

Pickets during Dodge Truck wildcat, Warren, Michigan.



## Strike Upsurge Sweeps U.S.

WV PHOTO

Throughout the capitalist world the past few years have seen a rising line of class struggle as organized labor has faced rampant inflation, often being shackled with state wage controls. Only in the U.S. did the trade-union movement abandon any attempt to protect the workers from the ravages of rising prices. Despite comparable rates of inflation, during 1973 hourly manufacturing wages rose only 8 percent in the U.S. compared with 13 percent in West Germany, 18 percent in Britain and 25 percent in Japan (*New York Times*, 26 May).

The American labor bureaucracy responded to Nixon's 1971 wage freeze and controls not merely with fulsome cooperation, but launched an extraordinary anti-militancy campaign. This sellout policy was typified by Abel's no-strike pact with the steel companies and the 1,000-man goon squad the UAW's Woodcock regime mobilized to smash wildcats in Detroit auto last August.

By early 1974, the bureaucracy's anti-militancy drive had reduced strikes to a virtual all-time low; real wages had fallen fully 5 percent from mid-1973 (*Economist*, 15 June). The capacity of Meany-Abel-Woodcock to hold down the ranks had become desperately strained, particularly as the moral authority of the central government plummeted to double zero because of Watergate.

San Francisco city workers struck in March with an enthusiasm that soon affected other sections of the local working class, leading to walkouts by teachers and transit workers. The rapid escalation led to the very brink of a citywide general strike in a matter of days. At the time we noted that the San Francisco events, particularly as evidenced by the mood of the workers, indicated an end to the post-1971 Nixon-Meany era of labor peace:

"Two events in the past month—the West Virginia coal miners' strike

against gas rationing and the escalating strike of San Francisco city employees—indicate that the 1972-73 period of class peace may be ending. In both of these, the militant actions were out of proportion to the modest goals and the rank-and-file upsurge continuously bordered on a mass political/industrial confrontation with the ruling class."

—*Workers Vanguard*, 29 March 1974

### Strike Wave of Spring 1974

The March San Francisco events were indeed not an isolated local episode, but rather the beginning of a new upsurge of labor struggles. Two and a half years of relative class peace ended with a bang this spring. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, time lost due to strikes went from 1.1 million man-days in February to 2.0 million in March (the latest available figures). In other words, it roughly doubled in the space of a month. What makes these figures so impressive was that there was no major national strike, but rather an explosion of local actions. In March some 480 strikes began, the largest number for that month since 1937!

As yet, the current strike upsurge has not produced a major national strike. The steel settlement negotiated in April under the provisions of the company-union no-strike pledge continued the sellout pattern that has recently enabled the American working class to "enjoy" a sharply negative trend in real wages (factory workers' real earnings down by over 10 percent since late 1972). A partial exception to the generalization about national strikes was the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' brief strike against tailored clothing manufacturers in early June. However, the Amalgamated strike was simply a ploy by the Finley-Sheinkman regime to allow militants to blow off steam and not a serious attempt to force better terms out of the companies. The wage settlement was below

the current rate of inflation and could have been negotiated without any strike at all.

The localized character of the present strikes means that the militant actions cannot fundamentally affect the condition of those key sections of the industrial proletariat (steel, auto, trucking) whose contracts are (and should be) nationally negotiated. Among industrial workers, only for the construction trades has the current wave of walkouts produced major gains. And the bureaucracy, although it would prefer absolute peace and quiet, is quite willing to allow pent-up militancy to burn itself out in local strikes which do not seriously damage the monopolies which dominate the U.S. economy.

### Highest-Ever Labor Unrest on West Coast

As reported in the *San Francisco Examiner* (20 June) some 100 strikes were in progress in the 13 western states in the middle of last month. This is the highest figure in history, according to government statistics. In the Bay Area alone walkouts have taken place among nurses and carpenters, as well as units of the Machinists Union, Teamsters, IBEW, Longshoremen/Warehousemen and the Printing Specialties Union.

Receiving most publicity was the strike by the California Nursing Association (CNA) which, beginning June 7, pulled out about 4,500 nurses from Sacramento to the Bay Area, affecting all Kaiser Foundation hospitals and clinics as well as 17 private hospitals. The nurses walked out in response to hospital managements' attempts to make worse the already notoriously rotten working conditions of nurses.

The issues were not primarily economic, as indicated by the mere 5.5 percent wage increase demand, but re-

volved around nurses' right to have a say in patient care—to achieve adequate staff for patient safety, to ensure that only specialized nurses would work in specialty areas, etc. Slogans carried on placards at a June 13 rally in San Francisco's Union Square included "Patients Deserve Better Care" and "Better Staffing—one night nurse for 38 patients is unsafe."

As could be expected, hospital management waged a demagogic campaign to portray the striking nurses as ruthless mercenaries who would use patients' lives as a weapon to secure their greedy self-interest. The bosses' pious concern for the patients' welfare was contemptible posturing as demonstrated by Kaiser hospitals' refusal to allow striking nurses to organize and perform care of the critically ill during the strike as they attempted to do. This fact did not prevent ominous threats to sue the striking nurses for "endangering the lives of the patients," a proposal whose union-busting implications are obvious.

Though the strike lasted three weeks and reflected militant determination on the part of the ranks, the nurses went back to work June 28 with a pathetic settlement—a caricature of their demands. The manual and clerical workers of Hospital and Institutional Workers' Local 250, AFL-CIO, in the Bay Area had crossed the nurses' picket lines throughout the strike as ordered by their president, Tim Twomey, despite their sentiments of support.

This gross betrayal, along with the CNA leadership's refusal to fight for AFL-CIO support and stage a statewide hospital strike, was a knife in the back that spelled defeat for the nurses. The official vote to go back to work was 1,670-494, but even as the CNA leadership explained the contract terms at the ratification meeting, placards appeared among the ranks in the audience denouncing the contract as a sellout and

*continued on page 4*

## PORTUGAL:

### Which Way to the Revolution?...6

### Postal Strike Defeated...7



# My Lai Mass Murderer Must Not Go Free!

More than six years ago, on 16 March 1968, at least 100 and perhaps as many as 400 unarmed men, women and children were massacred by members of the Americal Division of the U.S. Army in the village of My Lai, Vietnam. The Army, reluctantly prodded into an investigation by letters sent to public officials from an eyewitness, eventually charged a total of 25 officers and enlisted men with crimes including rape, sodomy, torture, maiming, indecent assault and premeditated murder. Six of these men were brought to trial, yet only one was ever convicted—Lieutenant William L. Calley, Jr. The rest are free. Calley too will probably be a free man within the year.

Calley was originally charged with the murder of 109 men, women and children at My Lai. After the longest court martial in history he was convicted in March 1971 of the premeditated murder of at least 22 civilians and sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent exactly 3-1/2 days in the stockade before being returned to his private apartment by the direct intervention of President Nixon, who promised to personally review the case.

A mere six months later Calley's sentence was reduced to 20 years by Lieutenant General Albert O. Connor. In April of this year Secretary of the Army Howard H. Callaway further reduced his sentence to 10 years. Calley will be eligible for parole approximately six months from now, since his past 35 months in his apartment (where his fiancée and such notables as Governor Wallace have had unlimited access) counts as time on his sentence of "life imprisonment at hard labor."

Calley's conviction sparked a wave of helpful protest. The mass murderer of helpless men, women and babies became transformed into a scapegoat-martyr in the eyes of much of the public. Liberals and even much of the left dismissed Calley as an insignificant pawn. The Progressive Labor Party belittled the case and conviction as a capitalist diversion, stating, "Naturally, we couldn't care less that one set of bosses kill another set" (*Challenge*, 1971 May Day issue). But Calley did not "kill bosses"—he slaughtered unarmed Vietnamese!

