

## Portuguese Military Stages "Democratic" Coup

**Oppose Spínola  
and the  
Military!**

**No Popular-  
Front Illusions!**

**For a Workers  
Government!**

MAY 6—"Portuguese Army Seizes Control and Proclaims Democratic Goal" read the headline of the *New York Times* following the coup in Lisbon on April 25. An editorial in the same edition praised "idealistic Portuguese Army officers, determined to restore democracy at home and peace to the African territories." Subsequent dispatches report thousands of joyous civilians showering carnations on soldiers, and on May Day Communist Party militants marched with a placard announcing, "the country is free thanks to the armed forces."

For almost two weeks now a false calm has enveloped the country. After 45 years of civilian dictatorship under Oliveira Salazar and his successors, Prime Minister Marcelo Caetano and President Américo Tomás, the mass of the population is unsure what to make of its unaccustomed "freedom." The "Junta of National Salvation" under General Antônio Sebastião Ribeiro de Spínola is reluctant to move against



General Antônio de Spínola

the left until the initial popular euphoria dies down. However, the decorated "hero" of Portugal's African wars refuses to hold elections for another 12 months and is known to favor a Gaullist-style "limited democracy" with himself as the strong president. After a demonstration by some 1,000 leftists (including Maoists and "Trotskyists") which demanded "freedom to the colonies" and "power to the workers," Spínola warned that he would use force to suppress "anarchy."

The task of revolutionary Marxists in this dangerous situation is to warn the working masses to beware of the "democratic" generals and to organize the working class to take power in its own name. But the Communist Party, which was the strongest underground force during the Salazarist regime, calls instead for "a firm alliance between the people's forces and the democratically-minded military." Following its line of a Popular Front with the "progressive" bourgeoisie, the CP supports the "creation of a provisional government that would represent all the democratic and lib-

eral political forces and trends" (*Daily World*, 30 April).

### Bourgeoisie Backs the Coup

The Stalinists claim to be strongly rooted in the "Movement of the Armed Forces," the officers' group which organized the coup. But a few tens of captains and colonels, no matter how strategically placed, could not have brought about the swift and almost bloodless overthrow of the Salazarist regime by themselves. The coup had wide support from the top levels of the military and key sections of the bourgeoisie. In the end, only the hated political police (the PIDE), the Republican National Guard and a small core of "ultras" around President Tomás made any attempt at resistance.

The press has portrayed Spínola as a "liberal" because of his recent book, *Portugal and the Future*, which stated that the seemingly endless war in Africa could not be won by military means alone. Pointing out that the battle to defeat guerrilla "liberation" forces in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea-Bissau had brought the country to the verge of financial ruin, he called for a Lusitano-African "commonwealth" modeled on the bogus "French Union" established after World War II. However, he firmly opposes independence for the colonies.

The publication of this book was far from being an act of individual rebelliousness by the "number one soldier of Portugal." It was approved by his own superior, Chief of Staff Costa Gomes, and Defense Minister Silva Cunha; moreover, it was passed by the normally strict censor, indicating approval by Prime Minister Caetano

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Rebel tanks during April 25 coup in Lisbon.



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# Militant Slate in Chicago Harvester Elections

The elections for convention delegate at UAW Local 6, representing International Harvester's Melrose Park plant on the west side of Chicago, were a test for would-be militant oppositionists. The struggle leading up to the June convention in Los Angeles represents a good opportunity to begin building a class-struggle opposition to the sellout Woodcock bureaucracy. But such a leadership will not be built with pious rhetoric. It will take mobilization of the ranks around a concrete, working-class program to stop the offensive of the auto companies and their bureaucratic servants in Solidarity House.

In Local 6, the right wing took the offensive against left groups in a local with a long, militant and democratic tradition (it was one of the few locals not to succumb to the Reuther/McCarthy witchhunt of reds in the 1950's). The so-called "Defense Coalition" was explicitly organized by Shop Chairman Bob Stack to "defend the union" against "propagandapassers at plant gates" who were characterized as seeking to "subvert our union in order to advance the group's philosophy of world anarchy." During the election, the Company proclaimed a new policy of wanting to see all leaflets before

they are distributed at the gates on Company property, and the "Defense Coalition" majority on the Shop Committee immediately endorsed the ruling! Stack was top vote-getter, with 838 out of about 1,400 voting.

The first target of this red-baiting campaign was Local President Norman Roth. Roth is a staff writer for the liberal *Labor Today*, monthly paper of Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy (TUAD), a pan-union group supported by the Communist Party. A verbal leftist, Roth was critical of the last contract, opposes the wage freeze (while calling for a "better" one!), opposes discrimination and in general provides a left cover for the leadership, in which he is a minority of one.

The March *Labor Today* quotes Roth, at the founding meeting of a new national auto caucus, the Auto Workers Action Caucus (AWAC) as saying,

"We got [stuck with the contract] because within our union, although there were individual outcries in locals across the country, there was no cohesive national rank and file voice within this union!" [emphasis in original]

AWAC, supported by TUAD, is presumably to be this voice. But where were TUAD supporters during the up-



Plant shift change at Melrose Park International Harvester plant.

heaval in Detroit over the last contract? A Communist Party shop paper, *Dodge Worker*, called for enforcing the Woodcock terms (*Daily World*, 27 November 1973). And Bill Scott, another leader of AWAC and committeeman in Local 664, Tarrytown, New York, gave the GM contract "critical support" (*Daily World*, 5 December 1973). This treachery is a reflection of the class-collaborationism of the Communist Party, which sees Woodcock as an ally against more conservative bureaucrats and Nixon. Roth is fully in accord with this liberal pro-capitalist strategy, in which the election of Democratic mayors such as Coleman Young of Detroit is passed off as a victory for the workers.

Despite his call for "cohesive" leadership, Roth relies on personal popularity to win votes. He failed to mention AWAC at all during the campaign. Though he came in second in the election with 787 votes, it is his TUAD-style opportunism and class collaborationism which weaken the left and feed right-wing anti-communism. If gains are allegedly to be had by subordinating the political struggle to liberal allies in the Democratic Party, then Stack, Woodcock, etc., are in a better position, with their bigger machines and lack of CP support, to obtain them.

Another target of the Stack forces was the Workers Slate, a syndicalist grouping which started out with a list of demands including "the forming of a labor party." The WS, however, thinks the shop-floor struggle is everything and politics nothing; its fixation on issues such as getting rid of the plant doctor causes it to try to avoid sharp (i.e., unpopular) political conclusions such as the need to break definitively with all support to Democrats as the basis for building a labor party. As a result, despite the importance of this issue to distinguish a genuine class-struggle position from TUAD-backed

reformism, the Workers Slate simply dropped all mention of its demand for a labor party during the campaign.

Only a small, new grouping, the Militant Action Slate, put forward a program capable of laying the foundation for a real alternative to Woodcock/Stack. The three MAS candidates, Chuck Marino, Marc Freedman and Judson Jones, called for nationwide strikes against layoffs, concrete international solidarity (a labor boycott of coal to Britain during the miners' strike), ending discrimination through union control of hiring and a shorter workweek, an immediate break with the two capitalist parties and a workers party to fight for a workers government. The three got 50 to 100 votes each, or about four to seven percent of the vote—a good result considering that it was their first campaign and the turnout was small and mainly older workers.

Roth's reaction in an election leaflet to the MAS was indicative:

"The 'militant action' candidates can't do us any good at the convention either. They're too busy fighting Woodcock and confusing the membership as to who is the enemy. If you disagree with them, they consider you to be the enemy too. The real enemy, the corporations, couldn't think of a better way to divide the membership."

But the membership is divided, and will remain so as long as no alternatives are put forward to unite the membership in conscious class struggle. This means replacing Woodcock and his entire bureaucracy and strategy of betrayal, not accommodating to the bureaucracy in the name of fake "unity." If the good beginning of the Militant Action Slate is consolidated into a caucus aiming its sights high, at the creation of a class-struggle opposition throughout the UAW, it will displace the likes of Roth and the Workers Slate and become the only force capable of successfully challenging the right-wing business unionists for leadership. ■

## Court Bans Delegate Elections in Fremont UAW

OAKLAND, May 6—The convention delegate elections in UAW Local 1364, Fremont, California, provide a good example of why the Spartacist League opposes going to court to settle disputes within the labor movement. Local 1364 is the only UAW local to have gone on record for a nationwide strike for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay to fight the layoffs plaguing the auto industry (see *WV* No. 39, 1 March 1974). Yet because of the bureaucratic ambitions of an ex-official, the Local delegate elections may be invalidated by a court. This interference in union affairs by the bosses' state may deprive the membership of any representation at the upcoming UAW convention in Los Angeles in June and thereby also hinder bringing Local 1364's call for a nationwide strike against layoffs to auto workers in other locals around the country.

This would be doubly unfortunate, since the Local is one of just a handful in the UAW in which there was an opportunity to vote for delegates with a class-struggle program. Two of the candidates for convention delegate from Fremont GM called, among other things, for going beyond Woodcock's pro-impeachment position. They called for a complete break with the two capitalist parties and for a workers party based on the trade unions. At *WV* press time, a court injunction was still preventing the counting of the ballots from the election.

The ex-official, former shop chairman John Herrera, now a "Unity Team" candidate for delegate, obtained an injunction barring the election the night before the voting was to begin. His grounds were that the Local was failing to implement a 1973 membership vote requiring the use of voting machines or outside observers at all general elections. According to another candidate, the cost of the measure would have been \$30,000.

Subpoenas were issued, and there were rumors of cops closing the polls the following morning. The Brotherhood Caucus—opponents of the Unity

Team and presently the leadership of the Local—decided to go ahead with the election anyway, since any delay would have gone past the union deadline for voting (thereby depriving the Brotherhood's slate from possibly getting elected).

Candidates Darlene Fujino and Joan Putnam of the Committee for a Militant UAW (CMUAW)—the authors of the February resolution for strikes against layoffs and the class-struggle position on impeachment—told *WV* later that they considered it vital to show maximum solidarity with the Local leadership in this defiance of court interference in the internal affairs of the union. However, they continue to have differences with the program of the Brotherhood and have no confidence in its ultimate determination to defend the union and its membership against the class enemy.

The CMUAW was the only group in the union to appear the next morning with a leaflet informing the membership of what had happened and urging members to vote as early in the day as possible in case of any attempt to stop the voting. The news in their leaflet reportedly came as a surprise even to some of the Local officials! Many workers responded to their call. (No cops showed up and the voting was held, but the Brotherhood is now honoring an order not to count the ballots in the hope of quashing the attack in court.)

The present dispute is a continuation of a long history of infantile bureaucratic in-fighting between the Brotherhood and Unity cliques. Recently there was an old-fashioned bar-room brawl between top leaders of the caucuses. There are no real political differences between the two, despite the Brotherhood's early "people power" rhetoric and its continuing residue of left-wing support in the plant.

Ironically, it was the Brotherhood itself, before it got into office, which sponsored the 1973 motion requiring voting machines or observers. Fujino

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## WORKERS VANGUARD

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## Needed: A Class-Struggle Leadership!

