

## Impeachment Means Ford in the White House...

# For New Elections and A Workers' Candidate!

MAY 18—The question has come down to whether Nixon will be impeached (an event which can be an exploitable gold mine for the Democrats) or resign (thereby getting the Republicans off the hook). Innumerable pious words to the contrary, the political forces pushing for impeachment (much less those calling for Nixon's resignation) are in no sense motivated by concern to protect democratic rights from the abuses of government power. Rather, Nixon's continuation in office is a serious obstacle to the smooth functioning of American imperialism—a fact now recognized by all sections of the ruling class. The latest dispute between the Democratic and Republican leaderships over impeachment vs. resignation only demonstrates how thoroughly the whole Watergate crisis is dominated by cheap partisan politicking.

A serious campaign to protect elementary democratic rights, so blatantly violated by the Nixon administration, would not consist of replacing

him with the ex-FBI agent Gerald Ford. Rather it would seek to check and dismantle the repressive apparatus of the state. All government wiretapping should be outlawed and all political dossiers destroyed. The secret political police (FBI, CIA and other intelligence agencies) should be abolished. The standing army and its officer corps should be dissolved. Simply to mention such a program is to show how little the impeachment campaign has to do with civil liberties and democratic government, even from a bourgeois liberal standpoint.

### "Clean-Minded" President Talks Dirty

After the Saturday Night Massacre (the firing of Special Watergate Prosecutor Cox, Attorney General Richardson's resignation) last October and the subsequent string of unprecedented Republican electoral defeats, Nixon's

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WV PHOTO



Nixon (right) and cronies Rebozo and Abplanalp (left).

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## Political Turmoil in West Europe—

# Brandt Falls

BERLIN, May 18—Looking superficially at the European political scene in recent weeks one could get the impression that chance is the dominant factor. In Britain Harold Wilson's two-month-old Labour government (the oldest of a major Common Market country at present!) won the recent elections primarily due to Tory Prime Minister Heath's irrational belief that defeating the miners' strike was worth plunging the economy into chaos. Pompidou's death suddenly ended 15 years of Gaullist rule in France. And now Germany's Willy Brandt has been finished off by spies and rumors.

In fact, deeper forces are at work. Although affected less by the Arab oil boycott/price offensive than any other Western state, German capitalism is suffering from sharpening internal contradictions. Consumer prices have gone up 7.6 percent in the last year while wholesale prices shot up at a 12.8 percent rate, indicating even higher inflation in the future. Unemployment, long a negligible factor in the land of the *Wirtschaftswunder* (economic miracle), stood at 560,000 in March. Heretofore docile foreign workers showed menacing signs of militancy in last year's August strikes in the Rhineland. And increasing dissat-



J.H. DARCHINGER

Spy Guillaume (left) and Brandt.

isfaction among German workers, particularly the young, is reflected in polarization inside Brandt's Social Democratic Party (SPD).

### Bourgeoisie Dumps Willy

Worried about the fragility of the economy, the bourgeoisie has been searching for a "strong man" who will take on the unions and hold down inflation by freezing wages. Lately Brandt has had little to offer the ruling class of the Federal Republic

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## Support NYC Anti-Discrimination Bill

# Full Rights for Homosexuals!

In the face of a recession, runaway inflation and the imminent impeachment of the President of the United States, one would not expect a local edict banning discrimination against homosexuals to generate serious political conflict at present. The normal procedure—as with laws against racial and sex discrimination—would be to pass the legislation and then violate it in practice. Thus the fact that the New York City homosexual equal rights bill (Intro 2) has produced active opposition from powerful organizations demonstrates how easily backward social attitudes, even on marginal questions, can become rallying points for political reaction.

Predictably, the main force behind the anti-homosexual campaign is the world's foremost purveyor of reactionary ideology, the Roman Catholic church hierarchy. Anxious to defend the sacred patriarchal family, church fathers are focusing on preventing homosexuals from teaching school children. An editorial in the *Catholic News* (25 April), official paper of the New York Archdiocese, states: "Homosexuality is an increasing threat to sound family life in our city today... we are equally opposed to forcing on others who consider homosexual practice gravely immoral, close or influential relationships that could harm persons in their formative years."

Also playing a leading part in opposing the anti-discrimination bill is the leadership of the Uniformed Fire Officers Association, which appears more interested in protecting the Fire Department's macho image than in defending the real interests of working firemen: "If passed, Intro 2 would permit a small segment of the NYC community who are afflicted with homosexual tendencies and who are otherwise sodomites, perverts and deviates to live and work where they choose" (*Fire Officers News Bulletin*, 23 April).

Anti-homosexual prejudice is one of the strongest reactionary attitudes within the working class, particularly (but by no means only) among workers from Latin backgrounds and even among those who consider themselves communists. (It is significant that a nationalist demagogue like Perón thinks that the most damaging charge he can raise against Marxism is to link it to homosexuality.) Historically the left wing of the American labor movement has refused to touch the homosexual question so as not to antagonize backward workers. The Stalinists go even further and label homosexuality a "capitalist sickness"; in Stalinist-ruled countries homosexuals are subject to diverse forms of persecution as "undesirables" and "deviates" (see "Left-Wing Puritanism," *RMC Newsletter* No. 7, April 1971). Yet it is clear that by failing to fight anti-homosexual prejudices these ostensible socialists are in fact giving direct aid to reactionary forces such as the Catholic church.

As a result of the campaign by the church hierarchy and UFOA leadership, passage of Intro 2 is now doubtful. Since a trade union is playing a leading role in opposing the bill, it is particularly urgent that the workers movement speak out firmly for the rights of homosexuals at this time. We call upon the New York City labor movement to support the bill banning discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing and public accommodations.

# Papal/Fascist Anti-Divorce Drive Defeated in Italy

MAY 16—In a two-day national referendum, Italy's first since 1946, Italians voted earlier this week by a margin of three to two to retain the country's three-year-old law permitting divorce. In this Roman Catholic country of chronic unemployment and a resulting shrinking job market for women, anti-divorce forces counted on Italian women to repeal the divorce law. They particularly looked to the two million "white widows" of the destitute deep South who fear being abandoned by their husbands who have gone elsewhere in western Europe to look for work. Italian women, who represent a 1.7 million majority of the electorate, were decisive in the referendum—voting not for, but *against* repeal and for their own rights! Even in southern Italy the pro-divorce vote was heavy.

The very conservative divorce law first went into effect in December 1970. It provides that a judge can terminate a marriage after a separation of five to seven years, depending on circumstances, or in instances in which one party has been sentenced for a grave crime. Almost immediately after the law's enactment conservative elements began a campaign to repeal it.

The vote result was a major defeat for the church hierarchy and the Christian Democrats, who head Italy's coalition government and have dominated Italian politics since World War II. This defeat will heighten tensions within the weakened CDP (many of its supporters had opposed the party's anti-divorce stance). It will undoubtedly topple Premier Mariano Rumor's government—his fifth since taking office last July—and could produce a split in the party. Contributing to the prob-



Campaigning for legalized abortion in Italy. CP opposes this democratic right.

ability of the government's collapse is Italy's soaring inflation, now at an annual rate of 20 percent.

The divorce battle has already split the coalition government. The other two members of the government—the Socialists and Social Democrats—opposed repeal, as did the Republicans, who have no ministers but support the government in parliament. Also opposing repeal were the Communist Party, Italy's second largest political force, and the Liberals, an anti-communist conservative group. On the other side, Pope Paul VI publicly lauded the church hierarchy for its anti-divorce stand.

The Christian Democrats' only ally in their anti-divorce campaign—aside from the Church—was Italy's fascist party, the Italian Social Movement (MSI). The bulk of the Christian Democratic Party fought the divorce law as the beginning of "permissiveness" which would lead to the "horrors" of sexual promiscuity, legalized abortion, drugs and pornography. But the right-wing Christian Democrats joined with the fascists to turn the whole campaign into an anti-communist crusade. Indicative was the fact that the only city which recorded a heavy "yes" vote (for repeal of the divorce statute) was Naples, a stronghold of the monarchists and fascists.

Despite the openly reactionary character of the anti-divorce campaign, the Communist Party was noticeably embarrassed by the whole business. First of all, it worried over the possibility of an internal split, fearing many of its rank-and-file women members would violate its instructions to vote against repeal of the law. Most importantly, the CP did not like finding itself in opposition to the Christian Democrats with whom the CP has for some time been trying to work out a deal in order to enter the coalition government (*New York Times*, 21 January). Last fall, Leonilde Iotti—a Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and widow of Palmiro Togliatti, leader of the CP until his death in 1964—and current CP head Enrico Berlinguer made statements that they would be available for talks with the Christian Democrats to amend—i.e., make even more stringent—Italy's divorce law!

For fear of endangering the possibility of class collaboration with the Catholic CDP, the Communist Party has not spoken out against the Vatican for years. Last fall it even went so far as to take a public stand *against* the simple democratic right of legalized abortion. At a conference of the Union of Italian Women, the Union's leadership offered a proposal demanding that the present legal ban on abor-



Pope Paul VI

SPECCHIO



Italian CP head Berlinguer

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## Maoists Bloc with Rightist Parties

# Balaguer "Wins" Rigged Dominican Elections

Joaquín Balaguer, president of the Dominican Republic since defeating liberal Juan Bosch shortly after the U.S. invasion of 1965, re-elected himself to a third successive term on May 16. Balaguer was virtually unopposed as three opposition groups withdrew from the race shortly before the election date, charging the government with fraud.

When it became apparent that the main opposition group, a five-party popular front called the Acuerdo de Santiago (Santiago Agreement), posed a challenge to his re-election, Balaguer took steps to ensure victory. With complete mock seriousness, the Central Electoral Board simply ruled that voters could cast ballots at any of the country's 5,000 polling booths. With no registration control, this meant that government supporters could vote at as many polling stations as they could travel to in one day! The Acuerdo de

Santiago withdrew its candidate as did two smaller slates.

### Acuerdo de Santiago vs. Bloque de Dignidad Nacional

The Acuerdo had originally been part of a larger coalition, the Bloque de Dignidad Nacional (National Dignity Bloc), united primarily around opposition to Balaguer's re-election. The Bloque was set up last fall at the initiative of recently returned exile Juan Bosch, historic leader of the left-bourgeois Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD).

However, shortly after the December convention of the opposition coalition, a split occurred within the PRD over Bosch's proposal to turn the PRD into a cadre party. Bosch's proposal was rejected by the bulk of the PRD leadership under José Peña Gomez, and Bosch left to form a new party, the PLD (Dominican Liberation Party), taking over the PRD's offices in the process.

The incensed PRD declared that it would refuse to sit down with "criminals who steal offices" and pulled out of the Bloque, taking with it the PRSC (Christian Democrats), the Partido Quisqueyano Demócrata (PQD—extreme right-wing militarists led by General Elías Wessin y Wessin) and the several-thousand-member Maoist MPD (Dominican People's Movement). One of the MPD's main arguments for siding with the PRD against Bosch was that only communists could have a cadre party; a bourgeois cadre party was utopian!

The Acuerdo de Santiago quickly proceeded to trim the program of the Bloque de Dignidad Nacional which had been adopted at the December meeting. Dropped were the key demands of nationalization of Gulf and Western, a large U.S. sugar company which dominates the Dominican economy, and nationalization of large landholdings. The justification given was that "the people" hadn't really supported the Programa de Dignidad Nacional, but had gone along with it only because the popular Bosch had written it.

The real reason behind the program changes was the Acuerdo's desire to get elected at any price. First, given the country's status as a bonafide sugar republic, it feared that the U.S. government would never permit a group calling for nationalization of the leading U.S.-owned monopoly to take power. Second, the PQD, PRSC and the other conservative parties didn't support the program of the Bloque. As for nationalization of land, the Acuerdo's presidential candidate, Antonio Guzmán, is himself a wealthy cattle rancher!