Calley was not simply a scapegoat—many men were sent to Vietnam and did not become torturers, rapists and murderers. To say that what Calley did was inevitable or meaningless is a vile insult not only to the Vietnamese dead, but also to the many soldiers who went through the agony of Vietnam without becoming sadists and mass murderers. The workers movement must hold Calley and his cohorts accountable for their crimes.

Admittedly, Calley himself is a wretched product of decaying capitalist society. His personal history is pathetic and shabby—from trouble in high school for cheating to aimless drifters' jobs as busboy, car washer and dishwasher, acting as a strike-breaking freight car conductor on the Florida East Coast Railway along the way.

Capitalism is indeed a breeding ground for twisted and depraved human beings. But such criminals as Calley are precisely the kind of social scum that the Nazis recruited to their fascist bands. And the magnitude of the crimes at My Lai is only increased by the fact that the murderers defend themselves with the argument that they were only carrying out orders. The lenient treatment given to Calley is intimately linked to the acquittal of the killer cop Thomas Shea in New York recently, and to the whitewash of the Kent State killings by the Ohio National Guard and the Jackson State killings by police in 1970. If crimes like the My Lai massacre are allowed to go unpunished, it



Calley entering stockade after initial guilty verdict.

only reinforces the arrogance of the bourgeoisie's official gunmen.

A workers state would undoubtedly condemn Calley to death as an elementary act of justice—or ship him back to the maimed survivors of My Lai for them to render judgment upon. We cannot call for the death penalty for Calley at the hands of the bourgeoisie, however. The capitalist U.S. state is drenched in the blood of countless millions of innocent people throughout the world and rests on the most ruthless exploitation, plunder and degradation of the working masses. We deny this state the right to murder: we are absolutely opposed to the death penalty administered by a capitalist state. Such occasional justice as might accidentally be achieved would be (and has been) far outweighed by the vicious repression of the working class to which such extreme measures would be applied. Remember Joe Hill and Sacco and Vanzetti!

This does not mean that what happens to Calley now is unimportant. Calley should be forced to serve out his life imprisonment at hard labor. The other murderers at My Lai must be brought to trial and condemned. As Captain Aubrey M. Daniel III, the prosecutor in the court martial of Calley, wrote in a letter protesting Nixon's heavy-handed intervention into the case: "The greatest tragedy of all will be if political expediency dictates the compromise of such a fundamental moral principle as the inherent unlawfulness of the murder of innocent persons."

Daniel found it "shocking" that the American public apparently failed to grasp the moral issue that "It is unlawful for an American soldier to summarily execute unarmed and unresisting men, women, children and babies," and accused Nixon of perpetrating an atmosphere in which Calley became a "national hero." We agree with these sentiments.

As we go to press, Calley is temporarily being held in the stockade at Ft. Benning, Georgia. This inconvenience is the result of revocation of his bail. He comes up for parole in six months, and the course of the case thus far leaves little doubt that he will be freed. But the workers movement will not forget William L. Calley, Jr., nor Ernest Medina nor the other butchers of My Lai, including Richard Nixon—as it seeks to eliminate the bloodiest war criminal of all: the capitalist class. ■

# Letters

Los Angeles  
June 20, 1974

Dear Editors,

We greatly appreciate the coverage you gave to the defense campaign of the Militant Caucus of AFSCME 2070. The censure motion brought by the Local leadership against the caucus is not a unique infringement of our democratic rights, but one of a series of bureaucratic harassments which exposes the leadership's inability to deal with our class-struggle politics.

The major issues over which the caucus has confronted the fledgling reformist bureaucracy, ironically known as the "Unity Committee," have been their laxity in organizing to obtain a contract, their groveling support to liberal labor legislation, their enthusiasm and participation in government and management inspired "affirmative action" programs and, of course, their continuing abuse of members' democratic rights, notably ours.

The priority of organizing the rest of the considerable work force into our union, the right to full collective bargaining, the right to strike, to a signed contract with a union grievance procedure, the right to leaflet all union members on the job—none of these crucial issues are spoken to by the Local 2070 leadership. Without these tools, the union is incapable of defending its members. Instead the leadership offers wholehearted support to potential strike-breaking schemes like the Morretti Bill. In the guise of granting California public employees the right to strike, this proposed bill would authorize injunctions, "cooling-off" periods and binding arbitration, thereby further institutionalizing government interference in union affairs.

In addition to our well-known stand against reliance on capitalist "pro-labor" legislation, the caucus has fought long and hard on the question of "affirmative action." The Militant Caucus sees the importance of waging a relentless fight against all forms of discrimination. As long as workers remain divided along racial and sexual lines we will not be able to gain the necessary unified strength to fight against the capitalists, who at every turn seek to keep us divided. But no amount of rearrangements or "staff participation" in joint worker-management committees, as advocated by the Unity Committee, can end discrimination. These programs are designed to convince minority and women

workers that their enemy is not capitalism but white, male workers. The so-called affirmative action programs serve as an arm for the capitalists and their government in their union-busting attacks by undermining the seniority system, a hard-won job-security gain of organized labor. The leadership's answer to our opposition to union participation in these committees was a slander campaign calling our members "racist," and ultimately a slur in the Local's press, calling us a "small band of reactionaries." The Local's press, by the way, is censored to all views but those of the present leadership.

But, most importantly, what the present leadership lacks is even a hint of a class-struggle approach, a strategy of independent union action that means concretely a break with the Republicans and Democrats, the parties of Nixon/Alioto, and a struggle for a workers party based on the trade unions. Union members received a leaflet from our union leadership advertising an "impeach Nixon Rally" which said that "we must continue to exert pressure on Congress to vote for impeachment. Write, call or wire your representative." Pressure Congress rather than put forth a clear working-class alternative! Their answer to inflation? Join the Coalition for Economic Survival (CES) and boycott liquid milk!

It was because the MC has consistently put forward its views at union meetings, in its newsletter and in leaflets, that a campaign was initiated to silence dissidents in the Local. First a restriction on speaking time on all points at union meetings, then a passage of a motion insisting that a disclaimer appear on every page distributed by the Militant Caucus (a totally superfluous statement that our views are not the views of the union), and now a censure motion—all designed to intimidate us and ultimately to set us up for purge.

Although the article in the June 7 *Workers Vanguard* was accurate on most points, your reporter made some minor errors which we would like to correct. The man who tried to enter the stewards' training class was the past union president, not the vice-president; the union membership is closer to five hundred, not three hundred as reported; and it was the International's educational representative who was present at the class.

