky's agitation for a united front in October 1934, by which he specifically meant a CP-SP (Blum-Cachin) government. But Trotsky counterposed this to a popular front including the bourgeois Radical Party, which the CP had already begun wooing. And at that time the French Bolshevik-Leninists were inside the Socialist Party. In other words, Trotsky's call was for a class united front with a revolutionary pole! Trotsky never meant the call for a united front to be a gimmick to glue together two reformist apparatuses at the top.



General Charles DeGaulle, Algiers, June 1958. Failure of post-war popular front led to chaos of Fourth Republic and Goullist coup of 1958.

centrism—a fligleaf for simple reformist appetites.

Trotsky and "Unity"

The new election line of the OCI represents a locking-on to the reformist element which is always inherent in centrism, although in a confused and contradictory way. In its propaganda the OCI has continually downplayed the struggle for the vanguard party and the Trotskyist program as the condition for real unity of the proletariat around its historic class interests. The OCI has instead elevated the "united front" into a strategy rather than a tactic, dissolving the revolutionary program into a spurious "unity" around the reformist bureaucratic misleadership of the class.

As Leon Trotsky so often pointed out, it is at the most acute points in the class struggle that the need for the independent revolutionary vanguard and its program is most pressing. This was Trotsky's position when he led the French Bolshevik-Leninists out of the SFIO in response to the signing of the Laval-Stalin pact, when Stalin suddenly "understood" the need of the French bourgeoisie for "national defense" (consequently ordering the CP to vote

For Lenin's Communist International the united front was a tactic to allow the vanguard organization to intervene with its revolutionary program in order to split the working-class base from its reformist leadership under the pressure of the class struggle. But from ignoring this crucial element of the united front the OCI has now gone over to embrace its opposite: the popular front.

Critical Support to the LO Candidate—No Support to Mitterrand!

Alone among the ostensibly Trotskyist organizations in France, *Lutte Ouvrière* is fielding its own candidate in the first round in opposition to Mitterrand and the "draft Piaget" movement:

"The support of revolutionary organizations for Piaget's candidacy could signify only one thing: that the revolutionary movement is hitching up at the tail of the PSU at the very moment when the latter is tailing after the Union of the Left."

—*Lutte Ouvrière*, 9-15 April
LO's declaration, however, makes no mention of the popular front, merely citing the need for the "voice of revolutionary workers [to] be heard in

these elections," thus leaving the door open for support to Mitterrand on the second round. (In 1973, LO like the OCI called for support to CP and SP candidates, though not those of the Left Radicals, on the second round; on the first round it ran over one hundred candidates, advising workers to "vote as far left as possible," thus implying support for CP or SP candidates in areas where it and other "far-left" organizations did not present



Mitterrand election posters in Paris.

candidates.)

Moreover, LO's rationale for its candidate (Arlette Laguiller) is a typical example of its conception of a "family of revolutionaries" which was expressed after the May-June events of 1968, when it proposed that all groups to the left of the CP produce a single common newspaper. In a letter to *Rouge and Revolution!* LO states:

"The revolutionary far left would no doubt exhibit a great deal of irresponsibility by presenting several candidates during these presidential elections."

—*Lutte Ouvrière*, 9-15 April

So, instead, the revolutionary program representing the interests of the working class and embodied uniquely in the Bolshevik vanguard party, must be sacrificed in order to put forward "unitary" candidates of the far left.

Why not, then, have unitary candidates of the left, like Mitterrand? Do the comrades of LO not realize that the candidacy of Laguiller could be accused by the reformists of dividing

the workers' votes and in a very close race might even make the difference between victory and defeat for the Union of the Left? While the LO candidacy attempts to draw a classline in a primitive way, its arguments are ultimately liquidationist. Furthermore, LO will no doubt capitulate and call for votes for Mitterrand on the second round.