An indication of the truly rotten nature of the Acuerdo de Santiago bloc was provided by a truckers' strike in the town of Santiago the week before the elections. The truckers demanded the freeing of political prisoners, among whom are leaders of the MPD, one of the parties of the Acuerdo. However, the following day PRD leader Peña Gomez denounced the strike as inopportune (*El Nacional*, 9 May).

### Maoists in Competing Popular Fronts

Most damning is the participation of the self-proclaimed Marxists of the Movimiento Popular Dominicano in this



Joaquín Balaguer

rotten coalition. The MPD claims to stand for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but its opportunist appetites have caused it to swallow its own program. As in all popular fronts between workers parties and bourgeois parties, it is capitalist politics that dominate the Acuerdo de Santiago. In true Stalinist fashion the MPD justifies such opportunism with the reformist theory of a "two-stage" revolution, in the first stage of which you can apparently ally with anyone in order to get into power.

The MPD theoretically has a position against participating in elections—a headline in its January 1974 *Lucha* (New York) reads "Electoralism Leads to Political Suicide"—but here they are in an electoral bloc with right-wing militarists! (Moreover, their ally General Wessin y Wessin was used by the U.S. Marines to subdue rebels during the 1965 uprising!)

The Maoists and Castroists of the Bloque de Dignidad Nacional (which as such ran no candidate in the election) correctly criticize the Acuerdo for its maneuverings to appease U.S. imperialists and the landowners. But, although much smaller, the Bloque is qualitatively no different. Here we have the same lineup—on the left the Maoists (Voz Proletaria and Bandera Roja) and the Castroist Linea Roja 1J4, aligned with the bourgeois PLD of Juan Bosch and three right-wing groups, the GIAT, UCN and MCN.

While to the left of the Acuerdo, the program of the Bloque is necessarily bourgeois, for the bourgeois members of the bloc could not support anything else without committing class suicide. Calling for such things as nationalization of the mines and land reform, it is similar to the program of the Allende government in Chile. Despite some radical-sounding demands in its program, by refusing to break with capitalism Allende's "Popular Unity" coalition wound up simply paving the way for last September's rightist coup and the ensuing repression of the entire Chilean left.

The Bloque's land reform program is typically bourgeois: it would not even nationalize capitalist farms; the "feudal" landowners who would lose part of their land would be compensated by the peasants and the state. The program explicitly states that this is necessary in order to promote capitalist development in the countryside! Other sections pledge non-interference with the order

of promotions in the military hierarchy, call for raising the salaries of middle-level officers and include the minimal demand of 44 hours' work for 48 hours' pay (*Programa para un gobierno de dignidad nacional*, 13 December 1973).

### Anti-Continuista Opportunism

The Bloque de Dignidad Nacional weeps over the loss of its former members at the same time that it criticizes them for their accommodation to the imperialists! According to the Bloque, only a unity of all the "revolutionary left" (which here includes the bourgeoisie and extreme rightists!) could successfully prevent "continuismo" (Balaguer is a former Trujillo aide) and set up a "government of national dignity" which would respect democratic freedoms and bring better living conditions.

In a polemic against the Acuerdo the Bloque writes:

"We were, and we are firmly convinced that in present conditions it is necessary to create a broad front which gathers the broad masses of people brutalized by the regime and brings together under its banner the immense discontent which reigns in the country under the Balaguer regime in order to direct them toward the fight against the election farce and the re-election of Balaguer, and for a democratic government which accomplishes the Program of National Dignity."

—"Acuerdo de Santiago: Un paso derechista," 25 January 1974

Thus for the Bloque de Dignidad Nacional, just as for the Acuerdo de Santiago, the objective is simply to oust Balaguer from office. In order to do this it is willing to unite with any group, no matter of what political stripe.

The popular-front tactics of the Dominican left are most criminal in light of the fact that it is repeating the same mistakes made during the 1965 Santo Domingo civil war. In the midst of an armed uprising of Dominican workers and peasants the left did nothing to raise a revolutionary program among the masses. It insisted on limiting a revolutionary situation to bourgeois-democratic demands and called on the masses to look to the leadership of the anti-communist Juan Bosch. Instrumental in cementing the 1965 unity with Bosch's PRD was the same MPD (which today blocs with General Wessin y Wessin). After months of bloodshed the masses voted in Balaguer, who campaigned on a program of "order" and "unity."

Having learned nothing from the past, the Dominican Maoists and Castroists now seek simply to get rid of Balaguer, whose victory they prepared in 1965, and install another bourgeois president. By forming a political bloc with sections of the bourgeoisie these Marxists are paving the way for their own destruction and liquidating their potential as a revolutionary force in the Dominican Republic. In Chile this came by way of a military coup. But given the reactionary character of the bourgeois parties involved in the Acuerdo and the Bloque, if either of these popular-front groupings ever achieves power, it could be the "popular" government of "national dignity" itself which wipes out its former left allies. ■

the Lateran treaties on church-state relations in the 1948 constitution. These treaties left regulation of marriage in the hands of the Catholic church, thereby giving rise to the current battle.

Divorce is a democratic right, as are abortion and equal pay for equal work. Revolutionary socialists fully support such demands. But to achieve real social liberation for women and eliminate all forms of sexual discrimination it is necessary to go beyond legal equality within the narrow framework of capitalism.

The right to divorce must be supplemented by child support from the state if it is to provide tangible protection for working women. To be accessible to the most exploited, abortion and other forms of birth control, prenatal and post-natal care and other medical services must be provided free on demand. Beyond formal equality in hiring and advancement it is necessary to incorporate the bulk of women into social labor, which requires putting an end to unemployment and providing services such as free 24-hour child-care facilities which point toward the complete socialization of household labor.

Only the integration of the struggle for women's liberation into the general proletarian struggle for socialist revolution can solve these questions. And this, in turn, requires a relentless struggle for a communist, i.e., Trotskyist, program of transitional demands which go beyond the limits of the capitalist system and include the perspective of a workers government to eliminate the bourgeois state.

The CP reformists seek the opposite—to restrict the struggle to what is acceptable to their (hoped-for or actual) bourgeois/reactionary allies. The Italian Communist Party's opposition to abortion and its faint-hearted support for divorce, like the U.S. CP's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, are dramatic proof that in their hunger for opportunist alliances (with the Catholic church, with reactionary labor bureaucrats) the Stalinists willingly sacrifice not only socialism but even the most elementary democratic rights. ■

## Auto Workers Fight Layoffs

Sunday, 9 June  
7:30 p.m.

Trinity Methodist Church  
13100 Woodward Avenue

SPEAKER:

David Phillips

Member of the Committee to Fight  
Layoffs of UAW Local 1364,  
Fremont, California

DETROIT



# Rightist Takeover Looms in Ceylon

by Edmund Samarakkody

## Special Report from Ceylon

COLOMBO, May 2—A sharp change has taken place in the political situation here. The rightist forces led by the older and more conservative bourgeois party (United National Party) have now begun to mobilise with the perspective of ending the coalition government [of Mrs. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party, along with the reformist LSSP and CP] and smashing the working-class movement and the left. In the context of the coalitionist and reformist politics of the working-class leaders, it means that the working class and the left parties face an unprecedentedly grave situation, unless these forces are able to speedily reorient themselves, forge a new revolutionary leadership and march forward for the revolutionary conquest of power. The alternatives of proletarian revolution or the triumph of counterrevolution are sharply and urgently posed on the Ceylon scene today.

The LSSP [Lanka Sama Samaja Party] betrayers and their Stalinist friends have so well practised class collaboration through the coalition government during the last four years—weakening seriously the working class and politically disorienting it—that the forces of capitalist reaction have gathered strength and are already taking the first steps (in the perspective of a confrontation to end the coalition and smash the working class and the left) towards the realisation of their new solution: a naked capitalist dictatorship.

The UNP and its allies in the parliamentary opposition—the Federal Party (Tamil bourgeois), Tamil Congress (Tamil bourgeois), Ceylon Workers Congress (Thondaman) and some independent rightist parliamentarians—stepped up their opposition to the coalition government with the deepening of the crisis of the economy and the worsening of the situation of the masses. Since the beginning of the year these rightist parties, backed by the "Dawasa" and "Sun" group of newspapers, have been campaigning for civil disobedience as a protest against the acts

ernment's decision to prolong the life of parliament for seven years.

Pursuing these aims the rightist forces led by the UNP announced at the beginning of April that they would hold 150 public meetings on April 21. The government's reaction to this was to ban all these meetings. And when the UNP leader, Jayawardena, indicated that they would defy the ban, the government imposed a twenty-four hour curfew for April 21 and also sealed the printing press of the "Dawasa" and "Sun" group of newspapers.

There was speculation whether in this context the government would allow May Day meetings. There was however only a partial ban of meetings on May Day. Only one trade-union meeting of the UNP was permitted. But the UNP and its allies broke this ban and held several meetings; the police did not interfere. The LSSP forces were the largest in the coalition's May Day demonstration.

The government's explanation for its actions in relation to the campaigning of the rightists is that fascist forces have raised their head and were planning to organise violence for the overthrow of the coalition government. Prime Minister Bandaranaike has used this theme to call upon the masses to come to the support of the government. Her claim was that the rightist forces are against the government because they have been adversely affected by the government's "progressive measures": land ceilings, house ceilings, income ceilings and severe taxation imposed on the capitalists.

All pro-government trade-union leaders have issued statements raising the spectre of "fascist offensive," expressing readiness to take to the streets with arms in hand to fight these forces. In this regard it is the LSSP that is most vociferous on the need to mobilise the working-class forces to meet this threat from the rightists. It is reported that the LSSP Political Bureau has taken a decision to "form workers militias."

The threat from the rightist forces that have begun to mobilise is indeed real. But there is no "fascist" movement today. Revolution-

perspective of the capitalist class is for a naked capitalist dictatorship.

But why has the capitalist class decided to have an end of coalition? Is there a real threat to capitalist rule in the immediate period ahead? Have there been mass mobilisations around an anti-capitalist orientation?

Unlike the cases of Indonesia and Chile, there has not been during this four-year coalition regime anything resembling mass mobilisations. And while working-class strikes, including strikes in important branches of the economy, have occurred, they have not led to any sort of confrontation with the capitalist class and the government.

However, the very success of the

outset, empty of content even in the sphere of small concessions. The working class was cheated. While striking direct blows at the workers' living standards, the coalition government dangled before them the so-called anti-capitalist measures—"income ceilings," "land ceilings"—which were only measures in the interest of capitalist development.

Thus it is now a question of settling the accounts between the forces of capitalism and the forces of the working class and toilers.

While the LSSP and CP leaders are shouting empty slogans of smashing "the fascists and reactionary forces and of ending capitalism under the leadership of the working class," they are lining up



Rebels captured in Anuradhapura during 1971 Sinhalese youth uprising.

coalition government in maintaining class peace (both through coalition politics and even more through the use of and show of strength of the armed forces) has cracked the base of the coalition regime. Bandaranaike's politics—a "rightful place" for Buddhism, dethroning the English language and enthroning Sinhalese as the only state language [to the exclusion of Tamil, the language of Ceylon's oppressed Indian-derived minority], and the LSSP and CP promises of "socialism"—are of no avail in keeping the working class and the masses loyal in the camp of the coalition; on the contrary, the masses have now broken with the coalition government by reason of the systematic blow struck against their living standards, the hopelessness of their present state and their possible fate from the further continuation of the government. The capitalist class can well see that the coalition has outlived its usefulness.