In Solidarity,  
Alice Lichtenstein  
for the Militant Caucus  
AFSCME Local No. 2070

## Spartacist Local Directory

<b>BAY AREA</b>	Box 852, Main P.O., Berkeley, CA 94701 . . . . . (415) 653-4668
<b>BOSTON</b>	Box 188, M.I.T. Sta., Cambridge, MA 02139 . . . . . (617) 282-7587
<b>BUFFALO</b>	Box 412, Station C, Buffalo, NY 14209 . . . . . (716) 837-1854
<b>CHICAGO</b>	Box 6471, Main P.O., Chicago, IL 60680 . . . . . (312) 728-2151
<b>CLEVELAND</b>	Box 6765, Cleveland, OH 44101 . . . . . (216) 651-9147
<b>DETROIT</b>	Box 663A, General P.O., Detroit, MI 48232 . . . . . (313) 921-4626
<b>LOS ANGELES</b>	Box 38053, Wilcox Sta., Los Angeles, CA 90038 . . . . . (213) 485-1838
<b>MADISON</b>	c/o RCY, Box 3334, Madison, WI 53704
<b>NEW ORLEANS</b>	Box 51634, Main P.O., New Orleans, LA 70151 . . . . . (504) 866-8384
<b>NEW YORK</b>	Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, NY 10001 . . . . . (212) 925-2426
<b>SAN DIEGO</b>	P.O. Box 2034, Chula Vista, CA 92011
<b>TORONTO</b>	(Committee of Toronto Supporters of the International Spartacist Tendency) Box 8867, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



# Reformists' Sectarianism Undermines Chile Defense

In recent months one of the main focuses of the activity of the Spartacist League has been organizing demonstrations in defense of the several thousand political prisoners of the reactionary Chilean junta. The urgency of this task was underlined by the series of mass trials that began this spring with the military court martial of 47 militants of the Castroist MIR (Revolutionary Left Movement) in the southern town of Temuco on March 28. Sentences in this trial, announced the following day, ranged up to 20 years.

Other court martials held in April and May include that of five student and peasant leaders in San Fernando on April 26 (all receiving death sentences, later commuted to life); of two Socialist Party leaders in Valdivia on May 5 (both sentenced to death); of 17 members of leftist parties in Talca (up to 10 years); and of 47 leftists in Punta Arenas who received up to life imprisonment (*Le Monde*, 8 May).

Simultaneously, a show trial of some 67 former government officials, mostly military officers, was opened in Santiago in the presence of foreign lawyers and newspapermen. This trial is now ended, with sentences soon to be announced. A subsequent court martial of 27 political and governmental leaders of former President Salvador Allende's "Popular Unity" coalition (including Socialist ex-Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier and Luis Corvalán, general secretary of the Communist Party) is being prepared in the capital.

In the course of our defense activities the SL has initiated united-front demonstrations in Boston, New York, Buffalo, Ann Arbor, Madison, San Francisco and Los Angeles; as well as mobilizing for demonstrations called by other organizations in New York, Cleveland, the Bay Area and Chicago. Our demands in all these protests have included the call for defense of all victims of the junta's repression.

## Leninist Defense Policies

But at the same time the SL has sought to raise a class defense of militants who are, as our slogans indicated, "class-war prisoners." The generals' and admirals' coup last September 11 toppled Allende's popular-front government (which included both bourgeois and workers parties), but its fundamental aim was to obliterate the organized workers movement. In good part this comes down to annihilating or at least imprisoning the leading cadres, both of the trade unions and the workers parties.

Thus, while raising the democratic demand for freedom for all the prisoner held by the junta (including, for instance, "constitutionalist" officers who opposed the coup), it is necessary to integrate defense actions into a broader struggle to defend the working class and its organizations, to overthrow the military dictatorship and replace it with the only real alternative—a revolutionary workers government. This integration of democratic demands into the struggle for socialist revolution is a continuation of the Leninist policies of the early Communist International and its defense organization, the International Red Aid.

Its U.S. affiliate was the International Labor Defense, headed by then Communist Party leader James P. Cannon (who was subsequently the founder of American Trotskyism). Commenting on the policies of the ILD in the famous Sacco and Vanzetti trials, Cannon remarked:

"Our policy is the policy of the class struggle. It puts the center of gravity in the protest movement of the workers

of America and the world. It puts all faith in the power of the masses and no faith whatever in the justice of the courts. While favoring all possible legal proceedings, it calls for agitation, publicity, demonstrations—organized protest on a national and international scale. It calls for unity and solidarity of all workers on this burning issue, regardless of conflicting views on other questions."

—"Who Can Save Sacco and Vanzetti?" *Labor Defender*, January 1927

(For a fuller explanation of the Spartacist League policy toward questions of defending democratic rights, see "What Defense Policy for Revolutionaries?" *RCY Newsletter* No. 17 May-June 1973.)

The alternative to a Leninist defense policy (if we except ultra-leftists who refuse to defend democratic rights) is the bourgeois civil libertarian policy, relying on the courts, appeals to respectable liberal public opinion, etc. Typical of such organizations would be, for example, the American Civil Liberties Union, the League for the Rights of Man, Amnesty International and similar groups. However, with a slightly more "radical" cover, the same orientation is shared by one of the main left groups engaged in Chile defense work, the Socialist Workers Party-led United States Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA).

At a meeting in December 1966 to discuss the USLA "Statement of Aims," supporters of the Spartacist League objected to its class-neutral character, in particular its call for defense of victims of political persecution "regardless of their particular beliefs, affiliations or associations...." This, the SL supporters pointed out, could include reactionaries such as some Chilean Nazis then being held by the Frei government. The USLA leadership turned down the SL-proposed alternative declaration calling for aid to "victims of rightist political persecution," objecting that it might alienate liberal support. Thereupon Spartacist supporters left the meeting (see "USLA Sectarian Liberalism," *WV* No. 41, 29 March 1974).

## Chasing the Liberals vs. Defense of Class-War Prisoners

These differences in orientation are naturally reflected in the contrasting Chile defense work of the SL and the SWP/USLA. Immediately after the coup, USLA announced it would highlight 23 prominent figures whose lives were feared to be in danger. Fully half of this number was made up of artists, writers and academics whose presence on the list might be expected to awaken the sympathy of bourgeois liberals in the U.S. (see *Militant*, 5 October 1973). Later this list was narrowed to USLA's "Chile 7" of whom only two, CP head Luis Corvalán and Luis Vitale (a leading supporter of the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat" in Chile), were leftist political leaders.

The Spartacist League, in contrast, demanded "Free All Class-War Prisoners in Chile," "Smash the Reactionary Junta—For Workers Revolution in Chile," "No Popular-Front Illusions," and called on unions to hot-cargo goods to Chilean ports. The very inclusion of such political demands was indicative of the difference in orientation. In the safety of the pages of the *Militant* the SWP claimed to oppose Allende's popular front; but in the demonstrations, where such a line was often far from popular, SWPers appeared only with USLA signs. USLA, of course, was only interested in civil liberties. (This is not quite true, since USLA's



WV PHOTO

other main demand was to cut off all U.S. aid to Chile. The inclusion of this demand inadvertently revealed that USLA's real commitment was not to civil liberties or "single-issue coalitions," but to whatever was palatable to the liberals.)

In January of this year the Chilean MIR put out an appeal for a worldwide campaign to save two of its leaders, Bautista Van Schouwen and Alejandro Romero, who had fallen into the hands of the junta butchers. The SWP and USLA received this information at the latest by January 31 and very likely before then. However, according to individuals who formerly worked with USLA, the organization's leaders originally protested that they were too busy with activities around the "Chile 7" to do anything about Van Schouwen and Romero. Only after heated discussion did they finally agree to send a circular to local USLA groups requesting that telegrams be sent to Pinochet about Van Schouwen and Romero.

In contrast, when the Spartacist League received information about the case of the two MIR leaders at the end of February, steps were rapidly taken to plan a united-front demonstration in New York centering on the demand for the release of Van Schouwen, Romero and all prisoners of the junta. Following an initial planning meeting USLA announced it would not support the demonstration because there was not enough time to build it. In fact, however, their concern was to not lose their liberal and Stalinist friends by defending these two far-left leaders.

However, the March 15 demonstration managed to attract 150 militants to a spirited picket line and brief rally. Some members of the USLA staff did build for the protest and several attended. And although USLA refused to endorse the action, a speaker from that organization received equal time in the short speeches following the picketing. When similar demonstrations were called in Madison, Wisconsin and Los Angeles USLA and the SWP likewise refused to endorse.