Trotskyism vs. the Popular Front

In the last elections (March 1973) the Spartacist League gave extremely critical support to the OCI and LO candidates as embodying a contradiction: on the one hand counterposition to the popular front, but on the other, refusal to recognize that all of the Union of the Left candidates, including those of the reformist workers parties, represented the popular front. In this election we again call for highly critical support to the candidacy of LO's Laguiller as the only vehicle, albeit a flawed and partial one, for working-class protest against the reformists' class treason. We do not call for any support to the FCR's candidate Krivine, since its campaign is in no way directed against the Union of the Left but is, rather, a publicity stunt.

The only revolutionary policy toward a popular front is to refuse it even the most critical support. Would French "Trotskyists" have had their militants vote for Allende as he led the Chilean working class to the slaughter? Like the Bolshevik Party addressing the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, we must demand of the reformist workers parties that they break from the bourgeoisie and take power into their own hands. And above all, we must unceasingly struggle for the revolutionary program embodied in the Trotskyist party.

Neither LO nor any of the other ostensibly Trotskyist organizations in France has yet said forthrightly what must urgently be said to the workers: Mitterrand is the candidate of the popular front! A Union of the Left government is not a workers government; it is not a "step forward" compared to the direct rule of the bourgeois parties and can only be a holding action while the bourgeoisie revamps its more direct agents and agencies. "Popular fronts on the one hand, fascism on the other, are the last political resources of Imperialism in its struggle against the proletarian revolution" (Trotsky, *The Transitional Program*). No support to popular fronts! Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

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...SLA

cluded), the brutality of prison life, the hypocritical rhetoric about "rehabilitation," the violation of the basic civil rights of prisoners and ex-convicts. But to move from this elemental personal realization to become a legitimate ally of the revolutionary proletariat requires the ability to transcend personalism in favor of a broader social vision, to reject criminal methods of struggle and the victimization of innocent people, to operate openly as part of a collective social movement based not on elements outside social life but on the working class and its historically progressive task: the construction of a new social order.

Role of Lumpen

The *Chronicle* series on the SLA notes that after creating this group De-freeze was able to make contact with various semi-political people who wanted to help prisoners. From the beginning, then—and from all we can tell, up to the present—the SLA was formed and dominated by a man with at best nothing but a bitter *personal* hatred for society and no particular loyalties to any class—i.e., a *lumpen* element. Marx did not mince words in commenting on the revolutionary value of such elements:

"The 'dangerous class,' the social scum, that passively rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of a bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."

—*Communist Manifesto*

"The *lumpenproletariat*, this scum of depraved elements from all classes, with headquarters in the big cities, is the worst of all the possible allies. This rabble is absolutely venal and absolutely brazen. If the French workers, in every revolution, inscribed on the houses: *Mort aux voleurs!* Death to thieves! and even shot some, they did it not out of reverence for property, but because they rightly considered it necessary above all to get rid of that gang."

—Preface to *The Peasant War in Germany*

The practice of the SLA has verified this analysis of the group as a lumpen-dominated formation bent on personal vengeance against society—the kind of group which could just as easily turn its guns against the bourgeoisie, the working class, or anybody who happens

to cross it. Of course, there have been similar degenerate elements in the Black Panthers or Venceremos. The tremendous damage they can cause is indicated by the murder of an innocent BPP member, Alex Rackley, at the orders of the sadist George Sams in New Haven in 1970. But in the Panther organization top political leadership was held by a small petty-bourgeois dictatorship—Seale, Newton, Hilliard, Cleaver—who imposed their line with military discipline. In the SLA it is the lumpen in command. This is not a political organization of the left—it is a cultist grouping using semi-political rhetoric to justify irrational outbursts of violence. Its first self-proclaimed act was the murder of an obscure black school superintendent, Marcus Foster—a rather bizarre target for a serious terrorist organization in a deeply racist country. Then came the kidnapping of Randolph Hearst's daughter.