The capitalist class (including the "national bourgeoisie" that was backing this government) can clearly see that the LSSP and CP leaders can no longer control the working class. The working class has come to the end of its tether. The pro-coalition trade-union leaders were compelled, however hypocritically, to take decisions to launch a general strike to compel the government to grant their wage demands. And although the government reacted to these mobilisations by granting a wage increase, the workers have already expressed their disappointment in that regard. Big class battles are in the offing. But the capitalist class and the government have reached the limit of any concessions on the wage front. It is thus that the organised working class is a terrible roadblock to capitalist class rule.

The other side of the picture is that the working class needs, from a different direction, to end the coalition. In fact what the working-class leaders in the coalition government got from this alliance was, from the

behind the bourgeois leader, Mrs. Bandaranaike, who has made it abundantly clear that she looks to the armed force of the bourgeois state to resist the forces of capitalist reaction! The LSSP and CP leaders have already raised their familiar and treacherous slogans: "unity of the progressive forces," "Anti-Fascist Peoples Front," etc.

While most of the "left" groups have echoed the LSSP and the Stalinists, Tampoe [head of the LSSP(R), Ceylon section of the "United Secretariat"] has not even made mention of the real threat from the forces of capitalist reaction. He has implicitly taken a position of unconcern whether it is the coalition or the UNP-led forces that will control state power. Tampoe's remedy is "rebuilding the left movement!"

It is only the Revolutionary Workers Party that has undertaken a Marxist analysis of the present development. Understanding the danger of the mobilisation of the rightist forces for the smashing of the working class and the left parties, we have explained how the coalition government, with the active assistance of the LSSP and CP, helped the growth of capitalist reaction and are still continuing to do so. We have explained that the struggle against the forces of capitalist reaction cannot be undertaken by a capitalist coalition government; such a struggle can end in the defeat of the reactionary forces only on the condition that it is an anti-capitalist struggle under the leadership of the working class, a struggle that will mobilise all the forces of the working class and the toilers on the basis of an anti-capitalist program. There cannot be any question of political support to the coalition government. Concretely, we have called for the independent organisation of the working class to counter the growing forces of capitalist reaction, and have insisted on the imperative need to break from the coalition government. ■



Ceylon premier S. Bandaranaike meeting with Chou En-lai.

and omissions of the government that have produced the increasing misery of the masses: increase of food prices, increase of the price of kerosene and petrol, increase in bus and train fares, increase in the prices of all commodities produced by government-owned factories and enterprises, etc. These parties have also demanded that the government go to the polls at the end of the fifth year (next year), as against the gov-

any Marxists are only too familiar with the cries of "fascism" raised by the Stalinists and other reformists to keep the masses chained to the chariot wheels of the so-called progressive bourgeoisie. Of course the ground is fertile for the growth of a fascist movement, and the further evolution of the present rightist opposition movement could well lead to the formation of such currents. In any event, the need and



# Portuguese CP Enters Spínola Government

MAY 17—General Antônio de Spínola, head of the military junta that has ruled Portugal since the coup d'état on April 25, yesterday installed an interim government with two ministers from the Communist Party. Also included in the cabinet are three Socialist ministers and representatives of liberal bourgeois parties. As part of an agreement with the major parties, Spínola assumed the office of president, and elections for a constituent assembly were put off for one year.

In the situation of general popular euphoria that followed the overthrow of the bonapartist civilian dictatorship that dominated Portugal for the last 45 years, the military junta has been understandably reluctant to test its strength by ordering a general crackdown on the left. It has permitted the formation of more than 44 unions (re-

agement not made. Plants belonging to Firestone, International Telephone and Telegraph and Timex were struck and occupied by workers demanding big wage rises as well as the removal of at least part of the old management accused of complicity with the 'fascists' of the old regime."

—New York Times, 17 May

It does not take much imagination to see that a revolutionary situation could easily arise as such strikes spread throughout the country.

The inclusion of the PCP in the government is an integral part of Spínola's preparations for a crackdown on the left. The Stalinists were, of course, given no real power: Cunhal is minister without portfolio and Pacheco Gonçalves, a CP union leader, was made minister of labor, from which position he will be responsible for ordering workers to abandon their strikes. The

the demand for immediate elections to a constituent assembly could win massive support from a population which has never had the chance to vote in free elections. It would also directly threaten the power of the military, the main guarantor (along with the Stalinists) of bourgeois rule in Portugal today.

While vigorously championing this democratic demand, revolutionary Trotskyists must also raise proletarian slogans in order to polarize the confused political situation on clear class lines. In addition to demanding substantial wage increases, the unions must demand workers' control of (not "participation" in) the important state enterprises. Militant workers such as those now occupying the CUF shipyards could certainly be won to support a call for immediate expropriation (under workers control and without compensation) of trustified industry. This can be organized by the formation of democratically elected factory committees, subject to immediate recall by the ranks, during the course of sit-down strikes. Such committees, drawn together in a central council of strike and factory committees, would represent a germ of workers power from which soviets could be formed in opposition to

stop hiding behind the military and bourgeois liberals and seize power directly. Its refusal to do so will go a long way toward convincing the masses of the need to build a truly bolshevik vanguard party.

The Stalinists are evidently counting on support from sections of the "Movement of the Armed Forces" which organized the coup (and a member of which is now defense minister). The existence of dissident "democratic" and even "socialist" captains and colonels can be an important obstacle to a rapid restabilization of Portuguese capitalism; but the workers must not place their trust in or rely on a small group of middle-level officers. Now is the time to organize soldiers' and sailors' committees, a move which would profoundly disrupt the armed forces, and to agitate for an immediate end to the African wars!

The CP claims to support immediate independence for Portugal's colonies; however, the new government is committed only to negotiations and a vague pledge of self-determination. Moreover, despite their presence in the government, the Stalinists have made it clear that they do not demand that Portugal leave NATO, nor even that it break

Portuguese CP leader Cunhal received warm welcome.



placing the state-run corporatist unions of the Salazar period) and a national labor federation. The generals also permitted two May Day celebrations. The larger drew some 800,000 in a march to a stadium to hear Alvaro Cunhal, head of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), and Socialist Party leader Mario Soares speak. A smaller demonstration called by the Maoist MRPP (Movement for the Reorganization of the Proletarian Party) drew 10,000, mostly youth, including many Africans and a number of sailors.

But the generals will not permit such freedom of expression and organization for much longer. Already the innumerable factory and office meetings are leading to strikes and demands for higher wages, workers' participation in management and an immediate end to the war in Africa. On May 3 militant telephone workers removed the old managers of the state enterprise, accusing them of corruption and complicity in the crimes of the Salazarist regime. These "mini-revolutions" rapidly spread to other public enterprises (railways, airlines, post office, electricity). And as the interim government was being installed yesterday, thousands of workers were going out on strike:

"Ignoring a plea for order and work by Gen. Antônio de Spínola, who took office yesterday as President, 8,500 workers of Lisbon's biggest shipyard, Lisnav, occupied the sprawling plant along the Tagus River last night with demands for a doubling of wages and for worker control.

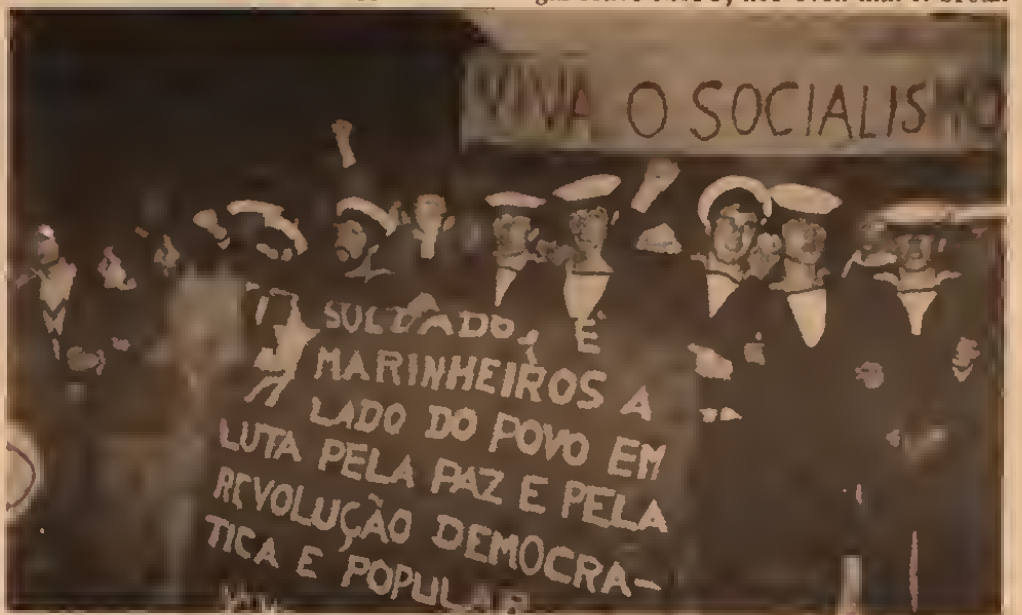
"It was a revolutionary scene, with banners proclaiming 'we want to own our country' and 'down with useless lackeys. Up with the workers.' Hammer-and-sickle symbols were sprayed over executive elevators leading to offices where Portugal's biggest industrial and commercial combine, the Companhia Uniao Fabril, held sway up to yesterday. "Hundreds of thousands of textile workers threatened to stop work if wages were not doubled and changes in man-

Stalinists are more than willing to assist in this effort.

While negotiations for the new government were going on the junta issued warnings to public employees that if they did not stop removing top officials the military would move against the workers (*New York Times*, 5 and 6 May). The CP, in response, called on its members to remain orderly, avoid acts of revenge and be vigilant in the face of "adventurists" (*Triunfo* [Madrid], 11 May). There can be little doubt what the PCP meant by its May Day statement which declared its "readiness to assume necessary responsibilities" in creating an interim government.

With their policies of popular-front governments (with the military and "progressive" bourgeois parties), the Stalinists are attempting to repeat the tragic Chilean experience. Right up to the morning of last September 11, the Chilean CP and Socialists preached to the working class that it must refrain from "adventuristic" acts which would divide the people, such as factory occupations, and place its trust in the "democratic" generals and the Christian Democrats—the very forces that organized the bloody coup. Even the slogans are the same: "O povo unido, jamais será vencido" ("the people united will never be defeated") chant the reformists. Pinochet proved this wrong in 1973, Franco in 1939. It is for proletarian unity, around their class program and vanguard party, not bogus "popular" unity that the workers must struggle.

Portugal is teetering on the brink of a revolutionary crisis, and it is above all the treacherous misleadership of the CP which is barring the way forward for the working class. Marxist revolutionists, in contrast, must seek to extend and organize the workers' militancy into an open challenge to the generals and their bootlickers in the provisional government. For instance



Sailors call for socialism at Maoist May Day rally in Lisbon.

the present bourgeois government.

The CP, now in the government, will do everything possible to retain its current bourgeois respectability, including the most shameless scabbing on every attempt to defend the interests of the masses through labor action. But thousands of Portuguese workers are not yet aware of the counterrevolutionary character of the Stalinists' policies. In a situation where every day lost represents a defeat for the revolution, Portuguese Trotskyists must do everything possible to expose the real policies of these fake-communist lackeys of Spínola & Co. As the Bolsheviks demanded that Kerensky, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries take power in the spring of 1917, a Trotskyist party would call on the reformist PCP to

the Iberian Pact, a military pact with Franco Spain (*Triunfo*, 11 May)!