At the New York demonstration the Spartacist League's leaflet, signs and speaker, in addition to the slogans agreed upon with the other sponsoring organizations, placed special emphasis on the need for opposition to rumored deals to save Corvalán and a few other leaders of Allende's UP coalition while sacrificing "far-left" militants, and for building a Chilean Trotskyist party as an alternative both to the open treachery of the Stalinists and social democrats and to the centrist waverings of the MIR. The same themes were raised by

the SL at subsequent demonstrations as well.

## United Fronts and Propaganda Blacs

These principled united-front actions initiated by the SL stood in contrast to a subsequent demonstration in New York sponsored by a temporary coalition, the May 11 Chile Action Committee, which included notably the Chile Solidarity Committee and USLA. Some time before the protest action, the Spartacist League contacted the May 11 CAC, stating its agreement with the demands of the demonstration. However, at a planning meeting the committee's organizers indicated that none of the proposed speakers were from ostensibly socialist groups, although bourgeois politicians such as Bella Abzug and Paul O'Dwyer were to be invited. The SL spokesman protested that even if the other organizations present felt their politics were adequately represented by Abzug and O'Dwyer, the Spartacist League did not, and therefore requested equal speaking time.

A week before the demonstration the SL sent a letter to the May 11 CAC repeating this request and indicating that it could co-sponsor the march on the condition that it be permitted a speaker:

"Thus, if there was the opportunity for the S.L. to counterpose revolutionary Trotskyism to the Abzugs, Boorsteins, etc., from the speakers platform we could take responsibility of endorsing this demonstration. Without this right, we would be giving backhanded support to the building of treacherous illusions in the capitalist state."

Needless to say, there was no reply to this letter. However, when the SL arrived at the demonstration we discovered that the coveted bourgeois politicians had not come through and several of the sponsoring organizations would indeed have speakers after all. However, when the SL again requested equal speaking time, particularly in light of the fact that we had the largest contingent in the demonstration, an USLA/May 11 CAC organizer informed us that the SL could not have a speaker since we were not sponsors!

Only after more than an hour of arguing did the demonstration's organizers permit the SL to have a speaker. Even then they made it clear that this was a concession made *only* because we had raised so much protest at being excluded (and probably also due to the fact that the crowd was small and no "big-name" speakers had materialized). The Militant-Solidarity Caucus

*continued on page 11*





Judge Stair personally orders end to blockage of Warren, Michigan Chrysler plant.

## Continued from page 1 Strike Upsurge...

many nurses simply walked out in disgust.

### Wildcat at Dodge Truck

One of the most dramatic events of the current strike wave—one which pitted ostensible radicals together with angry rank-and-file production workers against the union bureaucracy, the company and the state—was the wildcat at Dodge Truck (Warren, Michigan) in the Detroit area in mid-June. The strike, which was defeated after mass arrests three days later, was a virtual replay of the wildcats in Detroit Chrysler plants last summer. Officials of United Auto Workers Local 140 tried the same tactic of a mass goon squad which was used to break the Mack Avenue wildcat in August of last year. At the same time, in case the presence of 120 Woodcock loyalists at the plant gates was insufficient to spark a back-to-work movement, the courts and the cops were brought in as an added inducement.

Discontent had been building up at Dodge Truck for some time, over such grievances as inadequate ventilation producing temperatures as high as 135°, broken hydraulic lines spilling oil on the floor and unsafe clothing issued by the company, as well as a general speed-up. A slowdown to protest unsafe working conditions was organized by a steward, Steve Smith. The firing of Smith and four others provoked a walkout of the second shift on June 10. The day shift followed suit and all but a few hundred of the plant's 6,400 workers stayed out until the strike was broken by the arrests on Thursday and Friday.

Smith and the other leaders ran the action wholly within the framework of basic trade-union militancy. They made no attempt to place the wildcat within a strategy to combat the Woodcock machine, and the capitalist state behind it. The bourgeoisie and the union bureaucrats, however, observed no such reticence. UAW officials blamed everything

on "radicals," and the *Detroit Free Press* (13 June) printed a vicious red-baiting attack on Smith, quoting House Internal Security Committee spokesmen labeling him a former leader of the Maoist "Revolutionary Union" (RU).

In fact, it was not the strike leaders but rather UAW International representative George Morelli who first raised the question of government intervention. Addressing a strike meeting of 400-500 workers on June 11, Morelli refused to support the wildcat because it was "illegal" and would subject the UAW to fines, penalties, etc. The UAW leadership was able to brazen its way through the affair, with Morelli ejecting the several hundred assembled strikers from their union hall by summoning 35 cop cars. Smith and other leaders of the wildcat, however, did not even get around to electing a strike committee, an elementary necessity for the success of any rank-and-file action.

As if Morelli's dire warning carried straight to the ears of Chrysler management, the latter went to the courts and found the right judge, one Hunter D. Stair. Stair issued an anti-strike injunction and a few days later personally saw that it was carried out. In a bizarre spectacle he arrived at the plant and, standing on the back of a pick-up truck, went from gate to gate announcing, "I'm now holding court. Do you want to listen to me or do you want to go to jail?" (*Detroit News*, 14 June).

When the pickets refused to disperse, Stair had 20-40 workers arrested, including Smith. Despite illusions fostered by the pollyanna-like optimism expressed by some of the militants present ("this really shows we have the company on the run" was one comment), this police action effectively broke the wildcat. The arrests having precisely served their purpose, criminal charges were dropped. However, Chrysler subsequently fired about 75 workers for participating in the walkout.

As a cover to help break the Dodge Truck walkout the local UAW bureaucracy even allowed an "official" strike vote about a week later. The vote was overwhelmingly pro-strike, one of the demands to be the reinstatement



Cops mass as Judge Stair orders arrest of militant strikers.



Shipyard workers at General Dynamics' Fore River plant continue picketing despite police harassment.

of the 75 workers fired during the wildcat. But as yet the local officials have not carried out this mandate to call out the members in defense of their fired brothers.

In the Detroit area the RU has played up the Dodge Truck wildcat as a "victory." It has done nothing, however, to organize a united front to get the victims of the strike rehired. Perhaps it is too busy celebrating the "victory" to bother. UAW members, particularly in Detroit, must demand that their union force Chrysler to take back the workers fired for the Dodge Truck wildcat.

### Boston Shipbuilders Against General Dynamic

Perhaps the longest and bitterest strike of the current wave is at General Dynamics' Fore River shipyard in Quincy, Massachusetts. As we go to press, Local 5 of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers will have been out for 15 weeks. The strike began in mid-March with mass picketing and clashes between pickets and the local cops, leading to the arrest of 26 unionists (*Boston Globe*, 21 March). However, following a court injunction limiting pickets to five per gate, union officials ordered an end to the mass picketing.

The strike had its origins in a sweetheart contract negotiated five years ago, shortly after General Dynamics bought the Fore River yard from Bethlehem Steel. With GD pleading poverty, the old Local 5 leadership negotiated a five-year contract for minimal gains and no cost-of-living escalator. As a result of that abysmal pact shipbuilders at Quincy are the lowest-paid in the nation. When the union demanded a \$1.25 raise and a one-year contract, General Dynamic responded with the insulting and provocative counter-offer of 90 cents spread over three years!

Not only is the company trying to perpetuate subnormal wages, but it is also attacking basic union prerogatives. GD is demanding that the union scrap

all occupational guidelines and create a catchall category ("yard mechanic") which would include welders, pipefitters, riggers and other tradesmen. This would allow management to use anybody for any job! The giant conglomerate's profits are now being spent to place full-page ads in Boston newspapers attacking the union for opposing increased "productivity" measures.