A Strange List of Targets

Apparently selected as a symbol of the bourgeoisie, Patricia Hearst had expressed some liberal sympathies (she was quoted as criticizing the reactionary Hearst press as being "irrelevant") and was living quietly in Berkeley with a boyfriend. But even if she had been living in a mansion, Patty Hearst had committed no particular crimes against the working people.

Marxists do not believe in biological guilt. Our program is to expropriate the capitalists, not to carry on a blood feud against them "unto the fourth generation." Populist resentment of the rich as individuals does not in itself constitute political leftism; it is equally a justification of right-wing radical rhetoric and even of fascist demagoguery. It should not be forgotten that the deranged "Manson family" purposely selected rich people as the target of its senseless murder campaign and that some of its adherents later made use of leftist phraseology in the attempt to elicit sympathy.

Recently the SLA has issued a list of three people to be "shot on sight"—three rather unimportant people whose only common link is that they all were once personally associated with SLA members: Colton Westbrook, a black linguistics instructor at UC-Berkeley and former sponsor of the Black Cultural Association at Vacaville; Chris Thompson, a self-proclaimed black "capitalist" who once dated Nancy Ling Perry, alleged SLA leader, and who once lived at the SLA's Chabot Road house; and Robyn Steiner, who traveled around the country with Russell Little until they both settled in Berkeley in 1972 (*Chronicle*, 27 March).

Thompson has attempted to contact the SLA to clear himself of "crimes" and has suggested a "jury" of Ron Dellums, Bobby Seale, Angela Davis and several other black leaders. In the second week of April attorney Vincent Hallinan (well known for defending many liberal and radical activists, and one of the trustees for the \$4 million Hearst fund to be released when Patty Hearst is freed) stated that he had received phoned threats from the SLA saying that he would be shotgunned in the streets. The alleged SLA "hit list" reveals the unstable *personalist* character of the organization. (The Weathermen, despite their misguided strategy, consistently aimed at institutions of the capitalist state and deliberately tried not to harm innocent bystanders.)

Most recently the news media have published photos allegedly showing the SLA involved in a San Francisco bank robbery in which two passers-by were wantonly shot at and wounded. And a radio report of April 17 states that the SLA has now added Black Panther leader Huey Newton to its list of those to be shot on sight.

Against those who assert that the SLA is part of the left, we reply that it is no such thing. Anarchist or New Left organizations such as the U.S. Weathermen, or petty-bourgeois left nationalist groups such as the IRA and sections of the Palestinian resistance movement, despite counter-productive and sometimes wholly indefensible ter-

Continued from page 6

...Harvester

the Workers Voice Committee, a syndicalist formation which has spawned the Workers Slate for the elections. The bulk of the WVC's activity consists in enthusiastic support for the day-to-day struggles of the workers. This enthusiasm is interrupted from time to time, however, by the need to take positions on broader issues. Thus during last year's Local elections, the WVC announced, "We are not running a slate. We think that the development of *struggle by the workers* on the shop floor is the key to solving our problems" (*Workers Voice*, Vol. IV, No. 5 [1973]). Its leaders Mike Goldfield and Roger Stromberg issued a *leal*, however, which gave very obvious back-handed support to Roth.

In the present contest, the Workers Slate raises slogans which the WVC has never raised in the course of its work, including demands for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay and a labor party. The Slate leadership, however, puts out *leallets* which don't mention these demands. Furthermore, despite the inclinations of some of its more left-wing supporters, the WS fails to actually call for a break with the Democratic Party. The labor party demand is thus an empty abstraction. Reuther and Mazey were long-time supporters of such abstractions.

The WS also says nothing about government intervention in the labor movement and the use of courts against unions. The WVC has in the past supported suing the unions in the capitalist courts over unfair labor practices—a "tactic" which in this period of massive government intervention into the unions poses the threat of the final strangulation of the unions as independent workers' organizations.

The "leftism" of the Workers Slate reflects only episodic desires on the part of a thinly-disguised reformist leadership around Goldfield to distinguish itself from the CP-supported bureaucratic reformism of Roth. At bottom they are the same. The WS is a contradictory swamp which cannot last long.