# Canadian Postal Strike Sellout

MAY 3—A powerful cross-Canada postal workers' strike was sold out at the bargaining table last week by a union leadership more concerned about reaching a "gentlemen's agreement" with management than representing its own members.

Starting off as a wildcat in Montreal on April 8, the strike spread to Toronto a week later and at the high point tied up mails coast-to-coast for six days before the union brass "settled" the dispute on April 26 by agreeing to submit all basic issues to mediation. Involved in the walkout were 18,000 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), mainly inside workers (clerks, mail handlers), and some 12,000 members of the Letter Carriers Union of Canada (LCUC).

At issue was whether postal workers would be forced to suffer pay cuts, worsened working conditions, layoffs and victimizations in the interest of implementing government plans to automate the Canadian mails. The walkout was touched off by the suspension of 20 militants in Montreal, who were disciplined for wearing T-shirts bearing the slogan "Boycott the Postal Code."

The Montreal strikers demanded that mail coders under the new automated system receive the same wages as the sorters they replace. This key demand was unanimously endorsed by the Shop Steward Body of the Toronto local of the CUPW. But in their announcement of a national postal strike the top union leaders (grouped together in the Council of Postal Unions) watered this down to a vague call for "immediate resolution of the coder issue." Finally, even this stand was abandoned as the labor bureaucracy capitulated to Postmaster-General André Ouellet's refusal to negotiate until the strike was called off.

### Automation Threatens Postal Workers

The automation of the Canadian Post Office, begun in 1971, is based on the introduction of an alphanumeric code system which, by a series of letters and numbers, defines each region, city and block in the country. These codes are to be read by giant mail-sorting machines which will replace several thousand clerks and helpers. In Toronto alone, according to management figures, there will be a net job loss of more than 400 workers. Moreover, the wage rates for coders (POL-1) are up to 70 cents per hour lower than for sorters (POL-4).

CUPW leaders admit accepting the mechanization scheme when it was first proposed in 1970-71, but now say that postal workers will fight it unless they are guaranteed a portion of the benefits accruing from the increased efficiency. Until their hand was forced by the Montreal local, union tops were relying on a "Manpower Committee" (provided for in the current contract) to negotiate the introduction of automated processes. However, this committee never met until the middle of the strike! When the Post Office introduced automatic mail sorters at Ottawa and Winnipeg, hiring coders at the substantially lower POL-1 wage rate, CUPW leaders did nothing.

### "We Try Harder"

The key to victory in the postal workers' struggle, as throughout the labor movement today, is the fight for a revolutionary leadership to replace the present union bureaucracy, the agents of capital in the ranks of the workers. Several groups claiming to offer such an alternative were active in and around the Canadian postal strike, giving militants a chance to measure the reality of their "leadership" against the objective needs of the workers in this important class battle.

One of the main groups active around

the postal strike in Toronto was the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) which sympathizes with the European majority of the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat" led by Ernest Mandel. The RMG in its press raised the demand of a shorter workweek with no loss in pay before the strike. It also called for full cost-of-living adjustment of wages, a single job classification at the highest level, veto power by the workers over technological changes, a single postal union and several other demands (*Old Mole*, March 1974).

The RMG noted that "militancy... is not enough by itself" and saw that "victory... cannot be won within the limits of the strategy of the present leadership." But what it called for was essentially a more militant version of the same old trade unionism. Nowhere does it raise political demands, as if the postal workers' struggles were solely economic; apparently a new leadership of the unions would not have to counterpose class-struggle policies to the pro-capitalist line of the New Democratic Party which claims to speak for Canadian labor; apparently the struggle for a workers government is likewise irrelevant. Moreover, the RMG fails to mention the need for a programmatic caucus to organize the fight for a class-struggle leadership in the unions. How more militant policies are to win the support of the ranks is left totally unclear, perhaps even to RMGers themselves.

### One Line in the *Old Mole*, Another in the Strike

In any case, these are nothing more than fine words for the delight of the readers of the *Old Mole*. When it comes to a real struggle situation, where there are opportunities for wheeling and dealing and selling out one's program, the RMG suddenly drops its strategic demands. In five different leaflets issued during the strike, it entirely forgot to mention the call for a sliding scale of hours which in March it had claimed was the center of the struggle against layoffs



Officials seal mail boxes during Canadian postal strike.

due to automation.

In a leaflet "For a Fighting Strategy to Build the Strike," the most political tract issued by these fake-Trotskyists during the course of the strike, the RMG limited itself to a number of tactical suggestions (in themselves quite appropriate) for stiffening the strike (mass picketing, national strike, written guarantee to lift suspensions, reclassify all coders to POL-4, elected strike committees, etc.).

Comrades of the RMG, the fundamental issue of the postal strike was the response to management plans for



Postal workers picket in front of Toronto post office.

massive automation. Any "revolutionary" leadership which failed to present a program to fight against the consequences of this attack on the workers was by this fact alone preparing for a defeat in the next contract negotiations and giving Ouellet a free hand to introduce whatever he wants, whenever he wants. Even had the strike won the four demands, it would not have settled the question of automation, who benefits from it and who pays the cost.

What would such a program include? The RMG is enthusiastic about the struggle for workers control and has reported that Ottawa workers using the new machinery complain of nervous strain; but it failed to raise the demand for a union safety committee with power to control the line speed and stop processing. The RMG has called for an end to victimizations of union militants and discrimination against part-timers, but it fails to raise the demand for a union hiring hall which would take such questions out of the hands of management altogether. The demands of reclassifi-

a means of countering the present misleadership, it hails the decision of the Vancouver CUPW local to establish "a strike committee composed of the shop stewards and the executive"—i.e., a strike committee responsible only to itself ("Vancouver Sets the Example," 22 April RMG leaflet). The RMG enthuses:

"It is precisely these initiatives that demonstrate to the government that postal workers understand the full scope of the problems they face, that they are prepared to fight for their demands and that they know how to fight for them."

If the workers understand the full scope of the problem, know how to and can fight for their demands... then why doesn't the RMG just pack up its bags and go home? Apparently in the course of a cross-Canada strike which began as a wildcat, was patently illegal under capitalist law, etc., revolutionary leadership was unnecessary? But then it seems the workers were sold out only a few days later...!

Another equally revealing example of this tailism was the call for a national day of action against "essential service legislation" (laws prohibiting strikes by "public sector" workers). The RMG had indicated the danger of such a back-to-work strike-breaking law, such as the one which broke the Canada-wide rail strike last summer (see *WV* No. 28, 14 September 1973), pointing out the implications of a motion adopted by Parliament to use "any and all means" to end the "illegal" strike (a motion voted for also by the NDP members of Commons). But just prior to a mass meeting of the Toronto CUPW local on April 21, union militants supported by the RMG suddenly dropped their demand for a national action against the threat of strike-breaking legislation simply in order to effect a bloc with a group of syndicalists.

Clearly such a group, which abandons its own programmatic demands, separates politics from trade-union struggle and will sell out anything for the sake of a temporary bloc, cannot lead the postal workers forward to victory. Most likely they will not be leading even themselves for very long. Such confusion and capitulation in their main area of trade-union concentration can only be an indication of serious disorientation. Militants in the RMG who seriously wish to carry forward the struggle for the Trotskyist Transitional Program clearly must break with the fundamental eclecticism, tailism and capitulatory workerism which characterize this group's practical politics. As for "theoretical issues" (such as the role of the Transitional Program in trade-union struggles), the RMG still refuses to debate the Spartacist League. It is not hard to see why. ■

## **Hot-Cargo Scab Produce!**

# **Showdown for the UFW**

In the early months of 1974 George Meany has outdone himself, surpassing even his own record for shameless betrayal, in his back-stabbing of the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). On February 22 he announced from a Miami Beach hotel that the meagre financial lifeline extended to this sinking union was being cut off by the AFL-CIO. "There is no more money where that came from," he said, referring to the \$1.6 million which the AFL-CIO had contributed to the UFW last May. This money was used as a strike fund during last summer's bloody fight to regain the contracts stolen by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) in California's grape fields. The farm workers are now left ill-prepared (in more ways than one) for this year's strike battles, already under way in the Coachella Valley, which will determine whether or not the UFW is to survive as a trade-union organization.

The AFL-CIO support to Cesar Chavez' grape and lettuce boycott has been very qualified on the part of Meany as a result of a massive Teamster pressure campaign, as well as opposition to the boycott from some AFL-CIO unions (particularly the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Retail Clerks) who consider the supermarket boycott a threat to their members' jobs. In a disgusting public display of treason against their class brothers and sisters, the leadership of these two unions paid thousands of dollars for full-page ads in Ohio and Michigan metropolitan dailies to denounce the Farm Workers' boycott as "offensive," "ineffective" and anti-union (see *Detroit News* ad reprinted on page 5). These reputedly "progressive" unions could have, but did not, refuse to handle scab lettuce and grapes. They could have joined the picket lines, announcing they would not return to work until their employers took scab produce off the shelves. They chose to stab the UFW in the back instead.

Meany now claims that the AFL-CIO does not support picketing against supermarkets carrying scab products, but does support picketing the scab products themselves. This is just one more bogus "compromise" on the long road of AFL-CIO deals with the growers and the Teamsters. Though his racist comments about Chicanos rival those of Teamster officials, Meany is no doubt just as eager to receive the farm workers' dues as is the IBT. But he will not use the considerable muscle of the AFL-CIO (cannery, long-shore, maritime, railroad, grocery store workers—all of whom could effectively "hot-cargo" Teamster and non-union produce), and he does not want to pour money into a "losing cause."

IBT head Fitzsimmons, Nixon's most loyal trade-union supporter, has prostituted the Teamsters' Union to the agribusiness bosses and split on the ethics of trade unionism and working-class solidarity, scandalizing Meany himself (according to his hypocritical verbiage):

"The Teamsters' union-busting drive would be absolutely disgraceful under any circumstances. But for the nation's largest union to seek to destroy this small struggling union, representing some of the most exploited workers in the nation, is intolerable."

However, Meany's failure to provide any more than token assistance to the farm workers has aided the Teamster-grower-government alliance, battling to destroy the UFW ever since the union's inception.

### **Impotent Boycotts**

Chavez initiated the current boycott following the UFW's rout in the fields



Cesar Chavez

last summer. The strike was called off after several months of brutalization of UFW supporters at the hands of hired Teamster goons, growers and sheriffs' deputies, culminating in the murder of two farm workers—victims of Chavez' turn-the-other-cheek pacifism as much as of their assassins. Chavez ended the strike when the Department of Justice failed to provide protection for the UFW picketers—a demand that would be funny if it weren't so treacherous.

It is typical but pathetic that the lessons of the long and bloody struggle to organize agricultural workers in the U.S., not to mention the totality of labor history, could have passed Chavez by completely. Even the most conservative business unionists occasionally see the need to protect picket lines from violent attack. But not Chavez—his answer is prayers and vigils. The government—through its courts, agencies and commissions for the "protection" of farm labor, legislative apparatus and armed "law-enforcement"



TED STRESHINSKY

institutions—has unequivocally demonstrated time and again whose interests it exists to serve: the capitalist state serves the capitalists, including the growers! Strikers' picket lines must be defended by the labor movement itself!