This flagrantly anti-union posture has generated deep hatred for the company among the Quincy shipbuilders. The fight with the cops was triggered when pickets prevented GD's Quincy division president from entering the yard. The yardworkers' strike is weakened by massive layoffs of the Fore

## SL/RCY Public Offices

### BAY AREA

Friday and Saturday } 3:00-6:00 p.m.

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

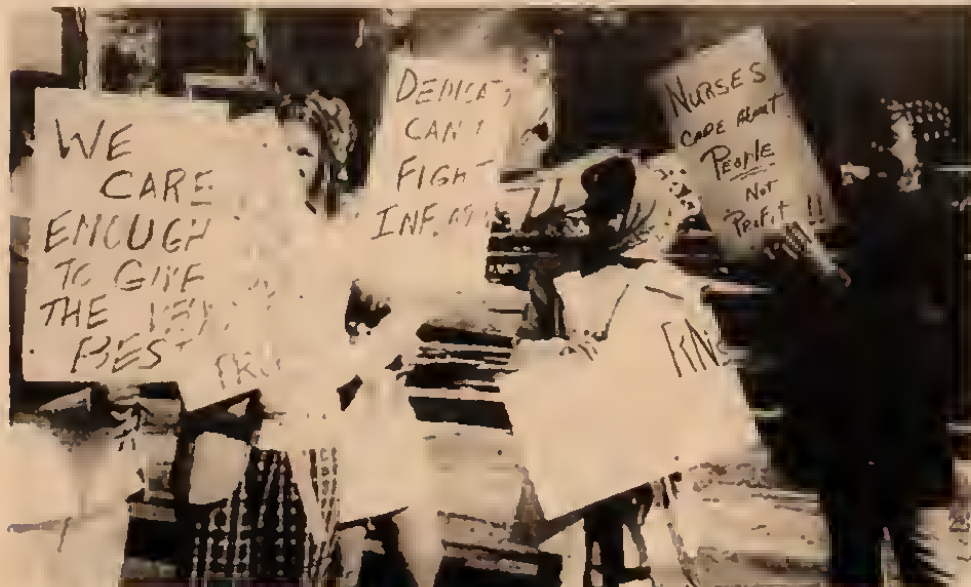
### NEW YORK

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

Saturday 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
260 West Broadway  
Room 522  
New York, New York  
Phone 925-5665

## REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE

WORKERS VANGUARD



Nurses picket at St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco.



River installations in the last three years, which have cut the workforce by two-thirds. However, the strike has recently been strengthened as the yard's white-collar workers have also gone out.

The Quincy shipyard is one of only three major industrial establishments in the Boston area. (Another, the Lynn General Electric turbine complex, employing some 10,000 workers, was also out on strike for ten days last month over a dispute concerning job rate classifications. The third is the Framingham GM plant, which has laid off half its workforce for the last four months.) Thus, the shipbuilders' strike has an impact beyond what the relatively small numbers (1,600) involved would indicate. Massachusetts Senators Kennedy and Brooke have both called for an early strike settlement, and the outcome of the bitter Quincy strike will undoubtedly have an effect upon the labor climate throughout New England in coming months.

### Back to State Wage Control?

The 24 June *Wall Street Journal* reported that in May hourly wages for manufacturing workers increased 14 percent (on an annual basis) compared with 8 percent in 1973. This was the first month since last September that real hourly earnings did not fall, that wage-rate increases actually outpaced the inflation. The May figures may be accidental, being influenced by the increase in the minimum wage from \$1.60 to \$2.00 an hour. But in any case, even a 14 percent annual wage rate increase would not seriously reduce the present rate of capitalist exploitation.

However, if the current strike wave produces a serious wage offensive (as it shows signs of doing in the construction trades), there will be pressures to reimpose state wage controls. At present, most sections of the ruling class are against reinstituting "wage/price controls." Meany, Abel and Woodcock have amply demonstrated a willingness to hold wages even without legal sanctions. Not seeing the need for state action against union wage demands at this time, corporate ownership is opposed to the government bureaucracy's intervening in its affairs, as this necessarily involves corruption, favoritism and arbitrariness.

However, even today, the advocates of "wage/price controls," though a distinct minority, are far from being insignificant. They include Wilbur Mills, conservative Democratic head of the House Ways and Means Committee and one of the leading shapers of economic policy within the American ruling class. Ted Kennedy waged a halfhearted struggle this spring to maintain some form of government controls. And that important organ of the Eastern liberal establishment, the *New York Times*, is calling for the re-establishment of controls and condemns Nixon as shortsighted for eliminating them.

If the strike wave escalates, involving major national contracts, (telephone workers this summer, coal miners in the fall), the ruling class will undoubtedly try to re-play the 1971 script of a wage freeze followed by controls. However, it is unlikely that history will simply repeat itself. The working class has suffered a major wage cut as a result of state controls and the illusions or tolerance which were widespread in 1971 have been stripped away by that bitter experience. Even Meany now has to denounce "Nixon's wage/price controls," hoping union members will forget that he fully supported them.

Forces within the labor movement that are pushing for militant wage struggles are in a far better position today than in 1971 to prevent the capitalist state from suppressing labor militancy. But the task of revolutionaries is not to enthuse over the now-evident combativeness of the working class, but to prepare militant workers for the struggles ahead by stressing demands going beyond simple trade-union militancy and directly challenging the capitalist system. ■

# Third Campers Spurn CSL Proposition

An unintentionally humorous look at the unappetizing flora and fauna which reside in the murky swamp of centrism was provided recently by the publication of an exchange of correspondence between the "Revolutionary Socialist League" (left social-democratic split from the International Socialists) and the "Class Struggle League" (product of an unprincipled unification between the *Vanguard Newsletter* grouping and the majority leadership of the former Leninist Faction of the Socialist Workers Party). The June issue of *Class Struggle*, sometimes-monthly press of the CSL, publishes a letter by Sy Landy on behalf of the RSL breaking off formal political discussions with the CSL, along with a reply by the CSL's Henry



CSL's Henry Platsky

Platsky. (All quotations here are from *Class Struggle*, Volume III, No. 5, June 1974. We have taken the liberty of correcting the obvious typographical errors.)

The two organizations apparently conducted discussions for several months in the fall of last year. The initiating impetus undoubtedly came from the CSL, itself the product of a lowest-common-denominator fusion which continues to be manifestly unstable, which is growing increasingly desperate in the attempt to latch onto some larger, if no more stable, formation. The CSL's unenviable future looks even dimmer now that the RSL has rebuffed its attempted capitulation.

Landy's letter obliquely notes the rotten-bloc character of the CSL. Charging that at the first discussion the CSLers had "openly quarrelled" among themselves over trade-union tactics, he notes that this cast doubt "on the question of whether the unity between the VNL and the LF meant anything more than the combination we believed it to be.... It doesn't appear that you have a functional unity. It seems that you are just a temporary assemblage of diverse entities." He also charges that the CSL, in response to a criticism of an article on Arnold Miller, had "said that you had allowed it to be printed without challenge because the writer was a close contact."

Landy also notes that the CSL's absurd position of calling for a Fifth International "is the vestigial leftover of an earlier maneuver within the embryo of the Leninist Faction, one of your component groups. In order to paper over a temporary bloc with Bordigist elements, you adapted to them on the question of the international. It no longer serves much of a maneuverist purpose so it will go when you find a new gambit."