While the commitment of CP leaders to such policies of class collaboration is total, this is by no means true of its ranks and the rest of the working class. By struggling for immediate elections to a constituent assembly, for the formation of factory committees, for workers control of state enterprises and expropriation (under workers control) of industry, for soldiers' committees, for immediate independence to the colonies and an end to the African wars, and by demanding the CP take power in its own name a revolutionary Trotskyist party can expose the Stalinist demogogy and open the way to proletarian revolution in the Iberian peninsula. ■



Portugal's Spínola

Chile's Pinochet



## Part 2/ The 1948 War

Editor's note: The first part of this article was printed in WV No. 33, 22 November 1973. In the ensuing period the Spartacist League has undertaken internal discussion on the national question as it applies to interpenetrated peoples generally and the Near East in particular. In the course of this discussion we have reviewed our earlier position on the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, which is found in Spartacist No. 11, March-April 1968.

The establishment of the Zionist state of Israel was one of the consequences of the dissolution of the British Empire following World War II. Six years of imperialist war in Europe and the Far East had drained the resources of the leading colonial power to the point of bankruptcy, engendering mounting social crisis in England and setting the colonies aflame with independence struggles.

The British working class demonstrated its "gratitude" for Winston Churchill's "victory" over German imperialism by sweeping him out of office in the 1945 elections. After a generation in opposition the Labour Party, with Clement Attlee as Prime Minister and Ernest Bevin (a right-winger within the party) as Foreign Secretary, crossed over to the government benches on July 17. Bevin soon made clear the new government's intention to fully enforce the 1939 "White Paper" on Palestine, which restricted Jewish immigration. Detention camps were established in Cyprus for captured illegal immigrants and additional British troops were dispatched to police the Palestine Mandate area.

### Battle Over Immigration

During World War II the Hagannah, armed wing of the Jewish Agency, and the Irgun, a rightist Zionist commando group, made a truce with the British. The so-called Stern Gang, which had a reputation as fascists within the Zionist spectrum, split with the Irgun over the truce and continued guerrilla operations throughout the war.

With the end of World War II and Bevin's moves to restrict Jewish immigration to Palestine, the Hagannah and Irgun resumed commando operations. In October 1945 they cut the Palestine railway system in 153 places, totally disrupting traffic. On 20 February 1946 a coordinated attack by the Zionist armed forces hit the Mount Carmel radar station, three RAF airfields (destroying 15 planes) and a multitude of police posts. On June 16, the Hagannah elite force, the Palmach, knocked out all bridges and rail lines that crossed the Palestine border. The British responded by occupying Jewish Agency offices and conducting mass arrests. The Zionists, in turn, retaliated by blowing up British military headquarters in Jerusalem's King David Hotel on July 22, killing 80 English, Arabs and Jews.

As the struggle between the Zionists and the British dragged out during the next two years, the Mandate government ordered mass dragnets and arrests, cordoning off whole cities and placing thousands of suspects in detention camps in Palestine. Additional thousands of "illegal immigrants" were confined in the Cyprus camps. The main conflict centered on this question of immigration from Europe.

The prospective Jewish immigrants were hardly the typical picture of fat,

arrogant, imperialist-bribed colonialists bred on Kipling's "white man's burden." Rather, they were the wretched survivors of the Nazi occupation who were "liberated" by the Allies only to have their concentration camps converted into "displaced persons" camps. At the end of World War II, these camps in West Germany held over 100,000 Jews; but the outbreak of pogroms in Poland and the Balkans during the summer of 1946 swelled the numbers in these camps to a quarter million.

In the United States, the Socialist Workers Party (the Trotskyist Party at that time) campaigned to force the government to drop its racist immigration quota system, which discriminated against Eastern Europeans, in order to permit Jews into the U.S. However, as many scholars have pointed out, "Zionists preferred to see Jewish refugees go to Palestine..." (David Brody, "American Jewry, Refugees and Immigration Restriction," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, June 1956). Far from opposing the discriminatory immigration quotas, Rabbi Wise (a leading Zionist) had testified in 1939 congressional hearings, "I have heard no sane person propose any departure or deviation from existing laws now in force" (*ibid.*). The reasons were obvious: if hundreds of thousands of European Jews came to America, then hopes for a Jewish Palestine would be shattered.

### U.S. Imperialism Replaces Britain

Shortly after World War II there was a sharp recession, especially acute in England, which bottomed at the beginning of 1947. Domestic social/economic crisis suddenly awakened the Labour government to the fact that it could no longer afford to police the British Empire. In the Mandate area England had some 80,000 regular troops and 16,000 policemen, along with the British-trained, British-officered and British-equipped Transjordanian Arab Legion, all of which represented a considerable drain on the budget.

In rapid succession the government announced on January 28 that Britain was leaving Burma, on February 18 that the Palestinian question would be submitted to the UN and on February 20 that His Majesty's troops would pull out of India no later than June 1948. The next day the British ambassador to the U.S. informed Secretary of State Marshall that England could not continue to supply military aid to Greece.

At the time, U.S. corporations owned 47 percent of the oil in the Near East. The oil companies were solicitous of Arab "good will" and hence hostile to the aspirations of the Zionists. Secretary of Defense Forrestal went on a nationwide campaign to whip up an "energy crisis" scare in order to build a lobby against partition. The State Department had a large component of Near East "experts" who were pro-Arab and, moreover, had the ear of Marshall.

Why, then, did the U.S. support partition? The international Zionist lobby was strident; but it was certainly not strong enough to get Truman to support a policy counterposed to U.S. imperialist interests in the region. Truman's desire for the "Jewish vote" in the 1948 elections no doubt played a role as well, though it also was not

decisive. He certainly can have felt no sympathy for the thousands of "displaced persons" in Europe or else he would have opened U.S. borders to them.

Stalin evidently supported partition at this point in the conviction that it would further disintegrate the British presence in the Near East. But while the U.S. was moving in to replace the British, it is doubtful that Truman wished to step up the pace (considering the unrest in France and Italy, not to mention nearby Greece). The main interest of U.S. imperialism in the creation of a Zionist state in Palestine was, rather, as a contributing force to balkanizing the Near East and as a lightning rod to deflect the aroused national and class aspirations of the Arab fellahin and proletariat.

### Partition

When the UN passed the partition resolution on 29 November 1947 there were some 600,000 Jews and 1.2 million Arabs in Palestine. Contrary to the story-book propaganda image of hardy Zionist pioneers hoeing the land on isolated kibbutzim, in fact over half the Jewish population was concentrated in three large cities: 150,000 in Tel Aviv, 100,000 in New Jerusalem and 80,000 in Haifa.

These cities and others were either "mixed" (such as Haifa, which had 70,000 Arab residents) or were adja-



Arab civilians fleeing Haifa following Hagannah attack.

cent to Arab cities (such as the 70,000 Arabs living next door to Tel Aviv in Jaffa). The proposed "Jewish state" had every major city, including the port cities of Haifa and Tel Aviv and the Arab city of Jaffa, except for Jerusalem which was "internationalized." Further, the Zionist state would include the best citrus lands (and was expected to pay the Arab state 4 million pounds yearly in consequence).

At the time partition was announced, the Jews owned only 6 percent of the land in Palestine; under the UN-approved plan they were to get 55 percent of the total area. The Zionist state would encompass 538,000 Jews and 397,000 Arabs, while the Arab state included some 804,000 Arabs and only 10,000 Jews. No wonder the



King Abdullah of Transjordan talking with Arab Legion commander Glubb.

ASSOCIATED PRESS, MAY 13, 1948



# of the Zionist State: A Marxist Analysis



Attack in April 1948.

Zionists rejoiced over partition while the Palestinian Arabs cursed it.

## Inter-Communal Conflict

Immediately following the UN partition vote inter-communal strife intensified sharply. In "mixed" cities sniping went on around the clock. Between cities, supply convoys were regularly ambushed. 50 Jews and 50 Arabs a week died from this irregular warfare. The Grand Mufti called (from Damascus) for a general strike alter the announcement of the UN resolution. But it was totally ineffective as the Zionists lived behind the walled fortress of their closed economy. The Mufti also called upon his "Home Guard," nominally 50,000 strong, to rise up in arms. But the only arms they possessed were ancient firearms of dubious usefulness, and much of their time was taken up by shootouts with other "Guards" who supported effendis antagonistic to the Mufti.

One of the most unfortunate aspects of the inter-communal fighting which followed on the heels of the UN partition vote was that it spread even to the few areas, like the Haifa docks and oil refineries, where there had been a long tradition of common Arab and Jewish class struggle. Christmas was "celebrated" in Palestine in 1947 with an orgy of bomb throwing, sniping and ambushes, especially in Haifa and the "no-man's land" between Jaffa and Tel Aviv, resulting in more than 100 deaths. On December 30, members of the Irgun threw bombs from a passing vehicle into a group of Arab workers standing at the gates of a Haifa oil refinery, killing 6 and wounding 47. Arab workers in the plant then attacked Jewish workers with knives and pick-axes, killing 41 and wounding 15.

## Enter the Arab League

The British-sponsored Arab League met in Cairo from December 12 to 17. While each member state truculently denounced the Zionists and championed the cause of the Palestinians and Arab unity, nonetheless each was interested only in how much of Palestine it might carve out for itself—and in preventing its fellow members from carving out too much.

The meeting was called at the initiative of the Iraqi prime minister Salah Jabr, who was the most radical in his rhetoric and proposals, calling for immediate armed intervention. Jabr knew he was sitting on a volcano of social unrest at home and needed the diversion a "Holy War" against Zionism would bring. But he was too late. Following the publication of a new

defense treaty with Britain on January 16, huge student demonstrations broke out, followed by workers and unemployed taking to the streets. Consequently, throughout the 1948 Arab-Israeli war most of the Iraqi army was tied up in keeping order in Baghdad.

King Abdullah of Transjordan was the sole surviving son of the sheriff of Mecca and dreamed of undoing the historic injustice done to his side of the royal family in the Versailles Treaty. As a first step to reestablishing a Greater Syria under Hashemite rule he was intent on capturing the part of Palestine allotted to the Arabs, especially Jerusalem, the third-ranking "Holy City" of Islam and a suitable site for his throne. Syria, too, may have dreamed of a reborn Greater Syria, yet it had but one poorly equipped division while Abdullah had the crack Arab Legion.

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem quite naturally wanted no regular armies to intervene, especially Abdullah's, for the Hashemite kingdom could only be built at the Mufti's expense. Instead he wanted equipment for his irregulars. It was finally decided to train and equip some 3,000 volunteers, the "Arab Liberation Army," under Fawzi el-Kaukji, a veteran of the guerrilla fighting following the 1936 general strike in Palestine and of the pro-Axis military coup in Iraq in 1941.

Such byzantine negotiations could naturally not ignore the Zionists. In November 1947, prior to the Cairo meeting of the Arab League, Abdullah had already had a secret meeting with Golda Meyerson (Meir) representing the Jewish Agency, in which he confided to her his plans for occupying those parts of Palestine designated for the Arabs, because "we both have a common enemy who will obstruct our plans—the Mufti." Likewise, in January 1948 Kaukji met with a Jewish Agency representative at his headquarters in central Palestine and promised neither to attack the Jews nor to come to the aid of the pro-Mufti Palestinian irregulars. While he broke the former part of his promise, attacking several settlements in the Galilee, he scrupulously kept the second part.

## Flight of the Palestinian Arabs

While the period of December 1947 to March 1948 was largely marked by inter-communal strife and diplomatic negotiating between the Arab states, the dominant aspect of April and early May was a concerted drive by the Zionists to secure their lines of communication and, subsequently, to drive out the Arabs from areas allotted to the Jews under partition. That the Zionists intended at the beginning to carry out such a mass expulsion is doubtful, but they certainly took advantage of the panic which set in among the Arab population.