So instead, Cesar Chavez liquidated the strike in order to prevent violence (!), despite the fact that the strike is the workers' most effective weapon for struggle against the employers, called for a "glorious boycott" and dispersed the farm workers to the supermarkets in the nation's major cities to conduct it, mouthing words of confidence that this boycott campaign would receive even more support than previous ones.

### **UFW Contract Gains**

A five-year boycott and strike struggle resulted in the UFW's securing its first grape-grower contracts in 1970. With this victory California's mostly Chicano agricultural workers for the

first time caught a glimpse of the road that could lead out of perennial miserable "stoop-labor" degradation and exploitation, enforced by the growers with every tactic in the books, from lobbying the government to institute and maintain the bracero program to vigilante attacks against those who would seek to organize. Farm workers have always been specifically exempted from minimum wage laws and legally required union recognition elections.

UFW contracts provided real gains for the farm workers, not only in wages and working conditions but also in the form of the union hiring hall, where workers were dispatched to available jobs on an equitable basis. This eliminated the hated labor contractor system whereby wretched social parasites in the service of the growers hand-picked work gangs, pocketing a percentage of each worker's wages—as well as whatever else could be cheated, hustled and coerced from largely defenseless victims.

Just how genuinely successful was the UFW's 1970 "great boycott victory" can be seen by how quickly and easily these gains were reversed. Having been defeated by the UFW in representation elections when the UFW secured its contracts, the Teamsters' union reappeared in the company of the growers as UFW contracts expired three years later. Without winning a single representation election and without a single union meeting (and consequently without a membership vote on the contracts), the Teamsters now legally "represent" thousands of farm workers simply because the growers signed a piece of paper, getting rid of the UFW hiring hall at a stroke of a pen. This is not a jurisdictional dispute, as IBT officials like to claim. It is outright union-busting. The UFW, for its part, failed to regain these contracts in last summer's strikes because Cesar Chavez steadfastly refuses to utilize the methods and weapons of working-class struggle.

### **A History of Betrayals**

Organizing agricultural workers is not an easy task. Unlimited grower violence and a desperately poor, isolated, largely foreign labor force (with little real economic power) have combined to undo all previous efforts. Only a militant struggle utilizing the strength of the organized labor movement in transportation and distribution could have overcome these obstacles. But the pro-capitalist bureaucracy which sits atop the unions, sucking out millions in dues while disciplining the workers in the interests of the bosses,

## **Famous Last Words: Chavez on the Boycott**

**"It's like quicksand. It's irreversible. Once it gets going, it creates a life of its own. It reaches a point where nothing can stop it. It's like trying to fight the wind."**

Though Cesar Chavez sees the boycott as a mystical experience, the present boycott of grapes, lettuce and Gallo wine is in serious trouble faced with the Teamsters' all-out war to smash the UFW.

IBT chief and Nixon crony Frank Fitzsimmons has hired expensive public relations firms to obscure the issues and promote an image of Teamsters as legitimate rivals in a "jurisdictional dispute" with the UFW. "Support for Cesar Chavez is not a question of boycotting non-union products," claims Fitzsimmons. "It is a boycott of Teamster union products. It is a question of dictatorial moves on the part of George Meany to decide for himself to which union workers will belong."

The power and resources of the two-million-member Teamsters, the nation's largest union, dwarf those of the tiny UFW. The IBT now claims to represent 50,000 farm workers through 308 contracts, while UFW membership has dwindled to less than 10,000 and a small handful of contracts. Furthermore, the size and strategic strength of the Teamsters allow them to exert strong-arm pressure on AFL-CIO unions. International Teamster representative Charles O'Brien points out that scores of unions plead almost weekly with Teamster members to recognize their picket lines.

In California's fields the IBT has allocated a minimum of \$100,000 a month to its campaign against the UFW—this time not simply to rip off its contracts, but to bamboozle support from farm workers with a renovated image of the cheapest veneer, making use of highly paid stooges of Latin American origin. As part of their image-refurbishing campaign the Teamsters have adopted the name "Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee," the same as the old AFL-CIO union.

The threat this campaign represents to the existence of the UFW is serious; now is the time for hard and realistic evaluation and preparation for this summer's strike battles, not dream-world fantasizing.

has consistently refused to undertake such a united class struggle.

The key to the companies' success in keeping down wages and preventing unionization has been to have a pool of labor which for legal, social, language and other reasons could not freely move about to seek the highest wages. At various times growers have used Chinese, Japanese, Arabs, Indians, Mexicans, Filipinos, as well as Italian prisoners of war, "Oakies," volunteer students and housewives, prison labor and American Indians. More recently California's Governor Reagan has coerced welfare recipients into the service of that state's largest business.

Mexico proved the most advantageous source of labor for the growers, and "bracero" programs (importing contract workers who are not free to change jobs) were instituted during both world wars in "the interests of patriotism." Even at the height of the Depression, with its phenomenal unemployment and the thousands of displaced small farmers of the "Dust Bowl" who were forced to seek work as migrant laborers, the growers claimed that the nation's food supply was endangered unless braceros were imported.

In the face of grower/government might, and with small immediate remuneration to be expected from a task so monumental, the few efforts by the established labor federations to organize agricultural workers were half-hearted and doomed to failure by the very nature of their approach. Thus the Agricultural Workers' Organizing Committee (AWOC), a mostly Filipino union which merged with Chavez' National Farm Workers' Association in 1966 to form the UFWOC (predecessor of the UFW), essentially organized not the ranks of farm workers, but the labor contractors, who collected dues and served as the union's link to its members. This practice hardly impressed the workers with the union's concern for their welfare. This is also a Teamsters' practice today.

#### Pacifism and Religion

Chavez' failure has been of another sort. Though tirelessly organizing directly among the farm-worker ranks, Chavez has never broken from his middle-class conceptions. He was a protégé of serve-the-people priests like Father McDonnell, and the Church has been a key pillar of support, holding a favored position in the eyes of Chavez because:

"All the Mexicans are Catholic. And the Church is the one group that isn't expecting anything from us. They're not doing any politicking among us. All the other groups, the unions, the civil-rights groups, they all want something in return for their support."

Chavez' concern has been to keep the movement palatable to bourgeois politicians and "public opinion" through such "moral" allies. For the same reason, he has always engaged in the reactionary practice of excluding those who would "taint" his movement with political radicalism. Chavez sees leftists as not only a threat to his leadership, but as elements which would offend the bourgeois liberal establishment.

Instead he courts the support of liberals such as the late Senator Robert Kennedy. Kennedy made a dramatic visit to the farm-worker picket line in 1966, which brought a spate of newspaper publicity and respectability to the embattled union. Despite his supposed distaste for "politicking," Chavez returned the favor by ordering platoons of farm workers into the East Los Angeles barrios to round up votes for Kennedy in the 1968 primary. An even more grotesque example of Chavez' reliance on liberal public opinion was his pathetic pilgrimage of penance for the farm workers' sins (!) in the spring of 1966. Arriving in Sacramento on Easter Sunday, Chavez meekly pleaded his cause to Democratic Governor Brown. That spring the first important contracts were secured by the Farm Workers—first with Schenley, then DiGiorgio and Pirelli-Minetti. August 1967 saw the beginning of

the "great grape boycott," originally against Giumarra, but by the end of the year subsequently extended to all California table-grape growers when Giumarra was initially able to undermine the boycott by using 105 different labels. The growers finally came to the bargaining table in the summer of 1969. Though negotiations were deadlocked for months over the companies' refusal to submit to union standards for the use of pesticides which endanger the health of farm workers, contracts were eventually signed in 1970.

#### Fasting or Working-Class Struggle

As the long struggle has worn on there has been an erosion of the faith in non-violence insisted upon by the religious mystic Chavez. In February 1968 he responded to the slashing of tires, burning of packing crates and roughing up of scabs by union members with a penitential fast to redirect the movement back onto the course of non-violence. Many among even his most loyal supporters were embarrassed by the circus-like vulgarity of the spectacle. For 23 days, the faithful maintained a vigil for Chavez in tents pitched outside, equating the fast to the Second Coming. Old women crawled on their knees from the highway to his quarters, as union aides pandered to the media that flocked to Delano.

The effort wasted on fasts, vigils and penance may endear Chavez to the Kennedy family, but the time would have better been spent organizing a united, militant working-class struggle capable of winning victory by relying on labor's own forces. This, however, is precisely what Chavez (and the Kennedys) do not want:

"We don't want to model ourselves on the industrial unions. That would be bad. We want to get involved in politics, in voter registration, not just contract negotiation.... We have to find some cross between being a movement and being a union."

Chavez is correct to recognize the limitations of business unionism. However, it is a revolutionary movement



Teamsters guard growers' property in Coachella Valley.

with a program for working-class victory—not reformist class-collaboration, religious obscurantism and nationalist "la raza" rhetoric—which is required.

Though it is certainly superficially different from run-of-the-mill Meanyite unionism, Chavez' "movement"-style tactics are qualitatively no better (except when compared with Fitzsimmons' current union-busting operation in the California fields). Chavez is not in a position to live in luxury off the sweat of the ranks of farm workers in the manner of Fitzsimmons (\$125,000 per year salary plus unlimited expense account), but the UFW bureaucracy is like any other in the role it plays as the carrier of bourgeois ideology in the workers' movement. The UFW leadership is a loyal agent of the bourgeoisie entrusted to confine the workers' struggles to the framework of capitalism.

Following the basic Marxist tenet that revolutionists have an obligation

#### Meat Cutters' Union Ad in Detroit News—

## Stabbing the UFW in the Back...

### It's Time for Some Straight Talk about that Picketing at Wrigley and Other Union Supermarkets

**We, members of the AFL-CIO, find UFW picketing offensive and ineffective.**

**We urge the United Farm Workers to Stop it NOW!**

**We Appeal to Consumers, as always, to shop in Union Supermarkets.**

Picketing has focused on Wrigley Supermarkets lately, but the target keeps changing. United Farm Worker boycott signs have appeared at A & P, Farmer Jack, Great Scott and Chatham. All these stores are selling table grapes today. And all these stores are 100 percent union.

Our AFL-CIO members benefit from years of organizing and bargaining. Our unions were helped along the way by other unions just as we have been helping those who try to organize to better their way of life. That included the United Farm Workers.

The AFL-CIO contributed millions of dollars to the Farm Workers' cause. That money came from the dues of AFL-CIO members... including the 30,000 who work in this area's supermarkets.

But we are tired of seeing our own union brothers and sisters harassed by UFW pickets. Many of them UFW pickets never belonged

to a union or have any understanding of unionism.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council recently voted to cut off financial support of the UFW. George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO, told Cesar Chavez last week that the AFL-CIO will not support secondary boycotts like the UFW is trying to get going against union supermarkets in Detroit.

We see no direct purpose in picketing that would turn customers away from union stores. In some cases UFW pickets have actually told housewives to do their shopping at non-union stores.

We appeal to consumers to continue shopping in union supermarkets.

We are proud to work in union supermarkets helping customers who have learned that union members honor their contracts and live up to their responsibilities to the public.

### WRIGLEY SUPERMARKETS ARE 100% UNION!

SO ARE... A & P, Kroger, Farmer Jack, Chatham, Great Scott and Other AFL-CIO Served Supermarkets.