Militants Launch Class-Struggle Slate

In contrast to this sorry opportunist spectacle, a Militant Action Slate of three candidates, Judson Jones, Marc Freedman and Cbuck Marino, is running on the basis of a program calling for a reorientation of the labor movement toward a perspective of class struggle rather than class-collaborationist reformism.

The Militant Action Slate is a more recent grouping, composed of several individuals who have been attempting to raise class-struggle demands in Local 6. One of the militants who helped form MAS put forward a motion last fall in the Local calling for reinstatement of fired wildcat strikers in De-

troit. More recently, it was one of the MAS candidates who introduced a motion calling for financial support to British miners and "hot-cargoing" of scab goods going to Britain during the British miners' strike. Seeing no harm in adding this demand to his verbal stockpile, Roth supported the motion, and it passed. Naturally, Roth did nothing concrete to implement it.

These militants were not satisfied with the hypocritical verbal militancy of Roth's Solidarity Caucus and the syndicalist Workers Voice Committee and sought to go further. The program of MAS specifically calls for a break with the Democratic Party, as well as calling for a labor party based on the trade unions. Unlike Roth or the WS, MAS calls for specific action instead of platitudes to deal with layoffs—a nationwide strike which would shut down all of auto (including plants the employers want to keep running) in order to reverse layoffs, through a shorter workweek at no loss in pay.

MAS also calls for impeachment, but without relying on Congress or Gerald Ford as do Roth, Woodcock and the CP. Instead, it calls for labor strikes to force new elections and "the running of a militant labor candidate for president to oppose the candidates of business." MAS also calls for ending discrimination through union control of hiring on a first-come, first-served basis with no preferential treatment for any group. It calls for international workers' solidarity, international strikes against international corporations and strike action against imperialist wars. The MAS program is clearly aimed at the very basis of the capitalist economic system; MAS urges auto workers to break with reformism by struggling for their demands without regard to the ability of capitalism to survive. MAS calls for the expropriation of industry under workers control and for a workers government "which can defeat the corporations once and for all."

Prospects for victory in the election look best for Stack's "Defense Coalition," with its majority support of the Shop Committee, its incumbent position and straight pro-Woodcock line. This is all the more reason *not* to place any faith in fake lefts like the Solidarity Caucus or Workers Slate: their reformist illusions and false promises only feed Stack's anti-communist business unionist fires.

The Spartacist League calls for support to the Militant Action Slate which, if it continues past the election, is bound to set an example for militants throughout the Chicago area and UAW nationally. Given its solid programmatic foundation, with the proper steadfastness in building and recruiting a base in the plant, the militants grouped together in the MAS can hope to participate fully in the construction of an alternate pole of class-struggle leadership in the labor movement. They can rest assured, however, that this is only the beginning of a difficult road, and the real content of their program and leadership must be tested in action before they can hope to win the support of the majority of the workers. ■

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REVOLUTIONARY
LITERATURE

terrorist acts, represent a deformed expression of the aspirations of the oppressed masses. The SLA "hit list" shows that this unstable, irrational and personalist formation is quite capable of turning its guns against anyone who awakens its ire. The SLA as such does not merit solidarity and defense by the working class and its allies.

(On the other hand, socialists must oppose frame-ups, even against common criminals, for any infringements of bourgeois democracy will inevitably be directed against the revolutionaries in the long run. Thus it does not appear that the police have at present sufficient evidence to convict Romero and Little, the two SLA members being held for the murder of Foster. This will not, however, stop them from trying to railroad through a guilty sentence as soon as concern for Patty Hearst's safety dies down. The labor movement must sharply oppose such kangaroo-court

proceedings.)