On April 9 the Irgun launched its notorious massacre at Deir Yassin, killing 254 Arabs, most of them unarmed. The remaining 150 villagers were dumped into trucks and paraded through Jewish sections of Jerusalem. While the Jewish Agency expressed its "disgust" at Deir Yassin in a cable to King Abdullah, nonetheless this atrocity was exploited by the Jewish Agency and the Hagannah to induce terror and flight.

In Haifa on April 22 the Hagannah launched a large-scale assault which overran important government buildings and occupied key sections of the Arab quarters. The Hagannah demanded that Arabs turn over all arms, that all non-Palestinians (Syrians, Iraqis, etc.) be handed over for trial and detention, and recognition of Jewish control over the entire city. Instead of submitting to these onerous terms, the Arab population evacuated the city. Three days later the Irgun launched a well-armed attack on the Arab city of Jaffa. While the Jewish Agency disclaimed respon-



Motorcycle scouts of the Arab Volunteer Armies.

sibility for this attack, when the Irgun disintegrated and its advance was stopped, the Hagannah came to its rescue and 70,000 Arabs had to flee.

Thus, even before the proclamation of the Zionist state, the Palestinian "refugee problem" had been created. More than 300,000 Arabs had fled to exile as a result of Zionist terror, inadequate or non-existent Palestinian leadership and (in some places) exhortations by the "Arab Liberation Army" to clear battle areas around the "mixed cities."

## Proclamation of Israel and the Arab Armies' Invasion

As the last British troops embarked on May 14 the State of Israel was proclaimed by the Jewish Agency leaders. The next day the armies of five Arab states crossed the borders into former Mandate Palestine. It is important to have a clear picture of the military situation at this point in order to judge whether the ensuing struggle was, as the Zionists (and Stalin) claimed, a war of national liberation or, on the contrary, a war of national expansion on the part of Israel.

In the first place, British troops were no longer a factor. This meant that, except in the north around Galilee, the only effective military forces in the former Mandate area were those of the Zionists. The Arab Legion, the main opponent of the Hagannah in the early fighting, had to cross the Jordan River and travel some 80-90 miles before making contact with the Zionist forces around Jerusalem. Thus much of the action in the early days of the 1948 war consisted of the Hagannah expanding the area of its control, filling the vacuum created by the departure of the British.

Secondly, the balance of military forces was roughly even. As of May 15 the Hagannah had mobilized approximately 25,000 regulars, who faced 10,000 Egyptians, 4,500 Arab Legionnaires, 7,000 Syrians, 3,000 Iraqis and 3,000 Lebanese, for a total of 27,500 on the Arab side. The Arab armies were initially better equipped, but the Zionists had the advantage of short lines of communications and tight defense lines in a country the size of Vermont.

Most important of all, however, the Zionist command was (more or less) unified while each Arab army pursued an independent and often contradictory

policy. The final Arab invasion plans had designated Iraqi general Nur ad-Din Mahmud as "Commander of the Regular and Irregular Forces for the Saving of Palestine." He was supposed to lead a coordinated pincer attack in the north combined with blocking maneuvers in the south, with the objective of capturing Haifa. However, on May 13 Abdullah informed the other members of the Arab League that he was to be supreme commander himself and was not interested in Haifa but Jerusalem. Consequently all plans were changed, throwing the Arab armies into chaos, and a superior military strategy was scotched in favor of one that had as its highest objective making Abdullah King of Jerusalem. As he had repeatedly told the Zionists, Abdullah had no interest in occupying the Jewish districts; not once during the war did he attempt to do so.

The actual fighting during the first four weeks of the war (May 15 to June 11) centered on lines of communication with Jerusalem. Because of Zionist military effectiveness, the lack of coordination of the Arab armies and the main Arab contender's exclusive interest in occupying the non-Jewish areas, the physical existence of the Jewish community in Palestine was never in question during the course of the fighting.

After four weeks of fighting the Arab Legion held Latrun, a strategic point blocking the main road from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; however, the Hagannah had managed to bypass the area by building a new road. General Glubb's Legionnaires had also taken Sheikh Jarrah, a village whose only importance was that it was midway between New Jerusalem and Mt. Scopus. And they had occupied the "Old City" of Jerusalem whose significance was purely religious and symbolic. The Iraqi army took Jenin, from where they did not budge for the rest of the war. The Egyptians took three settlements in the Negev. Militarily, the first round was a stand-off.

The UN-imposed four-week truce lasted from June 11 to July 9 and was used by both sides to resupply their forces. The Arab states expanded their troop commitments by 15,000 men. But it was the Zionists who benefitted most from the lull. Reflecting Russian policy, which considered the Israeli struggle a progressive anti-imperialist war of national liberation, Czechoslovakia de-

*continued on page 10*



## The Politics of Cowardice-

# Australian SWL Excludes Spartacists from Public Meetings

Sydney,  
18 October 1973

To the Political Committee,  
The Socialist Workers League,  
Sydney.

Dear Comrades,

At the forum held by the Socialist Workers League-Socialist Youth Alliance in Melbourne on Thursday October 11 about questions of revolutionary politics in Africa, comrade Dave Kuren, a member of your organisation, accused the Spartacist League of lying in a *Workers Vanguard* article on South Africa published in the issue of 28 September 1973. Questioned after the meeting, comrade Kuren cited his source as an article in the April 1973 *International Socialist Review*, which in fact contains nothing to support him.

Your meeting refused to allow comrades of the Spartacist League to reply to the accusation, claiming that our attempt to do so was an intolerable disruption of the meeting. Your comrade's accusation is thus clearly given the status of the organisational line of the SWL-SYA.

We hope you will agree that it is important that the left wing movement conducts the necessary debate among the different tendencies in an honest, principled and orderly way. The Spartacist League has severe differences with your organisation, but we always attempt to abide by the normal rules of order at public meetings held by your organisation. Nevertheless, our politics, and the unity of our members in putting forward these politics, have from time to time caused your organisation some embarrassment. In this the SWL-SYA is not alone, and some tendencies have even attempted to avoid our politics by keeping us out of their meetings. The Socialist Labour League has since February banned us from their public meetings. The Working Women's Group of Melbourne followed suit in April, and the General Meetings of the "Melbourne Women's Liberation Movement" in September. In none of these cases could it be claimed that the Spartacist League had violated the proper procedures for orderly meetings. In each case it was clearly a case of exclusion because of our politics (and because of the disciplined way in which we fight for them). In other words the always unspecific charges that the Spartacist League "disrupts", are but a very shallow cover for the worst kind of anti-communism. We are disturbed that Jamie Doughney, a leading member of your organisation, suggested at the meeting on Africa that the anger of the Spartacist League over the completely

unsupported assertion that it was guilty of lying might be used as an excuse for banning us from your public meetings.

One of the important principles of proletarian politics is, as you must agree, that revolutionaries maintain a strict veracity. The accusation that the Spartacist League has violated this principle is of the utmost gravity. You are now obligated to document and prove to the world that the Spartacist League lied, or to make a public retraction of the accusation in your press.

Comradely,

Bill Logan  
Chairman  
Spartacist League

Sydney  
25 March 1974

The Organiser,  
Socialist Workers League,  
Sydney.

Dear Comrade,

This letter is to challenge the SWL to a public debate on the question of the Middle East. It follows a verbal challenge I made at your public forum on 15 March.

On that occasion comrade Jim Percy said of our challenge: "Put it in writing! Put it in a letter!"

We hope you will contact us to make arrangements for a suitable time, place, chairman, speaking times, etc.

Comradely,

Keith Olerhead,  
Organiser,  
Sydney Local,  
Spartacist League.

[Sydney]  
April 23, 1974

Spartacist League  
Sydney

Dear Comrades,

At a recent meeting of the Political Committee of the Socialist Workers League it was decided to exclude all members of the Spartacist League from all future Direct Action Forums.

We took this action in defence of our democratic right to freely present our views (and allow invited speakers to present their views) free from the deliberate and repeated disruptions of members of your organisation. We point out that it is a violation of workers democracy to disregard the legitimate directions of the chairperson, to shout abuse after the close of a meeting, to attempt to take the floor when not called upon and so on. All these things numerous members of your organisation have been guilty of.

To take just two incidents of Olerhead, one of your members. In the first incident in Melbourne Olerhead leapt to his feet at the close of debate and discussion shrieking—"what is it to be—coffee or communism?" Other Spartacist members backed Olerhead in his behaviour. Olerhead was warned that such behaviour violated our rights and could only be regarded as an attempt to create an atmosphere in which new visitors to the forum would be repelled.

Olerhead repeated this behaviour at a recent forum in Sydney. He jumped up and screamed at the end of the debate at the chair and members of the audience. Your disagreement with our political positions can not in any circumstances justify such behaviour.

We reaffirm here our defence of your rights to participate in the mass movement as we have done in our press. Your repeated violations of our rights will not make us go against this. However we point out to you that others on the left, (mistakenly in our opinion),

seek to curtail your rights because of your blatant disregard for the rights of others.

Fraternally,

Jim Percy  
National Secretary  
Socialist Workers League

Sydney  
3 May 1974

Political Committee,  
Socialist Workers League,  
Sydney.

Dear Comrades,

We acknowledge your letter of 23 April 1974. We protest in the strongest terms against your exclusion of "all members of the Spartacist League" from your public forums as a blatant and disgraceful violation of workers democracy. You have named only two cases, separated by several months, of the alleged "disruption" which you claim gives rise to your action.

It so happens that in each of these cases we had felt it necessary to write you regarding the matters at issue. Neither of our letters, dated 18 October 1973 and 25 March 1974 respectively, have ever been answered.

The first was written after your comrade, Dave Kuren, at a Direct Action Forum in Melbourne on October 11, 1973, accused the Spartacist League of the United States of having lied in a *Workers Vanguard* article. The accusation was without foundation. In a desperate attempt to avoid examination of the charge against our co-thinkers, the chair used his right to control your meeting in order to close it prematurely, and refused to allow members of the SL to reply. Comrade Olerhead made an entirely reasonable protest against this violation of all norms of principled political struggle, which would not have been a "disruption" of the meeting, even if it had been in progress. But your charges are rendered entirely ludicrous by your own account, which admits that the meeting had already been closed!

Our second letter arose out of a forum held by you on 15 March in Sydney. Your comrades repeatedly misrepresented the position of the Spartacist League on the Middle East and after the close of the meeting (during which SL members raised the question from the floor, and SWL speakers had responded at considerably greater length) Comrade Olerhead, Sydney SL Local organiser, challenged your organisation to a debate on the question of the Middle East, in an effort to achieve clarity on the different programmes of the two organisations. Our letter put the debate challenge in writing, as requested by Jim Percy, your National Secretary, at the March 15 forum.

While we have received no replies to these letters, your letter of April 23 bizarrely attempts to find in the events which gave rise to our letters excuses to exclude us from all your public forums! Your attempts to describe a protest at the premature cutting-off of discussion by the chair in your own meeting, and a debate challenge following another orderly meeting, as "violation of our rights", "deliberate and repeated disruptions", and "violations of workers democracy", are simply pathetic.

At none of your forums have we disregarded any legitimate demands of the chair, nor attempted to take the floor unless recognised by the chair. These charges have as little validity as your slander in *Direct Action*, (March 29, 1973, No. 38) that at the Melbourne meeting marking International Women's Day in 1973 SL members "Seized the microphone".

We pointed out in a letter to *Direct Action* "in fact on those occasions on which they spoke they had been recognised by the chair". You refused to publish this letter, consciously condoning and abetting the same kind of slander.