**SHOP IN UNION SUPERMARKETS**



**AMALGAMATED MEAT CUTTERS UNION 539, AFL-CIO**

Thomas Szymanski  
President

Samuel C. Leone  
Secretary-Treasurer

handle scab products by the major unions, on the other hand, would effectively keep scab products from being sold and consumed; but a consumer boycott is useful only as a supplement to strike and hot-cargoing action and is not a substitute for it. Labor's greatest strength lies in its ability to control production, not in its moral appeal to the consciences of millions of dispersed individual consumers.

Likewise, the UFW leadership has not attempted a serious campaign to enlist the support of rank-and-file Teamsters against the union-busting policies of their sellout leadership. Many opportunities to gain rank-and-file Teamster support have been ignored. For example, last July Teamster truck drivers struck in the Salinas area, cutting off vegetable deliveries for weeks and causing the State Board of Agriculture to urge Nixon to intervene.

Again, toward the end of July the distinct possibility of a general strike emerged when 65,000 Teamster-organized cannery workers, many of them Chicanos, struck upon expiration of their contract. In fact, one of the issues in this strike was the attempt of the Teamster bureaucrats to introduce a clause into the contract which would have allowed the union to refuse to handle UFW-picked produce.

Chavez should have attempted to utilize these opportunities, together with a militant farm workers' strike, to push for a statewide general strike. In support of the UFW and against government interference in the labor movement. Instead of waging such campaigns for support Chavez indicates his inability to distinguish friends from enemies and encourages further government intervention in the trade-union movement by suing the Teamsters in the same courts which have been used by the growers against the UFW

#### Hot-Cargo Scab Produce!

A particular example of Chavez' defeatist tactics is the powerless consumer boycott campaign. Refusal to

continued on page 10

# Massive Strikes Rock Franco's Sp

"The day the lid is removed from the pot... the great problems of Spain—national, religious, social, administrative—will reappear intact; they will be revived without ever having died."

—José María Peman, in ABC, 19 May 1972

This is how the favorite author and poet of the monarchy and Franco evaluates the future of Spain after thirty-three years of bonapartist military dictatorship. The Spanish bourgeoisie is increasingly dividing into two camps in search of solutions to problems which cannot be solved under capitalism. One sector accepts the present regime, which has yielded such magnificent profits, and prefers a nominal transfer of the powers of the Franco dictatorship to the monarchy (Juan Carlos) with minimal changes in the governmental system. The other main sector prefers a liberalization of the regime and perhaps even a "pact" with the workers parties and the formation of a democratic republic—of course with as little democracy as possible. But both camps are mortally afraid of a repetition of the experience of the 1930's, when a combative proletariat almost overthrew the capitalist system. Stalin and the Communist Party saved the bourgeoisie then, but could the Stalinists do it again?

The increasing pressure of the class struggle and force of the proletariat are once again a threat. However, Spanish society today is quite different from that of 1931. The working class is not organized in powerful anarchist and socialist-led trade unions as in the 1920's; nor is there a powerful reformist workers party to play the treacherous role assumed by the Socialist Party in the early 1930's.

Today the CP, the largest workers party in Spain, controls only a small part of the proletariat and lacks the

with the CP/SP. More importantly, popular agitation on Spain's western frontiers, combined with the possible appearance of a popular-front government including the Stalinists in France to the north, will certainly have a tremendous influence on the Franco regime. The Iberian peninsula is one of the most acute focal points of the class struggle in West Europe.

If you add to this the present economic instability of the Common Market and galloping inflation at home, it is clear that a pre-revolutionary situation is rapidly approaching in Spain. In a descriptive manner, Spain today could be compared to Russia in 1903 with massive unrest in the working

of Spanish social life today.

In the last several years there have been a number of massive strikes in key sections of the economy, some of them even reaching the level of semi-insurrections on the order of the workers' revolt in Córdoba, Argentina, in May 1969. In the last decade Spain has become the country in Europe with the most strikes, an unusual distinction for a country governed by a rigidly authoritarian regime. Spain has also had the dubious honor of being the country where the most strikers have been assassinated by the "forces of law and order." Three cities in the north of Spain—Pamplona (June 1973), El Ferrol (March 1972) and Vigo (September 1972)

lutionary enthusiasm of the working class, which responded to intense governmental repression with a vast Asturian miners' uprising in 1934. When the bourgeoisie retook the initiative with the military uprising of 18 July 1936, the workers responded by taking over Barcelona, instituting workers control in hundreds of factories, erecting a coordinated workers militia, etc.

In the three years of ferocious civil war which followed, the workers were militarily defeated. But through the Popular Front, the collaboration of the workers parties (Socialists, Communists, anarchists) with the liberal and radical bourgeois parties, the working class had already been decisively subordinated to the interests of capitalism. The absence of a truly revolutionary, Trotskyist leadership gave free rein to the counterrevolutionary Stalinists whose popular-front policies and campaign of terror against the left produced the political defeat of the working class which led to the military victory of Franco.

At the end of the civil war, after terrible destruction of human life, came the repression. Three hundred thousand workers and peasants were assassinated. Many others were locked up in concentration camps. All working-class leaders were exterminated or expelled; all political and trade-union groups and associations were dissolved. The bourgeoisie created its special instruments of destruction and coercion which came to characterize the Franco regime: political police, incessant corporatist propaganda and the *sindicatos verticales* ("vertical trade unions"—the state-controlled compulsory labor associations). All the components of a Hitler/Mussolini-style fascist government seemed to be present.

But there was a difference. The civil war was initiated, led and brought to a conclusion by the army and the state bureaucracy (supported by the bourgeoisie). The state apparatus utilized the fascist groups during and after the war to crush the workers' organizations. In contrast to Germany and Italy, however, the fascist groups never held power. The fascists were always subordinated to the army, and when they became an inconvenience for the interests of big capital they were removed without effort.

The Falange (the Spanish fascist party) has been since the early 1950's a political party without any popular base. Its very existence is today restricted to the apparatus of the *sindicatos verticales* and a few top leaders linked to the state apparatus. The Franco regime is, and has been since the end of the civil war, a military bonapartist dictatorship—not fascism.

## The Rebirth of the Workers Movement

Up to the 1950's the living conditions of the working masses were reduced to an animal level. The Spanish workers were subjected to the worst mental and physical oppression in their history. Prostitution, alcoholism, venereal and infectious diseases, suicides and accidents were endemic. The cultural level of the workers, which had reached its high point in the 1930's, sank to an abysmal level reflecting the misery and deprivation of their situation.

Beginning with the early 1950's the working class began to regroup itself. There was tremendous immigration from the countryside. At the end of the civil war 62 percent of the economically active population lived in or directly from the countryside; by 1970 only 30 percent of the population was employed in agriculture. Several million new workers flooded into Madrid and other major centers, and many workers emigrated to industrial countries in Europe as well.

At the same time, in different parts



Frongo reviewing victory parade in 1939.

—have been totally paralyzed for days by strikers, and for the first time in 30 years the army had to be called to suppress the uprisings.

If the proletariat is threatening to overthrow the government with its methods of class struggle, the petty bourgeoisie is also becoming increasingly restive. The most dramatic recent example was the spectacular blowing up of the Prime Minister (Carrero Blanco) in December of last year by petty-bourgeois Basque terrorists. The universities have been unable to attain regular functioning for years. In Madrid the convention of the Bar Association summarily closed down; all the candidates for the Association's leadership withdrew en bloc when the government annulled the candidacy of three of them for political reasons. The government has reacted with wide-ranging repressive measures, rounding up hundreds of Communists, Maoists, "Trotskyists" and nationalists; and in early 1974 it carried out the first death sentence in years against a political prisoner (the garroting of Catalan nationalist/anarchist Puig Antich).

## The Civil War and its Consequences

In 1931 the parties representing the "democratic" petty bourgeoisie, the Basque and Catalan industrialists and the Socialist Party joined together in the Pact of San Sebastián with the goal of overthrowing the monarchy, the defender of Castilian big capital. The proletariat, which in 1917 and 1918 had threatened to topple the monarchy, was moving toward a revolutionary outburst which would overthrow the royalty and with it the entire capitalist system. But the SP collaborated with the republican bourgeoisie to prevent a revolutionary workers government, thereby guaranteeing the continued subjection of the working class to capitalist oppression.

The installation of the bourgeois Republic was unable to stifle the revo-



Aftermath of bomb explosion which killed Spanish Prime Minister Carrero Blanco in December.

rigid bureaucratic apparatus in the unions which gives the Italian and French CP's their power; the SP is no better off. Through numerous strikes, demonstrations, etc., the workers movement has repeatedly overflowed the narrow collaborationist framework which the reformists have tried to impose upon it.

## An Approaching Pre-Revolutionary Situation

Although the political and economic conditions of Portugal are by no means the same as in Spain (the former has been economically depressed for decades, the latter has undergone massive industrialization since 1950), the recent military coup in Lisbon will certainly reinforce those forces in the bourgeoisie who look toward a liberalized "controlled democracy" and/or a bloc

class, the absence of legal mass organizations (unions, parties) of the proletariat, an authoritarian regime, opposition to the government by sections of the bourgeoisie, a "leftist" intelligentsia, etc. But in Spain the working class is numerically far more powerful than in Russia at the turn of the century, and it has gone through the bloody but instructive experience of the Popular Front in the 1930's.

The bonapartist dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, with all its demagogic pretensions and false promises of eternal peace, its enormous bureaucratic and military apparatus, is beginning to crack under continuous blows from the working masses. The class struggle, which the government has tried to hide through despotic maneuvers and ideological sleight-of-hand, is present in every manifestation

# pain

of the industrialized north of Spain increasingly extensive strikes developed. In March 1951 an extensive boycott of public transport was carried out. Shortly thereafter 25,000 Basque workers unleashed the most intense strike since the civil war. In 1958 the entire Asturias and León mining districts halted work as a protest against the dismissal of eight miners. From this point on the police were able to obtain only partial victories, and the workers movement became progressively stronger. The classic industrial areas begin the strikes, but they are soon extended in a disconnected fashion to the rest of the country. With their massive concentration of workers and their political cohesiveness the Asturian mining zones are almost always in the vanguard of the movement.

In 1956, due to the bloody and repeated strikes, state regulation of wages was abolished. Under the Labor Code of 1938, wages were controlled directly by the state, strikes outlawed, the right of union association abolished and the *sindicatos verticales* established instead. Now, however, while the framework of corporatist laws remains, the employers are free to raise wages above the state-decreed minimum.

The continuing strikes and low labor productivity led in 1958 to another change in the Franco labor laws. *Convenios colectivos* ("collective contracts") were introduced which provide for the regulation of wages and working conditions in the framework of the *sindicatos verticales*, after discussions between workers and employers. In case they are unable to reach agreement, the "union" bureaucrats (appointed by the state from the ranks of the fascist party) determine the rates and conditions; there is no appeal.