On this question Landy was truly prescient. The same issue of *Class Struggle* which reprints this correspondence exchange also reports on a CSL National Convention at which the Fifth International position was abandoned. (The groupings which Landy termed "Bordigist" had already split

away from the Leninist Faction immediately following the LF's exit from the SWP. The Platsky reply sidesteps this fact by denying that there ever were any such "Bordigist elements." This is correct; the elements in question would more properly be described as merely Kollontaist.)

The Platsky letter protests indignantly against the charge that the CSL is "just a temporary assemblage of diverse entities." Yet his defense against the "maneuverism" manifested by the publication of the disputed article on Miller is, in part, "It should be pointed out that the article was printed before the fusion of the old Class Struggle League with *Vanguard Newsletter*. The leadership of *Vanguard Newsletter* had no responsibility for the decision to print the article...." In other words, it was the fault of the LF-variety CSL; "we" (the *Vanguard Newsletter*-variety CSL) had nothing to do with it! Some "fusion"!

The correspondence exchange is replete with accusations of maneuverism, and a number of political criticisms and differences are raised by both sides. But as is absolutely characteristic of centrists, neither side really deals with the central political difference separating these two gangs of opportunists: the question of the class nature of the Russian state and, therefore, of revolutionary defeatism or revolutionary defensism toward the USSR, China, Eastern Europe, Cuba, North Vietnam, North Korea in the event of armed conflict with the forces of imperialism.

Only the RSL's contemptuous sneers at the pasted-together "unity" of the CSL could goad the CSL's Platsky into pointing out that the RSL is itself a rotten bloc between the "defeatist" RSL majority and the "defensist" former Communist Tendency of the SWP. Yet Landy has to tie himself in knots to avoid characterizing the Russian question as a barrier to principled unification.

Indeed Landy's letter states, "we wish to indicate once again that we



RSL's Sy Landy

consider fusion with those comrades who hold to a degenerated workers' state analysis of Russia *et al.* and those like ourselves who have a state capitalist analysis to be quite possible and principled." Yet "we regard the adoption by the CSL of the Vern-Ryan position on the expansion of the Stalinists to be a serious capitulation to anti-working class views."

The Vern-Ryan theory was an erroneous attempt to explain the mechanics of the destruction of capitalism in Eastern Europe following World War II, resulting in states whose class character is qualitatively identical to that of the Stalinized Soviet Union. In other words, Landy would like us to believe that the process whereby these states acquired the same class character as the USSR is a "fundamental" question—but the question of *what* is that class character is not!

The reader unaccustomed to the tortuous "method" employed of necessity by centrists may well ask: what is the purpose of this obfuscation? Why cannot Landy admit that the two groups' divergent positions on the class nature of the deformed workers states are an important question prohibiting unification? The reason is simple: the RSL cannot admit that the Russian question falls within the category of "fundamental questions" because the RSL claims to be Trotskyist and yet holds that the USSR is state capitalist; Trotsky insisted that the USSR is a degenerated workers state. Thus the RSL must locate the CSL's anti-Trotskyism in the Vern-Ryan bugaboo, or indeed in anything—except the Russian question.

In order to seek to maintain the mantle of Trotskyism while criticizing one of its essential theoretical components, Landy accuses Trotsky of nothing worse than "inconsistency" and likens Trotsky's position on the USSR to Lenin's position (prior to the *April Theses*) for the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry." He observes that Lenin changed this position when it came manifestly in conflict with the needs of an independent proletarian policy in pre-revolutionary Russia.

This latter correct observation entirely destroys Landy's argument. For when the class nature of the USSR was placed firmly in the forefront of the crucial programmatic questions facing the Leninist movement in 1940 (by the Shachtmanite revisionists, of whom the RSL is the heir), Trotsky led the fight against that revisionism, whose ultimate logic was reconciliation with one's own bourgeoisie. It was precisely at such a moment that he should have discarded any such "inconsistency," just as Lenin did when the implications of a formerly inadequate theory became manifest in the living struggle. Landy's tortured analogy should have Lenin standing arm in arm with Stalin in opposing the proletarian insurrection in Russia!

The CSL, however, cannot deal with this devious assault on Trotskyism because it does not dare to treat principled political questions seriously. Its only concern is the struggle against its felt irrelevance, the struggle to postpone its inevitable descent into oblivion, unnoticed and unmourned among the denizens of the centrist mire. Platsky's letter could be reduced to a single desperate cry: here I am! look at me! He whines, "The RSL membership has consistently refused to buy our press.... The RSL has preferred to debate and chase the petty-bourgeoisified ranks of the Spartacist League and has simply ignored the existence of our tendency in any of its public activities"; "... one of the comrades sent by the RSL to 'discuss'... had previously admitted to my face that he didn't bother reading our press"; RSLers should "learn that a serious study of opponents' positions is necessary.... We should, therefore, expect a noticeable increase in our literature sales at your forums, functions, etc."; "your refusal to approach our politics seriously" and so forth.

Were politics simply a game—which, despite the opportunist antics of the RSL, CSL and their ilk, it is not—the best one could say about these organizations is that they deserve each other. The organizational decomposition of the CSL now appears imminent as well as inevitable, but the long-term prognosis for the RSL—Trotskyist state capitalists is fundamentally no better. Those who choose to remain in the centrist mire have little to look forward to but similar squabbles, rotten blocs and their decomposition into the original rotten components, on the road to nowhere. ■



## "Revolutionaries" Tail Masses

# Which Way to the Portuguese Revolution

During the last two months the Portuguese drama has focused on one fundamental theme: the struggle for the masses. For the reactionaries grouped around Spínola and the "Junta of National Salvation," the question is posed negatively: only by forcing the workers into passive submission—through an astute combination of concessions, fostering of democratic illusions and the use of brute force—can they hope to stabilize the armed forces and put an end to the current "anarchy."

For revolutionaries the same situation is posed positively, and much more sharply: only by freeing the proletariat from democratic illusions and from confidence in the reformist Communist Party (CP), only by crystallizing a Trotskyist vanguard party and winning the decisive sectors of the working class to its banners, can the way be prepared for socialist revolution.

Portugal is presently in a classical pre-revolutionary situation of a slow type. It is pre-revolutionary in the sense that any severe shock (such as a premature attempt by the junta to crush the left and working-class organizations, or the precipitous intervention of the Spanish army) could easily lead to the establishment of organs of dual power (soviets). This revolutionary potential is a reflection of a deep hatred of their exploiters among the Portuguese working masses, who time and again in recent weeks have gone on strike and demonstrated against the wishes of the "democratic" provisional government.

The slowness, on the other hand, is an expression of the lack of political experience of the workers, and the consequent absence of a revolutionary Marxist party firmly rooted in the masses. On the surface, the Russian Revolution transpired between February and October of 1917. In reality, though, this rapid pace of development was possible only because of the previous experience of the 1905 revolution and of more than a decade of sharp political struggle between the populist Narodniks, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks. This history is entirely lacking for the Portuguese working class, which is only now awakening from the 45 years of enforced political slumber under the Salazar-Caetano dictatorship.

The present situation is the result of an attempted maneuver by key sections of Portuguese capital. Facing imminent military defeat in Guinea-Bissau and a rapidly deteriorating situation in Mozambique, the bourgeoisie hoped to cut its losses in Africa (by granting bogus "independence" to its former colonies in the framework of a Lusitanian "commonwealth") and reorient the economy toward Europe, while maintaining a "controlled democracy" in Portugal. Not only Spínola had Gaullist dreams.