If the specific charges against us in your letter are somewhat less than substantiated, your vague suggestions of other, unstated, charges are simply hot air rather hopelessly intended to cover your political fear of the SL. You fear that unprincipled slander, your chief weapon against us, is proving ineffective. You fear that if we are allowed to attend your forums your misrepresentations of our positions on, say, the Middle East, will become untenable; and you fear that your groundless charges of lying will be successfully challenged. You are simply afraid of open political struggle.

Your contempt of your own membership, particularly that of your youth section, is of long standing. (We documented one egregious example in the April 1974 *Australasian Spartacist*.) You now hasten to "protect" them against an effective criticism of the revisionist politics of your disintegrating "international" in a desperate effort to shore up your stagnant and politically stymied organisation.

These are the real reasons for our exclusion, and not our imaginary disruptions. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that when our Melbourne comrades were informed of your decision by Comrade Steve Painter of the SWL, he made no such specious claim about our behaviour. Your comrade simply said that our attendance was making the forums into too much of a political debate, which was not what they were intended to be. Such honesty is to be commended, though it proves beyond all doubt your bankruptcy.

Another confirmation is your refusal to date to respond to our debate challenge. If in addition to your exclusions you continue to refuse a formal public debate between our two organisations as well, the SWL will stand exposed before the Australian workers movement as the most craven political cowards. In any event, we must insist that in the interests of workers democracy, your wholesale political exclusions be reversed.

Fraternally,

Bill Logan  
(for the Spartacist League)

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# Brandt Falls

in this regard. His diplomatic offensive to establish governmental and economic relations with East Europe (including East Germany) was good business, but the major negotiations are now complete. On the other hand, Brandt's "compromise" settlement of the public workers' strike this February, where he agreed to a 12 percent wage increase, while it was not a victory for the workers, did mean that the corporations have been unable to eliminate inflation by driving down real wages. Brandt's pro-big business Finance Minister (the new Chancellor) Helmut Schmidt called the settlement a "financial and economic calamity" (*New York Times*, 13 May).

In this situation the Guillaume spy affair provided a convenient opportunity for throwing Brandt overboard. The revelation that an East German intelligence officer succeeded in becoming a top personal aide to the head of the West German government, with access to numerous top secrets, meant that somebody's head had to roll. However, the official most responsible happened to be Interior Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who succeeded Walter Scheel as head of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) when Scheel was elected West German president last week. Genscher is personally ambitious and, moreover, support of the FDP is necessary for the coalition government's parliamentary majority. So, as the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* reasoned, since Genscher could not be sacrificed, it had to be Brandt.

In addition to tensions between the SPD and FDP, internal difficulties within the Social Democrats no doubt played a major role in Brandt's decision to step down. According to the liberal weekly *Der Spiegel* (13 May) a key factor was pressure from top SPD leader Herbert Wehner in favor of resignation. Wehner had grown critical of Brandt's indecision in recent months. Worried about the SPD's alarming loss of votes in recent state elections, he and other party leaders apparently felt a shift to the right was in order.

## Brandt as Elder Statesman

Brandt intends to remain as SPD party chairman, from which position he will attempt to play an "integrating" role. Though his image is one of conciliation, it was only in the 1960's that Brandt began to aspire to a Ken-

nedyesque role of mediator between left and right in the SPD. Mayor of West Berlin during the 1950's, the future chancellor gained respectability as the cudgel of the right wing of the Berlin Social Democrats against the left. Together with Wehner he was an architect of the ultra-reformist Bad Godesberg Program in 1958, which declared the SPD to be a "people's party" rather than a workers party.

Another element in Brandt's image is the fact that he was during the 1930's a member of the left social-democratic Socialist Workers Party (SAP). However, at the time Brandt's main contribution in the SAP was, as head of the organization's youth bureau, to lead the fight against the Fourth International by expelling Trotskyists.

## SPD Right Wing in Power

Brandt appears to have been too tired to carry out the fight against the now militant union ranks and left-reformist Young Socialists (Jusos). The new chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, on the other hand, is eager to take on the task demanded by the bourgeoisie and the party leadership. His career, which began in the Hitler Youth during the 1930's, has carried him through the Luftwaffe to chairmanship of the SDS (at the time the obedient youth section of the SPD) to parliament, where he has sat since 1953.

He is considered a "technocrat" and as a leading member of the Social Democrats' right wing he frankly prefers dealing with capitalists like his close friends Ernest Mommsen (the Krupp trust boss) and financier Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (the rightist candidate for French president) to Brandt's crowd of faded "democratic socialist" cronies (most of whom will probably

# Zionists/Arab Nationalists Trade Terrorist Atrocities

amidst of the population they had dispossessed.

Not only is the Israeli ruling class incapable of "cutting off the hands," but the bitter hatred that produces the terrorist politics of desperation can only intensify with each new exchange of atrocities. The Arab and Hebrew worker and peasant masses of the Near East will be forced to pay for their rulers' policies with even more blood than has already flowed.

At the same time, the politics of desperation are also the politics of impotence and of betrayal. Acts of mass terrorism like that at Maalot victimize innocent civilians—undermining, not advancing, the cause of proletarian revolution in the Near East—and should be condemned by revolutionists. This incident is one more indication of the rightward course upon which Nayef Hawatmeh and his "Marxist" DPFLP have embarked toward reconciliation with the bourgeois aspirations of the likes of Yasir Arafat and with the bourgeois colonels and reactionary sheiks who back him.

The shouts for revenge, "Kill the Arabs!"; which have resounded throughout Israel were also heard at a demonstration of 10,000 outside the UN in New York City on May 16.

Arnold Forster, associate director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, who has deplored a recent "increase in soft-core anti-Semitism"—an accusation directed against all those opposed to the Israeli government's expansionist policies—commented to reporters: "The world doesn't care too much about Jews being killed. We must make clear that the world is guilty, that the terrorists are sub-human, mindless savages who must be stamped out." Sub-human? Savages? The Nazis thought the same of the Jews, whom they referred to as *Untermenschen* and "stamped out" by the millions.

The logic of nationalism (whether Arab or Zionist) ultimately reduces itself to genocide. The underlying premise of Israel's bombing reprisals is that one Jewish life is worth 20 Arabs, and furthermore that all Arabs are "sub-human"—if Arab babies must die in order that Israel may live, so be it. But the Zionist state is in no position to succeed in such a strategy.

As *Workers Vanguard* pointed out in March 1973, in response to the Israeli Army's shooting down of a Libyan passenger airliner over the Sinai Peninsula:

"Only the working class—Arab and Hebrew-speaking alike—can transcend this spiral of guilt, fear and revenge through the intersection of the class struggle with the creation of the proletarian vanguard party whose revolutionary Marxist program does indeed uniquely express the most general and historic interests of the working people. For in the real economic and social conditions of life, it is truly only the workers of all lands who have the material basis to unite." ■

# Letter

May 15, 1974

To the Editor:

The May 10 *Workers Vanguard* carried an article on the Fremont UAW elections for convention delegate which contained two inaccuracies. Regarding the 1973 Brotherhood-sponsored motion in the local which required voting machines or outside observers in future elections, you state, "Fujino and Putnam point out that at the time (our emphasis) they opposed the motion on the grounds that the unions must clean up their own house rather than calling in others to do it..." When the issue came up over a year ago, we were against outside observers but did not have occasion to take a public stand against it until later. (See our "Elections Sabotaged" leaflet dated 5/30/74.)

Secondly, while it is true that the Brotherhood Caucus omitted their resolution on impeachment in the campaign literature they handed out on election day, they later said that the omission was unintentional and in fact they did subsequently submit it to the Resolutions Committee. However, they actively opposed our resolution on impeachment which called for a workers political party instead of continued support to the Republicans and Democrats. They also voted against our resolution opposing court action against unions—a position which backfired on them in the recent delegate elections.

In general, we think *Workers Vanguard* coverage of our union accurately reflects the political life of the local. By contrast, no active union members would recognize the local from the descriptions of it found in the pages of *Peoples World* and, in particular the *Bulletin* which covers the TUALP branch here as if it were a mass movement when in fact it is a fiction.

As a postscript, the injunction against the elections was dropped, and we enclose the election returns as well as a copy of our press release about the elections.

Respectfully,  
Joan Putnam  
Darlene Fujino

[According to the enclosure, Fujino received 52 votes and Putnam 48. In a light vote this represented approximately 10 percent of the total.]

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be purged from the new cabinet after a suitable period).

While Schmidt's politics do not in fact differ significantly from those of Brandt (keeping the unions in line while spouting "progressive" rhetoric) he can be expected to go after the leftists with particular vigor. Brandt already started the offensive with a sharp attack on the Jusos at a press conference last month. "The Social Democratic party will not allow itself to be thrown back to the last century's ideas of class warfare," he declared (*New York Times*, 3 April). Purges, which have been projected for some time—and already begun in some areas—can be expected to intensify in coming months.

With the SPD right wing on the warpath against anything that snacks of leftism, revolutionaries must pay particular attention to tendencies within the Jusos which may break to the left from social-democratic reformism. To the extent that such tendencies appear, it will be crucial not to make an opportunist political bloc with confused centrists, but rather to engage in sharp political struggle for the full Trotskyist program. ■

## CORRECTIONS

In the article "Brandt, Union Tops Stage-Managed Public Workers' Strike," *WV* No. 40, 15 March, there were several errors concerning the organizations IKD, KJO-Spartacus and Spartacus-BL, the remnants of the latter two having recently fused to form the Spartacusbund. The IKD split from the German section of the "United Secretariat" of Mandel & Co. in 1969, not 1970 as reported. The split which produced Spartacus-BL occurred in KJO-Spartacus, not the IKD as reported, and took place in 1971 rather than 1972. Moreover, the IKD did not break with Mandel's rejection of the Transitional Program. A picture caption in the same article referred to Interior Minister Genscher as belonging to the SPD; in reality he belongs to the small bourgeois Free Democratic Party which is in coalition with the SPD.

*WV* No. 43, 26 April, reproduced part of a leaflet of the Militant Solidarity Committee of UAW Local 906 at Mahwah, New Jersey. Unfortunately, it was mislabeled as being from the Militant Action Committee.

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# REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE



Continued from page 1

# For New Elections...

chances of surviving were poor indeed. His latest attempt to beat the rap, with yet another "edited" version of the tapes, has totally backfired. In fact, the tapes became the pretext for the Republican leadership to try to escape Nixon's fatal embrace.

The charges arising out of the tapes themselves are not hard proof of Nixon's implication in Watergate crimes (which is obvious in any case), but rather the evidence of vulgarity (!) and his utter cynicism about the niceties of bourgeois legality. The Republicans now demanding his resignation claim to be shocked by the immorality revealed by the tapes. Senate leader Hugh Scott termed the tapes "disgusting, shabby, immoral performances" (*New York Times*, 12 May). One gets the impression that Nixon is supposed to be unworthy of office only because his henchman, Ehrlichman, referred to John Mitchell as "the big enchilada" and he himself allegedly called Sirica a "wop."

While pretending to be shocked by Nixon's language yet asserting that his guilt is not yet proven, Republicans are desperately searching for some kind of device (anything!) to put distance between themselves and the head of their party without going into open revolt. In point of fact, the language on the Watergate transcripts is completely normal in political circles, indeed throughout U.S. society. One can only second Russell Baker's observation that for a group of politicians to dump a president because he talks dirty is like the Malia bumping off the godfather because he doesn't attend church regularly.

However, Nixon's own sanctimoniousness and unctuous hypocrisy do add a touch of irony. Campaigning against Kennedy in 1960, Nixon criti-

cized Truman (and thereby, presumably, Democrats) for the use of profanity:

"I'm very proud that President Eisenhower restored dignity and decency and, frankly, good language to the conduct of the Presidency of the United States. And I only hope that, should I win this election, that I could [see] to it that whenever any mother or father talks to his child, he can look at the man in the White House and say: 'Well, there is a man who maintains the kind of standards personally that I would want my child to follow'."