## Comisiones Obreras

At the beginning of the 1960's in the Madrid metallurgical industry the first *comisiones obreras* (CC.OO.—"workers commissions") were formed. The CC.OO. represent the crystallization of the proletariat's experiences in economic struggle under the Franco regime. Through the convocation of the *convenios colectivos*, groups of workers were able to come together for the first time to exchange ideas; the most combative workers began to distinguish themselves and were, or could be, elected as representatives of the workers in the *sindicatos verticales*. But the commissions and assemblies disappeared when the contract was signed. In 1962 the first permanent workers commission was formed in Madrid, and in the succeeding years this instrument of working-class struggle appeared in other provinces and industries throughout the country.

However, in 1967 the Supreme Court declared the CC.OO. illegal, and in February of this year ten leaders of



Demonstration of the workers commissions.

the workers commissions were condemned to sentences of between nine and 20 years for "attempted illegal association." (These convictions were the result of the government's successful raid on a meeting called to set up, for the first time, a national coordination of *comisiones obreras*.) During the last six years hundreds of militant workers have been blacklisted by employers, placed under police surveillance, jailed and tortured. But the workers commissions continue to spread.

What are the *comisiones obreras*? In June 1966 a pamphlet was published entitled "¿Qué son las comisiones obreras?" which defines the workers commissions as:

"A form of united opposition of all the workers, of whatever belief, political or religious affiliation, against the *sindicatos verticales*....

"The CC.OO. are an independent movement of the working class for the defense of the interests of the working class...."

However, on the other hand, "The CC.OO. are not today and never will be a labor union and much less a political party." The same pamphlet defines the objectives of the workers commissions as:

"1) Daily and immediate struggle in all workplaces...for all the points included in the labor contracts.... hours of work, overtime, firings and discrimination due to age or sex.

"2) Struggle for democratic liberties, especially to obtain trade-union rights.... we fight for full right of association, freedom of assembly, free elections, the right to strike and to a working-class press."

Their protestations to the contrary, the workers commissions function today as illegal trade unions, in open

struggle against the state labor associations (*sindicatos verticales*). In many areas the CC.OO. have grouped together the most militant elements of the Spanish working class. While they contain reformist elements, the actions of the *comisiones obreras* frequently surpass the narrow bounds imposed by the CP. Many groups, including left Catholics, Basque nationalists, Maoists and various groups claiming to be Trotskyist, not only participate in, but have been able to win positions of local leadership in the workers commissions. The Communist Party appears to have the most influence in certain regions, but this influence is far from being hegemonic due to the absence of a solidly entrenched bureaucratic apparatus with its own caste interests and partial independence from mass pressure.

## Limits of Trade Unionism

With the appearance of the workers commissions the class struggle was intensified. From 1962 on a strike wave extended to the entire country: Vascogadas, Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Asturias, Andalucía and Extremadura. In April of 1962 a strike broke out in Asturias which put the whole of Spain in a condition of extreme nervousness. At the "La Nicolasa" pit miners walked out demanding a wage increase, and the strike spread rapidly throughout the mining zone. Sixty thousand workers confronted the local police, and in some zones police stations were attacked. The state concentrated the police in the area but soon the entire north walked out. Movements of solidarity and sympathy strikes occurred in Madrid and even in small industries in the south, as well as in the universities. Despite police violence against the miners in Asturias, the strike held solid and won a limited victory.

Similar militancy and bloody repression have continued to characterize the strikes in recent years. Strikers have been killed by the police in Errandio (1969), Granada (1970), Madrid and Barcelona (1971), El Ferrol (1972) and San Andrés del Besós (1973). This demonstrates dramatically the need for armed defense of the picket lines. Likewise national coordination, both of strikes and of the workers commissions, is another burning need of the workers movement. But particularly in a brutal anti-labor dictatorship such as Franco's, it is not possible to emancipate the working class solely by more militant and coordinated trade-union struggle. It is necessary to elevate the struggle to the level of revolutionary socialist politics.

The lack of any political experience during thirty years of military dictator-

ship is certainly one of the factors explaining why until now virtually all the strikes have been limited to economic demands. Most important, however, is the question of leadership. The Stalinists consciously hold back the workers from taking up the political struggle for a proletarian revolution. But neither the pro-Peking Stalinists—the PCI, the FRAP, etc.—nor the groups claiming to be Trotskyist (the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria, Liga Comunista and Proletario group) have intervened in the strikes to take them beyond simple economic demands.

As Lenin incessantly pointed out, simple trade unionism does not go beyond the bounds of capitalism; as an ideology it is a means of subjecting the working masses to bourgeois theory and bourgeois rule:

"Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology being developed by the masses of the workers in the process of their movement the only choice is: either bourgeois or socialist ideology.... Hence, to belittle socialist ideology in any way, to deviate from it in the slightest degree means strengthening bourgeois ideology.... the spontaneous development of the labor movement is pure and simple trade unionism.... and trade unionism means the ideological enslavement of the workers to the bourgeoisie." [emphasis in original]

—"What Is To Be Done?"

The reformist CP, of course, does not deny the need for politics—the politics of class collaboration, that is. It argues that "only" monopoly capital has any interest in maintaining the absolutist Franco regime. Consequently it attempts to ally the workers with the "progressive" sectors of the Church, capital and the army in a "broad front" to implant a "new" democracy. With its "Pact for Liberty," Assembly of Catalonia and other popular-front schemes, the CP is preparing the Spanish proletariat for a bloodbath similar to or worse than that of 1936. In the October Revolution the Bolsheviks refused in practice the petty-bourgeois pacifist dreams of the Second International about a peaceful transition to socialism. But this does not seem to affect the Stalinists.

The lack of combativity of the reformist leaders of the CC.OO. has served as a brake upon the workers' militancy. But even had there been militant tactical leadership, to safeguard gains such as wage increases or the reinstatement of fired workers, won through hard-fought strikes, the Spanish working class would have to address the question of state power. None of the leftist forces in Spain has sought to intervene in the crucial class

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## Australian Elections

# Vote Labor! Oust Whitlam!

Reprinted from AUSTRALASIAN SPARTACIST No. 8, May 1974

On May 18 Australians go to the polls in an election precipitated by the small change of parliamentary chicanery, fought over programmes and policies which on neither side have any substantial connection with the aspirations of the masses of Australian workers.... There are times when the dissolution of a bourgeois parliament represents an organic development of a crisis in the bourgeois regime, or is a direct product of the class struggle, such as the recent elections in Britain. The double dissolution [of both houses of Parliament] announced in Canberra on April 11 has more to do with the "normal" manoeuvres of ambitious politicians.

No qualitative defeat for the working masses will result from the election of the Liberals, although they will undoubtedly reverse some mild reforms; and no great leap forward or substantial reforms will flow from a Labor victory. The class struggle is not fought out decisively in the artificial atmosphere of Parliament House; the intermittent teapot squall of parliamentary debate is only its pale reflection. For the proletarian vanguard, the significance of the current elections lies in the forum it provides for revolutionary propaganda, and in the opportunities for combatting the illusions retained by the masses of workers in the bourgeois-democratic framework and in their reformist misleaders.

Because workers look to the ALP [Australian Labor Party] for leadership, and because it is the historically-evolved mass political party of the class, the SL calls for a vote for Labor in the May 18 elections. The ALP remaining in office is a precondition for exposing in practice, as the class struggle intensifies, the dead-end of the current ALP leadership's reformism. But in order to avoid building the authority of the class traitors who now control the ALP, and in order to counterpose clearly before the class the path of revolution, we demand the ouster of Whitlam and the Labor bureaucrats and their replacement by a revolutionary leadership, and a Labor government pledged to expropriate the capitalist class.

... The issues presented to the public as key by the two contenders—inflation and (to use the bourgeois euphemism) "industrial unrest"—reflect key aspects of the current level of class struggle. But the LP-CP [Liberal Party-Country Party coalition] and ALP are only competing with each other to prove to the ruling class who is best suited to administer the capitalist state. While [Liberal Party leader Billy] Snedden makes demagogic appeals to the petty-bourgeoisie, wildly accusing the Labor government of encouraging strikes, refusing to chain the unions, coddling the unemployed, consorting with the deformed workers states in foreign policy, lusting after power for Canberra [the federal capital] over the States, and similar outrages to capitalist or petty-bourgeois conservative shibboleths, Whitlam seeks above all to portray his government as the most "responsible" servant of the bourgeoisie, capable of restraining the workers by backing token concessions, opposing strikes, promoting capitalist industrial development, fighting for greater "productivity" in industry (i.e., a higher rate of exploitation), and excising some of the more glaring warts from the face

of capitalism to prevent it from appearing too ugly to too many.

... Australian workers still overwhelmingly back [Prime Minister Gough] Whitlam's ALP at the polls, and together with [Australian Council of Trade Unions President Bob] Hawke and the ACTU bureaucracy, he has been largely successful in heading off and containing working-class dissatisfaction. But the election in 1972 of a government which workers regarded as representing their interests spurred rising industrial militancy which has now developed into a significant strike wave, as workers instinctively seek to take what they have been denied for so long. Revolutionists must seek to exploit this conflict, which drives the impatient workers in actual struggle against the "respectable" reformists who hope to cling to power by appeasing the bourgeoisie. Strikes have also been fueled by the temporarily favourable conditions for forcing trade-union concessions out of the employers. While limited to trade union demands, and largely an attempt to keep up with inflation, the class militancy is deep-going and sometimes extends beyond the wages struggle to important reforms that Cameron would rather bury in the Arbitration Court. A series of recent strikes have revealed determination and self-reliance. The NSW [New South Wales] power workers have been striking intermittently for a 35 hour week since early 1973. After suffering a setback last October, the power workers have now renewed their strike in the face of virulent slander by the bourgeois press. The oil tank drivers of the Transport Workers Union in Sydney have shown exemplary solidarity against an attempt by the petrol companies to force scab deliveries to Shell Oil customers while Shell drivers were on strike. Postal workers have embarked on a campaign for a 35 hour week, but their leaders have caved in to pressure from Postmaster General Bowen to call off strike action that might "embarrass" the Labor government in the elections. The coal miners have resisted pressure to accept a \$20 wage rise in their award [wage negotiations] campaign and have won a \$25 rise.

The trade-union bureaucracy has responded to the upsurge with a show of militancy, which has sometimes forced them to clash with the Federal Labor government (as with the NSW power workers, who have refused to buckle under and are continuing industrial action in support of their claims, disregarding Labor government pleas to back off for the elections). But their function is typified by the carefully stage-managed sell-out of the Metal Industry award settlement in early April. Whitlam is depending on the labour bureaucracy to keep the workers in line.

The pro-capitalist behaviour of the Whitlamite ALP should come as no surprise.... The ALP programme does talk of the "socialisation objective", but its definition is hedged in by so many qualifications that it is rendered meaningless, and it has remained a dead letter. As *The Australian's* editorial [20 April 1974]... notes,

"It [the Whitlam government] has not nationalised anything, and it has announced no positive plans to nationalise anything.... Mr. Whitlam's appeals last year for the cooperation of leading



Liberal Party leader Snedden debating Labor Prime Minister Whitlam (seated).

Australian businessmen was no flim-flam; he really wants their help."