The ruling class is already trying to use the irrational violence of the SLA as an excuse for witchhunts against leftist or even liberal opponents. Already there are indications of a sharp shift on the part of bourgeois "law-enforcement" agencies, reflected in the vow of the usually liberal-faced Mayor Alioto to drive out the SLA within six months. Perhaps emboldened by the liberals' revulsion against the SLA, Oakland police raided a Black Panther house on April 16 and arrested 14 people. As the bourgeois press shrilly screams about an alleged campaign of wanton murder of whites (the "Zebra killings") a law-and-order campaign with sharp racial overtones is being whipped up. Any attempt by the bourgeoisie to use the SLA as a launching pad for an assault on civil liberties must be vigorously opposed by the entire working class. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Bloody Antics of the SLA

OAKLAND—The flamboyant and irrational activities of the "Symbionese Liberation Army" (SLA), played up by sensationalist coverage in the mass media, have become the focus of hot debates throughout the country, in factories, on campuses and in the left press. Young workers disenchanted with American "democracy" and who see little immediate opportunity for active struggles against the injustices of U.S. society are asking one another whether the SLA is really fighting on their behalf. Avowedly "Marxist" groups are acutely uncomfortable with the issue; the political bandits of the Workers League, for example, have flip-flopped from labeling the SLA a figment of the cops' sinister imagination to heralding Patty Hearst's "conversion" as an expression of the legitimate rebellion of oppressed youth.

The most significant and ominous result of the SLA's bizarre activities, however, is certainly to push the climate of bourgeois opinion to the right: to facilitate the current racist harassment of young black men in San Francisco as part of the supposed investigation of the so-called "Zebra killings" (see article on this page) and to lend credence to the reactionaries' allegations that the left movement, to which the SLA is supposed to belong, is criminal, irrational and dangerous.

Speculation is rife over the fate of Patty Hearst: Was she really involved in the April 15 bank hold-up? Was the entire kidnapping a fraud? Has she been "brainwashed"? Is she dead? But whatever the situation of Miss Hearst, the essential character of the SLA itself is clear: the SLA is an irrational and cultist expression of lumpen-proletarian rage having nothing in common with the struggle of the working class for socialism.

Program is Not Just Words on Paper

What is known of the SLA's history shows the group to be essentially a formation dominated by lumpen elements, with the peculiar quality of pseudo-Marxist rhetoric added by some of its members who were apparently peripherally involved with the Berkeley radical milieu. The group appears to be an amalgam of former black convicts and guilt-ridden white radicals, with the former predominating under the leadership of one "Cinque" (alias Donald Defreeze, according to the police).

The attitude of Marxists toward particular formations is determined by a combination of considerations: explicit program, historical origins, social composition and practice. None of these factors in isolation can serve as a useful guide. To take an extreme example, considering solely the written program of the German National Socialist Workers (Nazi) Party in the 1920's, one might be misled into thinking it to be a misguided "anti-capitalist" group since the program called for a number of radical "socialist" measures. There was even a pseudo-"left" wing of the Nazi party led by Gregor Strasser, who attempted to carry out some of these radical measures, such as expropriation of the big banks through a 1930 Reichstag bill. (Strasser's career was predictably cut short by Hitler, who quashed the Reichstag bill and saw to Strasser's murder in 1934.) Paper program by itself, without knowledge of the living movement from which it springs, is useless as a guide. In terms of written program, the SLA's main document of goals (printed in the *San Francisco Chronicle* of 13 February) is strikingly vague and filled

with radical and semi-mystical rhetoric (such as "no one can own or sell the air, the sky, the water, the trees, the birds, the sun...") rather than specific political demands.

Criminals and the Left

More telling are the origins and composition of the SLA. It is not an accident that virtually the entire left knows next to nothing about the origins of the SLA and particularly of its principal leader, "Cinque." (By way of contrast, the origins of the terrorist Weathermen as a political tendency in SDS, and the years of prior leftist activism on the part of its leading individuals, were well known to the entire left.) From all available information, Cinque had never had a political history, but rather has only a long police record of mundane crimes. His statement to the judge after sentencing in his 1970 trial for robbery/assault reveals a bitterness about American "justice," but nothing more:

"Defreeze later made a lengthy speech saying the trial had made him disillusioned about the American judicial system. 'I honestly believed in our courts and our states. I really honestly did. I had been such a fool.'"