The ghost of Harry Truman must be having a big laugh over the Watergate transcripts!

## Meany Pushes Jackson/Wallace

It is not often that a government is so completely isolated and its moral bankruptcy so evident. There could be no better time for a working-class political offensive against the administration which froze wages in the midst of rampant inflation, deliberately drove up oil prices, cut thousands off welfare and is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese peasants and workers. However, the Meany-led labor bureaucracy supported Nixon's wage freeze and Vietnam policies. It is not only following the Democratic leadership in seeking to replace Nixon with the arch-conservative, anti-labor Ford, but is actually attempting (so far, successfully) to use the Watergate crisis to move the balance of political power to the right.

The AFL-CIO call for impeachment was partly to help put the skids under Nixon and partly to cover over the fact that just a few years ago, Meany and Co. were ardent backers of his administration. Having issued their call, the labor skates did nothing to bring it about—not so much as a single demonstration—leaving everything in the hands of Congress. As Meany/Woodcock well know, a major labor campaign against Nixon, involving mass demonstrations and work stoppages, would have a powerful tendency to go

Continued from page 7

# 1948 War

livered substantial numbers of arms and an entire airfield. From the U.S. and England the Zionists obtained bombers and fighters.

By the end of the truce period Israel had achieved clear military advantage, and in the ensuing "Ten Day Offensive" it proceeded to maul Kaukji's Arab Liberation Army in the Galilee and capture Ramleh, Lydda and adjacent Arab villages in central Palestine. Wherever the Hagannah advanced into Arab territory the civilian population was expelled and their homes and villages bulldozed and blown up. By the end of October more than 472,000 Arabs had

beyond replacing Nixon with Ford.

The real political activities of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy lately have not centered on forcing impeachment (Meany couldn't care less about that), but on electing the so-called "veto-proof" (i.e., overwhelmingly Democratic) Congress. The end purpose of Meany's present maneuvers is to elect the militaristic, virulently anti-Soviet Henry Jackson in 1976 and re-establish the old Cold War liberal/labor/Dixiecrat coalition. Related to this goal are his efforts to draw the Wallace forces into the mainstream of the Democratic Party.

## For New Elections and a Labor Candidate

The response to Watergate by most of the ostensibly revolutionary left has simply been to tail alter the liberal Democratic and Meanyite backers of impeachment—except for Tim Wohlforth's Workers League which recently joined the Republicans in pushing for resignation (*Bulletin*, 7 May). Had the left responded instead by demanding that the unions force immediate presidential elections and field a labor candidate, this would have been both a serious attack on the Meany/Abel/Woodcock bureaucracy and on the structural bonapartism built into American bourgeois "democracy." Such a demand could win great popularity, for Gerald Ford is hardly more popular among union ranks than Nixon himself. And rather than feigning heart attacks over Nixon's language, the task of revolutionary socialists is to focus on Nixon's real crimes against the working masses. Impeachment is not enough!

Play the Watergate Tapes in Full on Nationwide Radio!

Abolish the Secret Political Police (FBI, CIA)!

Abolish the Standing Army and Its Officer Corps! For a Workers Militia Based on the Trade Unions!

For Labor Action to Force Immediate Presidential Elections! For a Workers Candidate!

Break With the Republicans and Democrats—Dump Meany/Woodcock—For a Workers Party Based on the Trade Unions! Forward to a Workers Government! ■

been driven off their land and into exile.

After a second truce which lasted from July 18 to October, the Zionists concentrated on wiping out the Egyptian positions in the Negev and mopping up the Galilee. At the end of the fighting in early 1949 they had occupied all the territory allotted to the Jews under the UN partition plan and, in addition, had taken the eastern Galilee, parts of central Palestine (including the new city of Jerusalem) and parts of the Negev. Egypt took the Gaza strip and Transjordan got the West Bank. Abdullah, despite some battlefield reverses, now fulfilled his lifelong dream and crowned himself King of (a part of) Jerusalem and the (partially) restored Hashemite Kingdom. Not to be outdone, Egypt set up an "Arab Government of Palestine" in the Gaza strip.

## Hebrew Nation in Palestine?

The 1948 war established the framework in which the subsequent Arab-Israeli conflicts occurred. For this reason alone it requires careful study by revolutionary socialists. In addition to the obvious question of what position should be taken by Marxists in this conflict, it raises a number of other important political issues: Were the Jews in Palestine a nation? If so, do Leninists support their right to self-determination? Was the 1948 war an application of this right? And, more generally, what is the significance of self-determination for interpenetrated peoples?

Certainly by 1948 the Jewish-Zionist communities of Palestine had achieved one of their goals, having constituted a distinct national entity. (The point at which this occurred can be placed at the defeat of the 1936-39 Arab general strike and uprising, after which the Palestinian Jews had a functioning closed economy, essentially independent of the Arab communities. This separation laid the basis for the development of the Jewish economy during the second World War, when the isolation of Palestine compelled the development of entire new industries.) We say this as recognition of an accomplished fact, not implying "approval" of any kind.

Lenin and Trotsky resolutely opposed the bourgeois ideology of Zionism and opposed Jewish settlement in Palestine. But a nation is not a metaphysical moral category; it is a social category with a material content. Stalin's pamphlet, *Marxism and the National Question*, written in 1913 when he was still a Bolshevik and under Lenin's guidance, defines a nation in the following terms: "A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture" [emphasis in original]. This definition explicitly denied that European Jews constituted a nation. They were considered by Stalin and Lenin to be either assimilated (as in Western Europe) or an oppressed caste (as in Russia and Eastern Europe generally).

The Zionists also understood that for dispersed European Jewry, a "people

# Boston Chile Protest



BOSTON—Some 70 militants joined in a spirited march and protest rally here May 11 in order to publicize the plight of thousands of prisoners languishing in the jails of the Chilean junta.

The Boston demonstration was initiated by the Spartacist League/Revolutionary Communist Youth. Joining together in a Committee to Defend the Endangered Chilean Militants in order to organize the demonstration were, in addition to the SL/RCY, Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF) and the Revolutionary Communist League (Internationalist). The demonstration was also endorsed by the Cambridge Tenants Organizing Committee, Harvard-Radcliffe La Raza, Boston Mecha and the Haitian Action Committee, along with several stewards and executive board members of the Social Workers Guild and a number of individual endorsers.

Chants raised by the SL during the march included, "Down with the Junta—Power to the Workers," "Chile, Haiti, Vietnam—Free All Class War

Prisoners," and "No More Popular Fronts—For Workers Revolution." The marchers also sang the Internationale and Bandiera Rossa.

The United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA), led by the Socialist Workers Party, however, claimed that its members were "too busy"—even though its national organization had called for demonstrations on that day—and that the poor attendance at its last demonstration a month before showed that there was not broad interest in Chile actions in Boston.

At a rally at MIT following the march, a speaker from the SL emphasized the need for the workers movement to take up the defense of all imprisoned Chilean militants, and the betrayals of the Communist Party and USLA in failing to emphasize the defense of far-left militants. He criticized the sectarianism of the Boston USLA and the Chile Action Group (a local organization) for refusing to endorse or participate in the demonstration. ■

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without land," the formation of a nation was impossible without finding a corresponding "land without people"—or one that could be turned into a land without people through forced expulsion of the native inhabitants. This is what they proceeded to do in Palestine, first pushing the Arab fellahin off the land (bought from the feudal landowners), then constructing a closed economy of the Jewish communities and, finally, in 1948 proceeding to conquer the greater part of Mandate Palestine with an army organized prior to Partition, and to expel the majority of its Arab population.

Out of the destruction of European Jewry by Hitler (without whose aid the Zionists would have gone the way of the Shakers and other utopian sects) and at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs, a settler colony was transformed into a nation.

**Self-Determination for the Hebrew Nation?**

This Hebrew nation came into existence through force and violence, through the suppression, forced expulsion and genocide of other peoples. Communists must oppose this brutal national oppression. Yet once this historical fact is accomplished, we must certainly recognize that nation's right to self-determination, unless we prefer the alternative, namely national genocide.

The United States itself (as well as good parts of Spanish colonial America) was created through the most brutal, and ultimately genocidal, despoliation of the native Indian population. The wiping out of the aboriginal population was almost total in Uruguay, Costa Rica and Cuba, for example. Should Marxists therefore deny the U.S.' right to self-determination, for instance during the war of independence in 1776? Do we deny this right to the Spanish-derived inhabitants of Latin America? Are we to deny Iraq's right to self-determination because it suppresses the Kurds; do we deny this democratic right to Nigeria because of the massacre of the Bialrans, or to the Sudan because the Arab north has wiped out hundreds of thousands of blacks in the south? Do we deny the right of self-determination to modern Turkey because it was forged over the corpses of one million Armenians and Greeks? The oppression and massacre of these subjugated peoples were great historic injustices, but this does not transform irredentism into Leninism. Rather, it underlines the necessity to view the

national question within the internationalist framework of the proletariat, recognizing that nationalism—the petty-bourgeois ideology which covers the expansionist and genocidal appetites of the bourgeoisie—is incapable of achieving social justice even on the terrain of bourgeois-democratic national rights.

The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party now denies the right of self-determination to the Hebrew-speaking people of Israel, arguing: "From the point of view of the Leninist concept of the right of nations to self-determination, the key fact is whether the given nationality is an oppressed nationality or an oppressor nationality" ("Israel and the Arab Revolution," 1971 SWP convention resolution). It is one thing to distinguish between the nationalism of the oppressors (which is wholly reactionary) and the nationalism of the oppressed (which, although it too is a bourgeois ideology that must be combatted by socialists, is in part an expression of opposition to oppression). But Marxists do not pretend to sit with the gods on high, majestically rewarding the good but oppressed peoples with the right of self-determination and dispersing to the four corners of the world the bad oppressor peoples.

The SWP claims that Leninism recognizes only the claims of oppressed nations to the right of self-determination. This would have been news to Lenin! In his article, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination" (December 1914) he approvingly quotes the resolution on the national question from the 1896 (London) congress of the Socialist (Second) International: "This Congress declares that it stands for the full-right of all nations to self-determination..." To underline the point, Lenin goes on to remark: "The International's resolution reproduces the most essential and fundamental propositions in this point of view: on the one hand, the absolutely direct, unequivocal recognition of the full right of all nations to self-determination; on the other hand, the equally unambiguous appeal to the workers for international unity in their class struggle. We think that this resolution is absolutely correct..." [emphasis in original]

Under normal circumstances the self-determination of oppressor nations is of course not in question. The demand for self-determination for oppressed peoples means that they should have the same national rights already achieved by already established nations, not that oppressed peoples are

entitled to national rights while "oppressor peoples" are not.

By granting the right of self-determination to all nations, this does not mean that Marxists support the exercise of that right under all conditions. (Lenin compared self-determination to divorce; by recognizing the right to divorce one does not necessarily advocate dissolution of a particular marriage.) Further, when democratic rights come into conflict, it is necessary to subordinate the particular to the general. This was recognized by the then-Trotskyist SWP in 1948 in its editorial on "The Arab-Jewish War in Palestine" (*Militant*, 31 May 1948): "Haven't the Jewish people the right to self-determination and statehood as other peoples? Yes—but even if we abstract this question from its aforementioned social reality, the fact remains that they cannot carve out a state at the expense of the national rights of the Arab peoples. This is not self-determination, but conquest of another people's territory." The SWP vigorously opposed the UN Partition scheme and called for "a joint struggle against the imperialist oppressors on the basis of a revolutionary socialist program."