... The essential reason for the Spartacist League's critical support to the ALP is not the minimal reforms in its programme, but the fact that (though run by the labour bureaucracy) it is the historically-evolved party which expresses the political activity of the workers as a class, firmly tied to their mass organisations, the trade unions. Yet given its leadership and programme, it functions not as a party representing the interests of the workers, but as a bourgeois party, the instrument of agents of the bourgeoisie within the labour movement. Critical support—supporting the workers' party against the open parties of the class enemy, the Liberals and the Country Party—is a tactic to help set the aspirations of the working masses against the treachery of its petty-bourgeois leadership. The ALP is a contradictory phenomenon. It is the duty of revolutionists to sharpen that contradiction in order to resolve the ALP into its two class components, with the ultimate aim of winning the majority of workers to the support of a mass revolutionary vanguard party. Therefore we link the call for a Labor vote to the need to oust Whitlam and his ilk, and for a Labor party pledged not to parliamentary reform but to the expropriation of the capitalist class.

... The SWL [Socialist Workers League, co-thinkers of the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S.], which has never had a serious orientation toward the trade unions, has developed a distinctive style of capitulation to the social-democracy. In 1972, they made it clear that they hoped to play the role of a left pressure on Whitlam, with their highest aspiration being absorption into a new ALP left-wing more in the traditions of classical social-democracy than the pragmatic technocrats among ALP parliamentarians. They made themselves quite explicit:

"The ALP campaign can be a focus for all the mass movements to project their demands to a wider audience... and to pressurise the ALP to take up real questions...."

—election supplement,  
*Direct Action*, November 1972  
(emphasis added)

... This time around, the SWL has begun to throw out even those aspects of formal orthodoxy which it once kept for appearances sake. Dumping their 1972 talk of "nationalisation of transport, industrial and financial institutions without compensation and under workers control", the SWL instead includes among its so-called "socialist policies" the demand,

"... nationalise under workers control and without compensation all corporations which make excessive profits."  
—*Direct Action*, 13 April 1974  
(emphasis added)

So the SWL favours the continuation of "non-excessive" profits! Perhaps

they can explain which profits are not "excessive"!

It is not accidental that the central slogans of the SWL and those of the supposedly "anti-revisionist", "anti-Pabloist" Socialist Labour League (SLL) [Australian subsidiary of Gerry Healy's "International Committee"] are identical: both say, "Keep the Liberals Out, Labor to Power with Socialist Policies". With their sectarian inversion of the SWL's reformist methodology, the SLL mimics the SWL in adapting to parliamentary illusions among the masses—but the SLL manages to take cretinism to extremes.

... The lead article in the 11 April *Workers News* manages to include an amazing number of absurdities. Among them is the following:

"The class struggle has entered a new and decisive stage. What is at stake here is not a swing of the electoral pendulum but the struggle for power."

It is hard to keep track of all the "decisive stages" and "turning points" the SLL has proclaimed over the past few years. But if it were a question of the struggle for power, one can only conclude that the SLL thinks that the Labor Caucus [the ALP parliamentary group] is capable of carrying out an insurrection and smashing the capitalist state:

"... [the SLL demands] that the Labor leadership break completely from its capitalist policies and adopt a full socialist programme to defend the working class and keep the Liberals out for good."

A full socialist programme—the dictatorship of the proletariat—in order to keep the Liberals out of power? There could be no more cretinous parliamentarism than this! Like the SWL, the SLL states its desire to pressure the Labor leadership to the left.... The SWL is more reasonable—they only hope to "pressurise" Whitlam a little to the left.

Two organisations nominally left of the ALP, the CPA [Communist Party of Australia] and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party of Australia (SPA), are standing Senate candidates in the elections....

... Although the reforms advocated by the CPA and SPA go beyond those pushed by Whitlam, they must be regarded as only quantitatively different.... And, unlike the ALP, they do not represent any significant section of the working class. For revolutionists there is nothing to support in these campaigns. Although the CPA and the SPA are part of the workers movement, a vote for them, while not ruled out in principle under all conditions, is wasted....

The CPA and the SPA at present constitute only a distraction from the main task—to break the base of the ALP away from its reformist leadership in the ALP, to the support of a revolutionary programme. The accomplishment of this task, creating a mass-based, Leninist vanguard party, will clear the road for the proletarian revolution in Australia. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Continued from page 1

# Portugal...

himself. Caetano evidently hoped that the inevitable uproar following publication of the book would aid his policy of gradual liberalization and weaken the ultras such as hard-liner Kauiza de Arriaga who had just returned from Mozambique. But these calculations proved to be wrong and Tomás forced his prime minister to make a statement in the National Assembly denouncing all attempts at liberalization.

The actual publisher of Spínola's book was a subsidiary of the CUF trust which reportedly controls more than a tenth of the capital of all Portuguese firms. Marcel Niedergang, writing in *Le Monde*, identified the main poles in the controversy as a "conflict between the economic groups that support a reorientation towards Europe and the Common Market, and those which remain attached to the idea of privileged relations with Portuguese Africa" (reprinted in *Manchester Guardian Weekly*,

27 April). Spínola's flirtations with the Communist and Socialist Party leaders since the coup are an intimate part of this "reorientation." It is significant that shortly after returning to Lisbon the exiled SP leader Mario Soares took off on a tour of European capitals pleading for economic aid to the now "democratic" Portugal from Common Market countries.

## Independence for Portuguese Colonies!

Key to stabilizing the junta's rule is its ability to avoid military defeat in Africa. Spínola wishes to accomplish this by a constitutional trick, renaming the Portuguese empire a "new republic," and granting the colonial population limited autonomy (popular votes for governor, etc.). The various liberation movements have naturally rejected this fake "commonwealth" as an example of "neo-colonialism." And in any case, Portugal may soon be forced to grant independence to Guinea-Bissau where the rebels led by the PAIGC (African Independence Party of Guinea and Cape Verde) already control a substantial

part of the territory. The territory is small, economically unimportant and has only a few Portuguese settlers. In Angola Spínola may have more success, for the "liberation movement" is militarily weak and divided between the MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) of Agostinho Neto and the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) led by Holden Roberto. Roberto has been repeatedly accused of receiving CIA funds and is, in any case, strongly supported by the rightist Mobutu government of Zaïre (the former Belgian Congo).

The situation in Mozambique is more complicated. The north has a strong implantation of FRELIMO (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique) forces. In the south, the South African government might well invade to prevent a FRELIMO victory or even a sharp liberalization by Portuguese authorities. But the Portuguese bourgeoisie's main interest is to hold on to the coffee and minerals of Angola and the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda just to its north. Without the profits derived from these regions the Lisbon capitalists would be restricted to the economic resources of the poor west coast of the

Iberian peninsula, many of which are already controlled by British interests.

Revolutionaries must resolutely demand independence for all Portuguese colonies. The remark by Karl Marx that a nation which oppresses another cannot itself be free continues to be true today. The tremendous disorganization of Portuguese capitalism which loss of its colonies would engender could greatly aid the struggle of the metropolitan working class. But at the same time, Marxists have no illusions as to the real character of the petty-bourgeois nationalist movements à la PAIGC, FRELIMO, MPLA, etc. Despite occasional vague references to "socialism," these movements aim at the establishment of a "democratic republic" led by "all strata of the population"—i.e., they want to set up their own capitalist states.

## Toward a Portuguese Workers Republic

Those, like the Portuguese Communist Party, who preach confidence in the "democratic officers" must close their eyes to the sordid background of the junta's leaders. Spínola fought as a volunteer with the Franco forces in the Spanish Civil War and then accompanied the German army in the siege of Leningrad during World War II. He immediately volunteered for service in Africa when the guerrilla wars broke out in 1960-61 and is the author of "pacification" practices which involve total annihilation of the population of zones under rebel control. The assassination of PAIGC leader Amílcar Cabral in 1973 took place while Spínola was governor-general and military commander in Guinea-Bissau. This aspiring DeGaulle is far from the liberal the Stalinists and bourgeois press make him out to be.

In Portugal during these crucial weeks it is important to sharply counter the reformist Communist Party and its class-collaborationist politics in the unions and the universities. Against the popular-front CP slogan "the people united will never be defeated" (coined by the now-defeated "Popular Unity" coalition in Chile), Marxists must explain that the working class can rely only on its own forces, that the solution is not "new" democracy but socialist revolution. ■

Continued from page 2

# ...Fremont

and Putnam point out that at the time they opposed the motion on the grounds that the unions must clean up their own house rather than calling in others to do it, just as they oppose the government intervention to which such reliance on outsiders leads.

In order to provide a left cover for the Brotherhood in the election, the Caucus' "radical" supporters put forward a series of resolutions in the name of the Brotherhood, including a number of supportable demands such as Spanish translations of all union materials, free child care and maternity leave for women members and fighting to raise the wages of foreign auto workers in order to combat runaway shops. However, the real leaders of the Brotherhood showed their decreasing appreciation of this group by freezing its supporters off their slate entirely, thereby rendering their resolutions abstract.

So loyal is this cheering squad to its bureaucratic "allies" that it reportedly expunged from its resolutions all mention of opposition to Woodcock's call for quotas on foreign auto imports—a reactionary attack on foreign auto workers that the Brotherhood bureaucrats support. Furthermore, when Fujino and Putnam put forward their resolution calling for class-struggle politics going beyond simple impeachment, all elements of the

Brotherhood were reportedly so horrified that they withdrew even their own mild pro-impeachment resolution! This is the meaning of the kind of "united front" advocated by groups like the Maoist October League, a group which has never retracted its initial enthralling over the Brotherhood.

The presence of the Militant slate had an effect on other political tendencies in the Local as well. Local 1364 is one of the few places where the Trade Union Alliance for a Labor Party (TUALP), described as "the trade union arm of the Workers League," actually has a supporter, Tom Cagle. Despite heavy coverage as a TUALP activist in the *Bulletin*, organ of the pseudo-Trotskyist WL, Cagle not only did not run in the election, but refused to support Fujino and Putnam or their resolutions for strikes against layoffs and a labor party despite his repeatedly declared agreement with their program.

Supporters of the *Bay Area Worker* (a regional paper backed by the Revolutionary Union) calling themselves the Concerned Rank and Filers of Local 1364 also dropped into inactivity after having announced one candidate. Although he never put forward any campaign material, their candidate had

been active in the Employed/Unemployed Committee. This committee stands on a program which objectively accepts unemployment, seeking only soup-line palliatives for the unemployed in place of a class-struggle program.

The Committee for a Militant UAW conducted an active campaign, attempting to use the opportunity provided by the election to explain as completely as possible the class-struggle program of the group. Its literature called for union control of hiring and upgrading to end discrimination, nationalization of the auto and energy industries under workers control without compensation and a government "of, by and for the workers."

Furthermore, the Committee's quick response to the threat of court-ordered closure of the voting demonstrated the kind of leadership in action required in order to actually mobilize union membership behind a class-struggle program. For the militants of the CMUAW, fighting for their program means more than just mouthing a few "militant" phrases to be dropped once they get into office. Regardless of the outcome of this election, their performance in it bodes well for the future. ■

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# ...Spain

battles to raise demands leading toward a political movement under proletarian leadership confronting the bonapartist dictatorship: the urgent demands for independent legal trade unions, for the right of political association and freedom of the press and for the right to strike (demands which are supported even by sections of the bourgeoisie) must be infused into the strikes themselves, not just restricted to paper programs.