But to date the grand maneuver has been notably unsuccessful. Already Portuguese workers have entered into sharp elemental class battles with their capitalist oppressors; already they are clashing with the provisional government. But while the workers view their struggles in class terms, and large sections of the proletariat recognize that the coup fundamentally signifies only a better position from which to fight for their liberation, they are as yet unable to transcend the economic framework of trade-union struggles.

### For A Revolutionary Regroupment

Exactly the same condition, expressed in more sophisticated terms reflecting centrist political confusion,

is present among the numerous ostensibly revolutionary groups in Portugal. On the one hand, the so-called "far left" is relatively large in comparison with the reformist CP. If the CP can mobilize 10,000 militants and supporters for a demonstration against strikes, both the Maoist MRPP (Movement for the Reorganization of the Proletarian Party) and a nascent left Maoist/Castroite/workerist/anarchist/"Trotskyist" bloc can mobilize a roughly equal number for demonstrations demanding immediate independence for the colonies. But at the level of political direction, none of these groups has demonstrated the ability to lead the struggle forward to proletarian revolution by generalizing and centralizing the workers' struggles into a battle for state power.

During mass upsurges even a small group can become a great force in a short period of time if it gives the masses a correct analysis and raises the correct slogans in good time. With large numbers of workers already going beyond the reformist strait jacket of the CP and several thousand militants supporting one or another of the various centrist groups, the way is open for a far-reaching revolutionary regroupment in Portugal. This is how Lenin prepared for the victory of the October Revolution following his return to Russia in April 1917: reorienting the Bolshevik party toward the goal of winning soviet power, fusing with the group led by Trotsky and struggling to win the workers away from the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries.

Such a regroupment must take the form of the construction of a Trotskyist party on a firm Marxist programmatic base. Only in this way can the eventual product of splits and fusions among ostensibly revolutionary parties lead the struggle of the masses instead of simply tailing behind them (as is now occurring). The key to a successful revolutionary regroupment is thus a sharp struggle for the Transitional Program and Trotskyist politics.

This perspective is sharply counterposed to the opportunist bloc now being sought by various groups to the left of the CP in Portugal. The "Trotskyist" LCI (Internationalist Communist League), the Castroite-anarchist LUAR (League of Unity and Revolutionary Action), the Castroite-workerist PRP (Proletarian Revolutionary Party), the Maoist URM-L (Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Unity), the CIC (Groups for Immediate and Total Independence for the Colonies) and the left social-democratic CBS (Socialist Rank-and-File Committees) are attempting to cement a false unity on a three-point program: "immediate and total independence of the colonies," "rejection of CP opportunism and working-class betrayal" and "socialist revolution as the only means of liberating the Portuguese proletariat."

While the demands are just, and could be the object for occasional joint action, the "unity" they represent is entirely bogus. Most likely this will not develop beyond an informal propaganda bloc in which the several organizations opportunistically submerge their political differences. But if a common formation should emerge (similar to the Chilean MLR, founded in 1965 by Maoists, Castroites and "Trotskyists") it would only split apart at the first serious political test: for instance, in a "July Days" situation where the Maoists, anarchists and Castroites might well attempt some kind of adventurist action; or over political demands, such as a call for immediate elections to a constituent assembly.



LCI contingent at Lisbon demonstration in June.

The political program of Lenin's regroupment of the revolutionary Marxist forces in Russia in 1917 was the famous "April Theses." These dealt with the question of the attitude toward the provisional government; toward the imperialist war and the agrarian question; on the tactics for struggle in the military; on the immediate tasks of the party; over the national question and concerning the class character of the revolution. These were the burning questions of the hour: without unity on these, revolutionary action was impossible. Only a program of similar magnitude can be the basis for Marxist regroupment in Portugal today.

Trotsky, in the founding document of the Fourth International ("The Transitional Program") called for the formulation of a program of demands

"...to help the masses in the process of the daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist program of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of *transitional demands*, stemming from today's conditions and from today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat."

—"The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International," 1938

In a situation in which tens of thousands of Portuguese workers are striking in defiance of the military junta, the provisional government and the Communist Party, while their demands are centered on a "minimum program" of a 40-hour week and a 6,000 escudo minimum wage, the need for such a transitional program is obvious.

### Democratic Demands in Portugal

Democratic demands would play a large role in such a program. It is remarkable that in condemning the treacherous role being played by the Stalinist Communist Party, none of the "far-left" groups, not even the ostensibly Trotskyist LCI, has seen fit to raise the demand for *immediate elections for a constituent assembly*. The Stalinists, to be sure, are for a constituent assembly...12 months from now when everything has been "pacified." To struggle for immediate elections means directly challenging the power of the junta and the provisional government, which were not voted into office by anybody. It means breaking

the "alliance of the people and the armed forces," the cornerstone of CP politics in recent weeks. But in a country that has suffered under the yoke of a bonapartist dictatorship for almost half a century, this demand could easily win mass support.

Another key democratic demand is the call for *unconditional independence for the colonies* and for *immediate withdrawal of the troops from Africa*. Particularly after Spínola's recent declaration on the colonies, which as one army officer commented "could take generations to implement," this too is a call for struggle against the junta. Moreover, it can be used effectively to drive a wedge between the Communist and Socialist leaders and their base: both the CP and SP are formally pro-independence, but the provisional government of which they are a part is pledged only to "negotiations."

One group for whom this demand has special importance, of course, is the soldiers. An example of how seemingly democratic demands can grow over into a direct challenge to the bourgeoisie was the vote by an armed forces unit in Tancos that it would refuse to embark for Africa under any conditions (*Luta Popular*, 6 June). After all, they were only voting on the war, a simple democratic right! For the several tens of thousands of workers from the colonies in Portugal this demand is also of great interest. By undertaking consistent agitation for unconditional independence communists can demonstrate to the most conscious African workers and militants that the road to real national emancipation is not through bourgeois nationalism but through proletarian internationalism.

At the present time, a sharp struggle must be mounted around the demands of *no censorship*, for *freedom of association* and *full freedom to strike*. With the junta moving simultaneously against the political groups to the left of the government and against striking workers, these demands can serve to overcome widespread syndicalism among the workers (the product of CP betrayal) and point to the need for political struggle to protect their elementary democratic rights. It can also drive a wedge between the junta and sections of the petty bourgeoisie, as some newspapers and even Socialist Party leaders have expressed dissatisfaction over the

continued on page 9

WORKERS VANGUARD



# volution?

## Military Threatens Occupation, CP Organizes Scab Brigades

# Portuguese Postal Strike Defeated

FROM OUR SPECIAL  
CORRESPONDENT

LISBON, June 25—After three weeks of futile negotiations with the new Portuguese government, 35,000 workers of the CTT (the official postal and telecommunications agency) left their jobs at midnight on June 16. The strike shut down post offices nationwide and curtailed phone service outside Lisbon and Oporto, the only two cities where telephone service is under another company.

The strike vote was taken by democratically elected delegates from each of the work locations, who then entrusted the day-to-day leadership of the strike to the Comissão Pró-Sindicato. The Commission is a small group struggling for the formation of a trade union for CTT workers, who have been prohibited by the government from organizing.

The strike was almost total, with perhaps 2-3,000 workers not adhering. Strikers demanded 100 percent vacation pay, retroactive to January 1, a minimum salary of 6,000 escudos (roughly \$240) a month, a 35-hour five-day workweek, overtime pay and immediate promotions for workers who had been in the same category for more than five years.

Three days later the strikers returned to work, having gained absolutely nothing. They bowed before a threat from the government to send troops against the strikers and a vicious campaign by the Communist Party and liberals to whip up public opinion against the strike.