**Self-Determination for Interpenetrated Peoples?**

The SWP was, however, vague in its propaganda at the time, and tended to be unable to reduce its correct sentiments to a line on the war. This was not an accident, but flowed out of the complexity of the situation, the scarcity of hard information on the war itself (the bourgeois press' coverage being largely confined to hysterical propaganda about the plight of the poor beleaguered Jews) and the theoretical dilemma posed by attempting to apply the right of self-determination to interpenetrated peoples.

It was clear that the establishment of an independent nation-state, either by Palestinian Arabs or the Jews, would occur in Palestine only at the expense of the other nation. When national populations are geographically interpenetrated, as they were in Palestine, an independent nation-state can be created only by their forcible separation (forced population transfers, etc.). Thus the democratic right of self-determination becomes abstract, as it can be exercised only by the stronger national grouping driving out or destroying the weaker one.

In such cases the only possibility of a democratic solution lies in a social transformation. For example, the decomposition of the old multi-national Turkish empire precipitated a period of intensified murderous national conflict in the Balkans. The centuries of national hatreds and massacres between for example the Serbian and Croatian peoples exceeded the history of national strife between the Hebrews and Arabs in the Near East. The only basis for the unity of the Serbs and Croats (and other peoples) of Yugoslavia was the triumph of the partisan armies, against all of the nationalists, following World War II in a struggle which broke the bounds of capitalism and resulted in the creation of a deformed workers state in Yugoslavia.

Under capitalism, the right to self-determination in such a context is strictly *negative*: that is, against the abuses of national rights of either the Arabs or the Hebrew-speaking population. Thus, had there been an independent armed force of the Palestinian Arabs in the 1948 war, Marxists could have given it military support in the struggle against the expansion of the exclusionist Zionist state and the onslaught of the Arab League armies, which together suppressed the national existence of the Palestinian Arabs. Likewise, had there been an irredentist onslaught of the Arab states which threatened the survival of the Hebrew nation in Palestine, Marxists would have taken a position of revolutionary defensism of the survival of that nation.

Until recently the Spartacist League has held that the intervention of the Arab Legion following Israel's proclamation of independence transformed the

1948 war into a struggle to defend the survival of the Hebrew people and its right to self-determination. While opposing partition and fighting for the return of the expelled Palestinians, nonetheless we would have called for victory of the Hagannah over the Arab Legion.

The criteria by which we judge such a war have not changed. However, additional revelation of the circumstances surrounding the 1948 war through new factual material, much of which became available only recently, makes it quite clear that at no point in the 1948 war were the Arab armies in a position to challenge the survival of the Hebrew nation. In particular we call the readers' attention to the article by Y. Rad, "On the First Arab-Israeli War," in *WV* No. 35, 4 January 1974.

In light of this and other material, the SL Central Committee on 16 March adopted the following motion:

"The correct Trotskyist policy toward the 1948 Palestinian War was one of revolutionary defeatism (and exercise of self-defense by specific villages and settlements when under attack) because:

"1) the democratic issue of self-determination for each of two nationalities or peoples who geographically interpenetrate can only conceivably be resolved equitably within the framework of the proletariat in power;

"2) concretely in 1948—the Zionist-led Jews possessed the social/military organization to achieve and expand their own nation state. The Palestine Arabs were disorganized, ineffectual and betrayed on all sides. With the exception of the battle for Jerusalem, the Trans-Jordan (and British-inspired and backed) war aims were to compete with the Jews for the partitioning of Palestinian Arabs' lands. The role of other foreign Arab armies was essentially to posture, seeking to deflect discontent within their own states."

In 1948 the Revolutionary Communist League, Palestinian section of the Trotskyist Fourth International, while recognizing the right of the Jews to self-determination, resolutely opposed partition and took a revolutionary defeatist position in the Arab-Zionist war. "This war can on neither side be said to bear a progressive character... *It weakens the proletariat and strengthens imperialism in both camps. The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps*" [emphasis in original] ("Against the Stream," reprinted in *Fourth International*, May 1948). Clearly, a re-examination of the historical evidence confirms the position held by the Trotskyists at that time—that the survival of the Hebrew nation was not in question. There were no effective forces fighting for the rights of the Palestinian Arab nation; none of the Arab forces fought for the national rights of the Palestinians or against imperialism, but rather against the Zionists and each other in order to carve up the Palestinian Arab nation among themselves and/or divert social struggle at home.

While the imperialist powers certainly had an interest in and intervened to shape the outcome of the conflict, it is not possible to consider the struggle on either side as anti-imperialist. Thus the Israelis were aided by the U.S. and the USSR (diplomatically and, at least indirectly, militarily), while the Egyptians, Iraqis and Jordanians all received British military aid. (On the other hand, not only the Israelis but each of the Arab countries involved was assiduously pursuing its own national aims, so that it is likewise impossible to reduce the war to a simple great power conflict.)

Marxists could give military support to neither side in the 1948 Palestine war. Our position for proletarian internationalism requires viewing that war from the necessity of revolutionary defeatism on both sides, counterposing to the victory of either side the perspective of united proletarian struggle, which offers the only possibility for the genuine fulfillment of the right of self-determination—through a socialist federation of the Near East. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD



Young victims being carried from school in Maalot after clash between Palestinian guerrillas and Israeli troops. Both Arab nationalists and Zionists engage in mass terror: the working people pay the price.

## Israeli Planes Bomb Refugee Camps- Zionists/Arab Nationalists Trade Terrorist Atrocities

MAY 18—On 15 May Israeli soldiers stormed a school building being held by Arab guerrillas in the town of Maalot, Israel, with guns blazing. The result: 24 of the 85 high school students being held hostage there dead; all but a few of the students injured; the three guerrillas dead. In the aftermath: an orgy of murderous bombing raids against the defenseless masses of Palestinian refugees in camps in Lebanon, perpetrated by a shaky Israeli government more piously self-righteous than ever.

Israel's retaliatory air raids, ostensibly to destroy commando stations, were clearly directed toward indiscriminately mowing down the civilian population, destruction of homes, schools, hospitals, playgrounds. In one camp, half the homes were destroyed. So far the death toll is above 50, with hundreds injured. The Lebanese government, which has tolerated such raids by Israel in the past, protested meekly. The pattern is familiar.

Outrageous as acts of indiscriminate terrorism by Arab nationalists (and their supporters) have been in recent years—the Munich kidnappings, the massacre at Lod Airport—they pale in comparison to such Zionist terrorist atrocities, which are never called by their right name in the bourgeois press. The whining and indignation over Israeli casualties is the very height of hypocrisy coming from murderers like Moshe Dayan, whose hands drip with the blood of massacred Palestinian refugees.

The facts of the case have become adequately clear. The commandos (members of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) entered in the early hours of May 15 and, after murdering a family and some Arab workers, took the students, who were on an outing from their religious school, hostage as they spent the night in the school building at Maalot. The commandos demanded the release of 23 Arab guerrillas held in jail in Israel in exchange for release of the adolescent hostages, threatening to blow up the building at 6 p.m. if their demand was not met.

Golda Meir claimed to acquiesce to the demand, but behind the Israeli government's deliberately confusing

references to a "missed" code word is the fact that it does not even claim to have attempted to deliver the guerrilla prisoners to Cyprus. Even as officials went through the motions of attempted negotiation, Israeli soldiers stormed the building at about 5:20 p.m. A question remains as to whose bullets actually massacred the youths. Golda Meir's pious pronouncements have a hollow ring: "...the government of Israel will do everything in its power to cut off the hands that want to harm a child, an adult, a settlement, a town or a village." Hollow—because, no matter whose shots actually killed the school children, the government had decided not to release the terrorists and instead to storm the building whatever the cost in human lives. After all, it could then bomb thousands of Palestinian refugees in "reprisal."

Ruthless as the Zionist expansionists may be, this arrogant belligerence is rather pathetic coming from these chauvinists, whose reactionary aspirations and racist ideology justified their usurping the territory of the Arab population of Palestine and who chose to fortify themselves in isolation in the

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Nayef Hawatmeh, DPFLP leader

## Cops Slaughter SLA Leaders in L.A.

MAY 18—Yesterday's outrageous storm-trooper assault by more than 300 Los Angeles, county and federal police against a house allegedly occupied by members of the "Symbionese Liberation Army" must be vehemently protested by all labor and left organizations.

The Spartacist League does not defend in any way the "SLA" or its acts of indiscriminate terrorism (kidnaping and murder of individuals who were guilty of no known crimes against the working people). But such massive military "overkill" operations are clearly intended to create a police-state atmosphere, and as such they are a direct threat to the union movement, radical organizations, minority populations and working people generally.

Moreover, the spectacular barrage of heavy weapons fire from the police strongly suggests that the authorities had no intention of taking the occupants

the recent "Zebra" killings and the April 16 raid on Black Panther Party headquarters in Oakland are additional examples of such police atrocities.

Moreover, there are numerous recent reports (*San Francisco Examiner*, 28 April; *Great Speckled Bird*, 13 May; *New York Times*, 17 May; *Black Panther*, 18 May) that alleged SLA leader Donald DeFreeze (alias "Cinque") was a one-time police informer, supplied arms to the right-wing black nationalist "US" group (which assassinated Panthers Carter and Huggins), and that his escape from the "minimum-security" Vacaville State Prison may have been staged by the authorities. There have been charges that various officials have been pressing for just such a shootout as occurred yesterday in L.A.

We do not know the truth of such allegations; nor do we place any faith in bourgeois justice to clarify the



SLA hideout goes up in flames during shootout.

alive. Neither did the police take adequate precautions to protect residents of the immediate vicinity when they began the shooting.

The Los Angeles police have a well-earned reputation for such storm-trooper tactics, whether under racist-reactionary Mayor Yorty or black "liberal" Mayor Bradley. But there are additional reasons to suspect that the "forces of law and order" intended to simply murder the alleged SLA leaders.

With the abolition of the death penalty, the FBI and police in many large cities seem to be intent upon usurping the role of judge, jury and executioner for a brand of "justice" that makes the "kangaroo courts" of the Old West appear relatively humane in comparison. The racist dragnet launched by San Francisco Mayor Alioto in response to

mysteries surrounding the SLA or to arrive at a just verdict in the case of SLA prisoners such as Remiro and Little. But it is an essential duty of revolutionary socialists to protest all violations of bourgeois democratic rights (such as trial by jury) even when the victims are themselves unsavory characters. In the end, such incipient bonapartism will fall most heavily on the working people, their organizations and leaders.

As for the Symbionese Liberation Army, Cinque and his associates apparently went down fighting in a dramatic shootout which must have surpassed anything they ever fantasized. But whatever the SLA may have wanted, its bizarre and bloody story and its fiery ending have accomplished nothing except the waste of the lives of its victims and of its members. ■

## CWA Local Hits "Zebra" Dragnet

The following motion, introduced by the Militant Action Caucus, was passed overwhelmingly by the members of Oakland Local 9415 of the Communication Workers of America.

Whereas: Alioto's "Operation Zebra" is a vicious attack on the constitutional rights of blacks in San Francisco, designed to fan racist hysteria, and worthless in attempting to catch the "Zebra" killer,

Be It Resolved: that this local calls on all unions and black people in the area to join in a demonstration at San Francisco city hall on Tuesday, April 30th at 5:30 pm to demand "Stop this racist harassment now!"

Be It Further Resolved: that all organizations participating will be given equal time to address the rally, and will be encouraged to carry their own slogans.

Be It Further Resolved: that the local president be responsible for making the necessary arrangements, notifying all the unions and organizations of black people in the area before Monday, April 29th.