To give the strikes a political perspective would soon require repulsing attacks by the police, Guardia Civil, army, etc. (as all major strikes in Spain do in any case). Thus it is crucial to prepare armed self-defense of the picket lines, under the control of democratically elected strike committees, which can function as organs of the proletariat as the situation approaches dual power.

The struggle to deepen the strike movements requires the injection of an explicitly political element with a clear anti-capitalist thrust. Not relying upon the "progressive" bourgeoisie to lead the fight for democratic liberties, but understanding that a unified working class struggling for power in its own right will win over the support of many sectors of the peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie, the workers movement must advance the perspective of a workers government, the only real alternative to the bonapartist military dictatorship. ■

Presenting...

# The Impeachment Rally Follies

"The Watergate crisis" has been largely confined to the top circles of the American ruling class. It was caused by Nixon's use against respectable bourgeois politicians of methods normally reserved for reds, black radicals and union militants. In contrast to the issues of black rights and the Vietnam War, the Watergate crisis has not polarized American society at the base or even generated mass protest activity. While tens of millions of Americans despise Richard Nixon and want to get rid of him, they don't believe it is necessary to do anything to bring that about, apart from voting against the Republican in any available election. The general popular attitude toward the Watergate affair most close-

the Patty Hearst Brigade in honor of the latest counter-culture heroine. Folksinger Phil Ochs rewrote one of his old antiwar songs to deal with Watergate, not even bothering to write a new one. The Communist Party's youth group, the Young Workers Liberation League, added color to the occasion with their cobalt blue uniform blouses.

Although the rally was mainly organized by two ostensibly socialist tendencies—the RU and CP—one would, as usual, never know it from the speakers. The demonstrators were addressed either by heads of front groups (like the CP's favorite, the ubiquitous Beulah Sanders of the National Welfare Rights Organization) or left notables like Dave

without streakers. So several members of the Patty Hearst Brigade duly ran naked through the crowd.

But the high point of the day was a brawl between the Attica Brigade and Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF), a bizarre amalgam of revisionist "Trotskyism" and Third-World Maoism. The Attica Brigade had announced a "militant action" and marched off to do its thing at the Justice Department. Never a group to resist a "militant action," YAWF marched off after them. The "militant action" led to rocks being thrown at the cops, who promptly charged. Unfortunately for the retreating Attica Brigade, however, YAWF continued to

WV PHOTO



Impeachment rally in Washington, April 27.

ly resembles that of Roman spectators watching a particularly repellent group of barbarian chieftains being ripped apart by wild animals.

(Such a passive attitude is not an accident. With everyone from Southern conservative Sam Ervin to the Communist Party and the Maoists proclaiming impeachment as the answer to Watergate, it is hardly surprising that the American public is inclined to sit back and let Congress settle everything.)

It was predictable that come spring some "left" group would try to foment a "mass impeachment movement" modeled on the late, great antiwar movement, whose lack of success in ending the war can be testified to by any South Vietnamese peasant. The right-Maoist Revolutionary Union (RU) has risen to the occasion through a "Throw the Bum Out" campaign of its student group, the Attica Brigade. (The Socialist Workers Party of NPAC fame, in contrast, has been too busy pushing its "socialist answer to Watergate"—attacking Nixon through court suits—to organize anything of consequence lately.) After a brief sit-in at the Statue of Liberty, the Attica Brigade organized its first "mass action" in Washington on April 27.

## Antiwar Graffiti

At this point, a demonstration in front of Congress demanding that it impeach Nixon has about as much political purpose as a demonstration before Democratic Party Headquarters demanding support for holding elections next November. The evident irrelevancy of an impeachment rally reflected itself both in the small size, perhaps 6,000, and in a ho-hum carnival atmosphere at the April 27 events.

The rally resembled a parody of a fourth-rate antiwar demonstration circa 1969—virtually a conscious exercise in nostalgia. The Yippies (remember them?) made a comeback playing

Dellinger, whose main qualification for addressing rallies is that he represents nobody but himself. The speakers had the difficult task of presenting impeachment as a radical demand and a blow against the many-sided oppressiveness of American society. However, they proved up to the occasion, spewing forth endless political idiocies full of sound and fury but signifying nothing.

Dolores Huerta of the United Farm Workers spent most of her speech denouncing the American people for "vast ignorance" and "racism" in voting for Nixon—in short, a retroactive campaign speech for McGovern. Dellinger intoned, "we are going to impeach Nixon and keep right on moving" to "return the American system to the American people," a system which "must develop faith in the people." Sanders was singing a feminist tune that afternoon: "If we had a woman in office I believe we would not have the trouble we have today." And Herbert X. Blyden of the Attica Defense Committee spoke darkly of a "long, hot summer" (during which the cops will again gun down hundreds of unarmed black youth, as happened in the 1967 ghetto riots?), counterposing to impeachment the following course of action: "you have to do what has to be done."

The actual political content of the rally was captured by the RU slogan, "Throw the Bum Out"—tough-guyism for impeachment. This is exactly the same demand being made by George Wallace, Henry Jackson and Ted Kennedy. Not one speaker even called for the obvious relevant democratic demand—an immediate presidential election. And of course not one called for a break with the liberal wing of the Democratic Party and the building of a workers party.

## Streakers and Brawlers

No such rally would be complete

march forward. So the Attica Brigaders were trapped between YAWF and the police, which led to their being badly mauled by the cops.

The incident is an object lesson in the need for a genuine united front on such occasions, involving joint preparations and close tactical coordination. When the bruised Attica Brigade finally got back to the rally point, it denounced YAWF for objectively aiding the cops; YAWF counter-denounced the Attica Brigade for cowardice in the face of the enemy. At this point fights flared between members of the two groups. The brawl petered out as YAWF announced it had recovered an Attica Brigade banner from the battle of the Justice Department and magnanimously offered to send it back to them in the mail.

For Immediate Presidential Elections!  
For a Workers Candidate!

That the majority of American people wants the repulsive liar and criminal Nixon removed from office is a good thing—certainly better than if they didn't. However, his replacement by the equally conservative, anti-labor Gerald Ford as the result of a congressional impeachment trial would hardly be a major advance in the class struggle. Impeachment is not enough! The working class must organize to settle accounts with Nixon and his class for their real crimes against humanity. The only position for a revolutionary socialist on Watergate is to call for labor action (including, if necessary, a general strike) to force immediate presidential elections and to run a union-based candidate on a program opposed to both capitalist parties. For a left group to agitate for impeachment now (like the CP, RU, et al.) is simply to do donkey work for the Democrats and useless donkey work at that. ■

Continued from page 5

## ...UFW

and caused the arrest and brutalization of thousands of farm workers.

### The Last Round?

Chavez' lack of a class-struggle strategy has made it relatively easy for the Teamster pressure campaign to neutralize even the liberal Democrats, whom Chavez favors as "allies." Recently the Detroit IBT threatened a strike by the city's 650 garbage truck drivers if liberal Democrat Mayor Coleman Young declared a "grapes boycott day" as requested by Cesar Chavez. Young, a personal friend and supporter of Chavez, ceded to his Teamster political supporters' demand that he take no stand, not even a symbolic one, in support of the UFW.

The UFW let Young off the hook and negated its own case with anti-labor statements that could only serve to alienate the rank-and-file Teamsters to whom the UFW should be appealing over the heads of their leadership. UFW spokesman Sam Baca charged that "by succumbing to this kind of coercion, the mayor is setting a dangerous precedent. Will the people of Detroit be threatened with the denial of a service for which they pay taxes every time the elected officials of this city make a decision the Teamsters do not approve?" (*Detroit Free Press*, 9 March 1974). Identical arguments could be used to crush a general strike in support of the farm workers!

George Meany's failure to provide strike funds to the UFW, instead advocating piddling, pass-the-hat contributions from individual unions, coincides with an escalation in the Teamster/grower/government assault on the UFW. Because of the low wages of farm workers and the dwindling membership of the union, a strike fund is crucial to UFW success.

Furthermore, legislation is currently in preparation to allow the reinstatement of the bracero program—which provides for the importation of up to 500,000 Mexican nationals, inevitably to be used as strikebreakers. In fact it was only with the elimination of the bracero program in 1964 that farm workers were able to successfully organize at all. The growers continue to lobby for legislation that would destroy the UFW, including outlawing "unfair" strikes, i.e., those at harvest time!

Militant unionists, while calling for

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Labor contractor's bus which plunged into a ditch in January leaving 28 dead.

full citizenship rights for all foreign workers in the U.S. and opposing all laws to deport or fine foreign workers (such as the Rodino-Kennedy bill), must oppose the bracero program or any other form of importing contract labor which limits the right to organize, seek higher wages or change jobs freely. Recognizing the need to count only on our own forces, labor and socialist militants do not call on the government to deport scabs, but instead deal with them through vigorous defense of the picket lines, unionization of agricultural workers in Mexico (many of whom produce for the U.S. market in any case). Ultimately, scab-herding must be beaten by incorporating the scabs/victims in the common struggle.

Farm workers must recognize that the UFW's battle will be won by strikes in the fields and by solidarity action by the rest of the labor movement (especially hot-cargoes), not by moral witness in front of supermarkets. The strikes around this year's grape har-

vest in California's valleys may well be the battles which will determine once and for all whether the UFW is to survive as a trade-union organization. The UFW needs a leadership that will make use of farm workers' militancy and desire to struggle in their own interests, with a strategy and politics that can win. Instead of attempting to ingratiate itself with the bosses' Democratic Party, such a leadership would reject anti-communism, "respectability," pacifism and prostration before bourgeois legality, and instead call for and organize all-out struggle for the mobilization of the entire labor movement against the growers and their capitalist government. Teamsters out of the fields! Hot-cargo scab products! For a state-wide general strike in defense of the UFW! For armed defense of the picket lines! Nationalize the fields under workers control! Oust the bureaucrats! For a workers party based on the trade unions! For a workers government! ■

## Demonstration Protests Haitian Deportations



Supporters of the Spartacist League march in April 27 demonstration protesting deportation of Haitian refugees from the U.S. The protest action drew more than 200 participants, including numerous Haitians, supporters of various socialist organizations and trade-union militants. A particular urgency is given the demonstrations by the dragnet raids carried out by the U.S. Immigration Service in the New York area earlier in the month to round up anyone who "appears to be" an undocumented Haitian. At the same time, in Texas and Miami more than 130 Haitians are being held in "preventive detention." Altogether, throughout the U.S., more than 440 refugees from the brutally repressive Duvalier dictatorship have been denied asylum and ordered deported by the Nixon government.

Among the trade unionists present were representatives of the Militant Solidarity Committee at Mahwah, N.J., Ford with signs in French proclaiming "Stop the Deportations" and "Full Citizenship Rights for All Foreign Workers." SL signs included the slogans "For a Trotskyist Party in Haiti" and "Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International."

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## ...Steelworkers

were helping Abel and the companies shelve the right to strike for another six years, steel workers were finding they very much needed the right to strike in two localities in which both the companies and their courts and government were being as brutal as ever. In Nashville, striking members of Local 4802 were harassed by restrictive court orders, scabs and cops, and in a company town in Michigan, open warfare is in progress because of company union-busting. In the April 1974 *Steel Labor*, right next to the article praising the anti-labor judge's defense of the no-strike pact, we find the following:

"Amid Dow Chemical Co. safety posters and billboards declaring 'Life is Fragile,' Steelworkers from the 5,300-member Midland, Mich., Local 12705 in the second day of their strike were confronted by more than 100 state police who bloodied them with riot sticks, made mass arrests and herded others into a rental 'U-Haul' for the county jail."