—*San Francisco Chronicle*, 11 April

Disillusionment with the institutions of "democracy" may in some cases provide the first step toward social radicalization, but by itself it is far from sufficient to constitute a political leader. Every prisoner who has experienced the American system of "justice" can be justifiably bitter about the frame-ups (the guilty along with the innocent railroaded into jail by perjuring cops, corrupt judges and unrepresentative juries from which ex-convicts are ex-

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Patricia Hearst posing in front of SLA cobra symbol.

TDR

Indiscriminately Stopping Blacks . . . Racist Police Sweep in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO, April 20—In response to a wave of wanton murders here that has claimed 12 lives so far (code-named "Zebra murders" by the local police), San Francisco mayor Joseph Alioto has unleashed an unprecedented "stop-and-search" attack against the entire population of young black males in the city. Alioto, who is running for governor of California this year against Reagan (and therefore wants to show he is a tough "law-and-order" man), justifies this blatantly unconstitutional and utterly useless police dragnet with the argument that "extraordinary situations like this call for extraordinary measures."

While the bourgeois media drum up a campaign of crime hysteria, the police sweep has already involved arbitrary searches of hundreds of young black men. "We are not going to stop white people," said S.F. Police Chief Donald Scott. "We are going to stop black people. We are not going to stop fat black people. We are going to stop slender black people" (*Oakland Tribune*, 18 April). The cop on the beat appears to be somewhat less "discriminating," however; one was quoted on the KQED news (18 April) as replying to a protesting black man, "all you n-----s look alike."

The racial hysteria being generated by this scare campaign is very real. Moreover, it is certainly related to the inability of the police to make any headway on the murders or on the Hearst

kidnapping case. But as a means of catching the murderer(s) it is positively stupid. To be more precise, it is stupid and hysterical and, in present-day U.S. society, therefore necessarily racist.

There is no precise description of the perpetrators of the shootings; two teenage boys who were critically wounded gave contradictory descriptions of the same man. Police are reportedly stopping any "stocky-to-slender black man, 20 to 30 years old" (*New York Times*, 19 April). To find what? The only possible incriminating evidence would be if one of the three .32 calibre pistols involved were actually found on the suspect's person! Clearly, this sweep is solely an attempt to convince the voters that Alioto is "doing something," and it has no useful purpose whatever.

Already the local petty-bourgeois liberal community is up in arms over the dragnet, with the ACLU trying to stop it by a court suit and influential black liberals such as Reverend Cecil Williams denouncing it as a "police state" measure. Carlton Goodlett, a respectable black publisher, has denounced the searches as "America's first pass system, which resembles South Africa," referring to the slips of paper given to blacks who have already been searched and released. Even the Officers for Justice, a black police association, has opposed the measures as "ineffective."

The labor movement must be vividly aware that the sweeping aside of bourgeois democratic rights represented by this blatantly racist and senseless police dragnet is a direct threat to labor. If this incident is let pass without a squeak of protest, it will not be long before it is the unions which are experiencing the mailed fist of willful police attacks. The necessary step is for union and black organizations in the Bay Area to call a mass meeting to demand the immediate repeal of Alioto's arbitrary "stop-and-search" order.

We are not about to propose more effective anti-crime measures to the bourgeois state, which is incapable of eradicating the crimes it engenders on such a massive scale. All the various "reforms" proposed by fake left groups (such as police review boards, community patrols, community control of the police) ultimately come down to involving the left in administering the bourgeoisie's laws. The task is not to reform this rotten and corrupt system, but to smash it and replace it with a workers state! A system in which the working people control and participate in the entire state administration will provide effective protection against crime and will have no need of justly hated storm-trooper elite police units and such arbitrary procedures as this outrageous "stop blacks" edict. Labor must take immediate action to halt this pointless and racist harassment campaign! ■