What *Steel Labor* doesn't mention is that there have also been clashes with Sheriff's deputies... who belong to a unit of the Steelworkers!

### Leadership the Real Question

It is not ENA or some other bogey but control of the union by a reformist bureaucracy that is key. In its struggle against ENA, the NSRFC makes itself completely indistinguishable from the liberal bureaucrats like Sadlowski of District 31 (Chicago) who are snapping around Abel's feet. (The CP gave obvious back-handed support to Sadlowski in the last District elections—which, incidentally, are being reviewed in court, like so many other things!). The Sadlowskis, in turn, are no different from liberal bureaucrats running many unions which have the right to strike.

There is very little difference in real conditions or degree of workers democracy among these unions. The recently announced steel contract is remarkably similar to the last UAW contract. It has the same paltry 3 percent yearly raise sugar-coated for good first impressions by a cost-of-living "roll-in" (addition of previous COL gains to the base rate in the first year); a virtually identical minuscule increase in the inadequate rate of computation of the cost of living; and a similar sellout on probation for new hires. The UAW got larger pensions, but Abel obtained the principle of "inflation adjustment" on pensions.

To the CP, which is interested in finding excuses for its orientation toward liberal bureaucrats like Wood-

cock, it is important to find distinctions where none exist. Wanting to avoid annoying Woodcock—since he is an ally of the liberal bourgeois politicians—the CP was nowhere to be found during the struggle over the last UAW contract and later gave "critical support" to the sellout. Since Abel is an ally of right-wing liberals such as the anti-communist Jackson, Woodcock's contract must somehow be made to seem better than Abel's—so the UAW's bigger pension is cited (*Daily World*, 18 April). As far as democracy goes, how can the UAW with its vicious red-baiting and gross manipulation of the contract vote last year be considered qualitatively different from Abel's "representative democracy" and compulsory arbitration? The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party reflects the same tone of seeing the liberal UAW as somehow better:

"In all cases the terms [of the steel contract] lag behind those negotiated last Fall by the United Auto Workers."

—Militant, 26 April

This is pure hogwash and a reflection of the SWP's abysmal ignorance of the real conditions facing U.S. industrial workers today.

Unlike the CP, which gives political support to both liberal bourgeois politicians and liberal trade-union bureaucrats on the basis of distinctions that don't really exist, revolutionists must put forward their own, class-struggle program in the unions. Blocking with centrists and reformists in specific actions against specific betrayals of the bureaucracy, such as ENA, should not be confused with political support.

For the CP, there is no program other than replacing Nixon or Abel with a slicker version of the same thing: a McGovern or a Woodcock. Revolutionists, however, begin with the need to replace the reformist bureaucracy with class-struggle leadership, and the capitalist ruling class with the working class in power. In the unions, this means uniting all the workers in the struggle to make the employers pay for discrimination rather than supporting court-inspired, anti-union redivisions of the same pie—for jobs for all through a shorter workweek at no loss in pay; union control of hiring and promotion on a strict first-come first-served basis; company-paid recruitment and training programs and an end to all government intervention in the labor movement. On the basis of such a working-class program, caucuses should be built to struggle to replace the Abels and Woodcocks with a new class-struggle leadership rather than putting in some slick-talking fakery who call for higher wages, union democracy and everything else any self-respecting business unionist claims to favor—as long as he is out of office. The struggle is also political; a truly militant union leadership would have to break with the capitalist parties and build a workers party to fight for a workers government. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Abel and Courts Shaft Steelworkers

Union militants with illusions in the willingness of the employers' courts to combat racial discrimination have just been handed a hard lesson, courtesy of the Abel leadership of the Steelworkers union. A year ago Abel surrendered the steel workers' right to strike, without so much as a membership referendum over this historic betrayal. Now the USWA bureaucracy has chalked up another slick fait accompli for the membership: an April 15 Washington, D.C., district court decision which effectively absolves the steel companies from all responsibility for their decades of discriminatory treatment of women, black and other minority workers.

In steel, black workers have been kept segregated into the hottest, dirtiest and most dangerous work through the departmental seniority system, which allowed no transfers, or transfers in which the worker started at the bottom in another department, with loss of pay and seniority. Since the late 1960's this system has come under increasingly heavy attack, many workers demanding plant-wide seniority. With the union leadership refusing to fight for this demand, black workers have been enticed by liberals into placing their hopes in court suits under Title Seven of the Civil Rights Act—suits in which the union usually is charged as well as the company.

These suits began to make some headway in the courts in 1971. Court rulings have led to some improvements for blacks in some locations, such as the Bethlehem Steel plant in Lackawanna, New York or U.S. Steel's Fairfield, Alabama works, but only by instituting various forms of reverse favoritism. These court-ordered "reforms" have the dual effect of heading off the development of revolutionary

permanently. The April 15 ruling—a product of months of backroom maneuvering between the companies, the union and various government agencies—is national in scope and provides for token back-wage payments for victims of racial discrimination.

The record total of \$30.9 million in damages actually works out to an average of only \$400 to \$800 per individual worker, when the actual amount due should be computed in thousands, not hundreds. In order to claim even this, the worker must sign a waiver against any future court action on his part, thus ensuring an end to claims. Like most of the previous local decisions, the new arrangement establishes quotas for new hiring and gives special privileges to black transferees instead of uniform plant-wide seniority. And again the union is held liable for part of the back-pay awards.

The way in which the deal was put over is the crowning touch. On the basis of prior arrangement, the Labor Department, Justice Department and the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) sued the companies and the union on behalf of all the black workers who had been discriminated against. The companies and the union, of course, instantly agreed to the terms which they had jointly cooked up beforehand. This made the government a party to the deal between the companies and the union, so that its agencies are now obligated to enter any future Title Seven suits (by workers who refuse the token back-pay award) on the side of the companies!

More important, the rug has been pulled out from under any internal union struggle for plant-wide seniority, since the union is now legally bound to the present arrangement, without the union membership's having had any say.

pay awards, which could have been used to break the union financially. The main point, however, is the increasing government dictation of terms to the workers—the inevitable result of relying on the courts to "impartially" settle disputes between labor and capital. Suits to right the wrongs of the companies create illusions in the courts, which exist to protect the property, profits and other "rights" of the companies.

The Abel bureaucracy uses the courts to cement its collusion with the racist companies. Militant steel workers, however, must recognize that a suit against an employer, undertaken without illusions as part of a strategy of class struggle, is at best a secondary, although sometimes desirable, tactic. The real struggle is to unite the workers around a militant pro-

Unionists for Action and Democracy, a pan-union group supported by the CP, enthused over the court experience because Abel was exposed in the witness chair for his gross ignorance and bureaucratic functioning. For *Labor Today*, it was really the "rank and file," not capitalist state power, dominating the court:

"...Abel seemed to recognize that he was making admissions that would look bad to steel workers and he began making speeches about the 1971 contract, maybe 'the greatest contract' in the history of any labor negotiations. The steel worker audience hooted with laughter."

Not surprisingly, the judge had a better idea of what was really going on. Explicitly defending the ENA as "an evolutionary step forward in labor relations," he ruled arguments of de-



Abel (left) and company representative announce ENA no-strike pact last year.

gram for the labor movement, to oust the Abel bureaucracy and its policies of insensitivity to racial injustice. Central to such a program is an understanding of the class nature of the state and its courts. Those like the CP who advocate court suits against the union itself are fundamentally no different from the class-collaborationist Abel bureaucracy.

### No-Strike ENA Upheld

Only two weeks prior to the "anti-discrimination" ruling, another court action in early April had upheld Abel's no-strike "Experimental Negotiating Agreement" (ENA). Thirty-five steel workers, supported by the NSRFC and CP, had sued the companies and the union to overturn ENA and also provide for membership ratification of contracts, which has never been a right in the Steelworkers. Abel had rammed through the ENA in supremely undemocratic fashion: even the International executive board was kept in the dark until the last minute, and the critical passage by the Basic Steel Industry Conference was based on a flawed copy of the terms! The court ruled to uphold the ENA, just in time for Abel to announce a new contract which extended the "experimental" no-strike pledge until 1980.

Despite the court's ruling upholding the ENA on all counts, *Labor Today* (March 1974), monthly organ of Trade

mocracy irrelevant and concluded:

"No one, and especially no one with roots in the Pittsburgh area, belittles the right to strike; brave men died to win it. No one discounts their sacrifice. But it is symbolic of the changes wrought by time that this dispute is being resolved in a court of law, rather than recourse to violence and recrimination which characterized labor relations in the recent past."

—quoted in *Steel Labor*, April 1974

One wonders how the NSRFC supporters in court must have felt, having asked a capitalist jurist (which side was he on when the 'brave men died' in Pittsburgh?) to make this ruling. Did they actually expect the courts to hand over historic rights to the workers without a fight? No; they were conducting a cynical, opportunist maneuver, a maneuver which backfired dangerously. By detouring the struggle against ENA into the courts, they helped give Abel a needed breathing space and a legal prop. Opposition to ENA had been mounting; ten locals denounced it, petitions were gathered, etc. (see *WV* No. 38, 15 February 1974). Now, even in the unlikely event of a successful appeal, the new regular contract has replaced the original ENA deal with a similar no-strike pledge for the following three years (covering the next negotiations in 1977 and extending until 1980).

In the meantime, while the courts

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Cops confront strikers at Midland, Michigan, Dow Chemical plant.

class consciousness among discontented black workers by fostering reliance on the government and of heightening racial tensions and reinforcing white racism. Thus the Lackawanna decision, which gave rate-retention and limited plant-wide seniority rights to black transferees but not to whites, was followed immediately by the creation of a reactionary "Rights for Whites" group in the plant. The May 1973 Fairfield decision went further in that the judge ordered a sweeping restructuring of the lines of seniority, virtually rewriting the contract in the courtroom. But again rate-retention was only for black transferees, and the workers were made to pay half the back pay awards through a tax on the union!

### New Ruling: Bureaucratic Deal

After the Fairfield decision, and with a contract approaching, the companies were anxious for a scheme for piecing off black workers cheaply and

Naturally, the agreement is being hailed in the bourgeois press as a model of "voluntary compliance" with the "affirmative action" requirement of the Civil Rights Act.

J.P. Cannon once remarked that it is better to call for something you want and not get it than to call for something you don't want and get it. The latter is ever the fate of opportunists. Groups in the Steelworkers union such as the National Steel Rank and File Committee (NSRFC), supported by the reformist Communist Party, had called for the implementation of the Fairfield decision throughout the industry. Yet the CP and its union friends are none too pleased with the present outcome. "A Cheap Deal," declares the CP's George Morris (*Daily World*, 23 April 1974), trying to make a distinction between the "good" Fairfield decision and the present decree—conveniently ignoring key aspects of the Fairfield ruling: its deliberately racially divisive effect and the union's being held partially liable for the back-