The government launched its attack immediately. Ignoring the fact that the strike vote had been taken by delegates from the work sites, it tried to blame the walkout on the Comissão Pró-Sindicato and appealed to the "conscience" of individual workers to go against their strike leaders:

"...the Government cannot but note that although the strike is a right of the workers it cannot be used indiscriminately without exhausting the possibilities of negotiation, which in this case, the Government was still committed to continuing.

"It appeals, therefore, to the political conscience of the CTT workers, so that they think over the consequences of a strike in this moment, [consequences] for which they will be entirely responsible, [and] the certainty that the Government will not back down from showing the firmness that the situation will require in order to assure the normal life of the country."

—*Diário de Notícias*, 17 June

When the workers stood united in the face of this threat, the Provisional Government carried out its promises of "firmness." On the third day, with the strike ranks still holding solid, the government called on the armed forces to intervene. Major General Costa Gomez amiably agreed.

Even more devastating to the strike effort than the threat of troop intervention, however, was the smear campaign of the Communist Party traitors. Having obtained two seats in President General Spínola's cabinet, including the Ministry of Labor, the CP was naturally "in perfect unity" with the government line that interruption of work in vital sectors of the national economy contradicted "normal progress toward



Postal workers gather during Lisbon strike.

REVOLUÇÃO

democracy." This strike-breaking line was echoed by the Stalinist-led labor federation, the Intersindical: "Certain demands made at this time are an affront to the democratization of the country" (*Diário de Notícias*, 20 June).

But the "Communist" Party did not stop at mere words! In several parts of the country the Stalinists organized demonstrations against the strike. They also formed goon squads which smashed post office windows and threatened to enter the occupied work locations. In Bragança, where such a gang actually did enter the post office, the workers remained firm in refusing to return to work. (Throughout the strike the CTT workers continued vital services such as urgent communications with hospitals, doctors, pharmacies, firemen, etc.)

Under the threat of troop intervention and physical danger to strikers from the CP's goon squads, bargaining between the Comissão Pró-Sindicato and the government reopened on June 19. Despite the affirmation two days previously that it was "committed to continuing" negotiations, in the middle of the session the government's representatives got up and left, declaring that they had made their final offer. The next day the authorities declared over the radio that it was actually the Comissão which left the negotiations and once again tried to go over the head of the commission, appealing directly to the workers to go back to work by publishing in the newspapers a table of proposed wage categories. (Moreover, this schedule was actually lower than the government's last offer at the negotiating table!)

Immediately following the June 19 negotiating session, the Commission adopted a position of abandoning the strike and called a meeting of the delegates. At the beginning of the meeting the delegates were firm in their resolve to continue the strike, but after a four-hour discussion the

Comissão brought them around to its position that the strike could not continue because the strikers were in physical danger and "because the unpopularity of the strike was sowing dissension within the class as a whole."

Now the Commission has adopted a new set of demands which it intends to put before a delegate vote June 26. These include a minimum salary of 5,000 escudos, a 75 percent discount for CTT workers in the pharmacies, control of social security and personnel (transfers, hiring and promotions) by the workers, removal of all sympathetic to the old regime from the administration and the same immediate promotions demand as previously. But the Comissão has abandoned a position of strength and, having led the workers through what turned out to be a useless strike, it has lost the initiative in relation to the government. There is even less chance now for acceptance of the workers' demands, even though they are of a lesser character.

The defeated CTT strike has been another lesson in the hollowness of Spínola's pretensions to the granting of democratic liberties under the new regime. In other words, the right to strike will be "permitted" (although "regulated," naturally) as long as it is not used in important sectors of the economy! It is precisely because the means of communication are vital to the operations of the bourgeoisie that the government responded immediately with the threat of force. Having gotten away with it, the government will be all the more ready to use similar methods to crush other strikes.

For intransigent defense of the unlimited right to strike for all workers in Portugal! With the government pleading inability to pay and refusing to accept the just demands of the CTT employees, the only way postal and telecommunications workers can win their wage claims, expel the criminals of the

continued on page 8

## Spínola/CP Regime Reimposes Censorship

LISBON, June 22—In the wake of the arrest of Saldanha Sanches, editor of the Maoist MRPP's *Luta Popular* and the placing of television under direct government control following a TV workers' protest over military censorship, General Spínola has just informed the Portuguese public as to what is meant by freedom of speech under the new regime. Yesterday the general signed into law an act that authorizes the "Junta of National Salvation" to nominate an ad hoc commission for control of the press, radio, television, theater and motion pictures until the publication of new laws regarding these media.

The preamble to the law points out that the replacement of the former Salazar-Caetano dictatorship must proceed "without internal convulsions which affect the peace, the progress and the well-being of the country." "To the means of social communication falls the fundamental mission of actively cooperating in the reconstruction of the country," according to the provisional government, which includes Communist and Socialist ministers. Thus there is an "absolute necessity of prohibiting the unjust use of a liberty which must be responsible, thus preventing the country from being led into a climate of anarchy through incitement to disorder and violence." In other words, freedom of speech will be permitted as long as no one says anything against the government!

The ad hoc committee is to remain under the direct control of the junta, functioning in conformity with the regulations annexed to the law which include the following prohibitions:

- Incitement or provocation, even though indirect, to military disobedience, including disrespect for military laws and regulations.
- Offenses against the President of the Republic or members of the State Council.
- Offenses against foreign heads of state or their accredited diplomatic representatives in Portugal.
- References to military operations whose divulgence has not been authorized by the Armed Forces.
- Incitement to strike, work stoppages or demonstrations not authorized by legislation in effect.
- Ideological attacks that contradict the execution of the Program of the Movement of the Armed Forces.
- Practice or incitement to practice of any other acts which the general law classifies as crimes. Violations will be punished by a fine of 500,000 escudos (roughly \$20,000) and suspension of the offending media for a period of sixty days.

There is no doubt whatever that this attack is not directed against "the forces of reaction" as it claims to be, but is a naked attempt to stifle not only the left, but all workers' organizations as well. If the reactionaries accumulate enough strength to rigorously enforce this law the left will be forced once again to clandestinely circulate its publications. For working-class mobilization to defend full freedom of the press, freedom of speech, the right to association and the right to strike! For the immediate release of Saldanha Sanches!



Continued from page 7

## Postal Strike...

Salazarist regime and achieve control of personnel is to take over the installations and run them under workers control. (This would also be a tremendous step in the direction of organizing nationwide resistance to a move by the junta to crush the labor movement.)

A strike for such advanced demands requires audacious and rigorous organizing to achieve victory: occupation of the CTT facilities and expulsion of all representatives of the government; armed defense guards to protect the strikers against Stalinist goon squads and an army attack; democratic election of a strike committee, responsible to the ranks, which can be recalled at any time. Likewise, it is necessary to link up with militant workers throughout the country, calling for strikes to achieve a 30-hour week with no loss in pay (Portugal suffers massive unemployment which forces hundreds of thousands of workers to emigrate in search of jobs); full cost-of-living pro-

tection (sliding scale of wages, a key demand with inflation in Lisbon now running at an annual rate of more than 20 percent); equal pay for equal work (important because of the widespread wage discrimination against several hundred thousand women and black Cape Verdean workers); doubling the minimum wage; and expropriation under workers control of the banks, industry and monopolies (CUF, Dos Santos, Champalimaud, etc.) who run the country's economy.

Such strikes require organization and leadership which, given the scabbing policies of the Stalinist CP, cannot come from the unions of the Intersindical; it is necessary to extend the democratically elected unitary *comissões operárias* (workers commissions, joining together members of the many unions in a single plant) to all workplaces, and to coordinate them through a national council of workers commissions and strike committees. Pointing out to their working-class brothers in uniform that their interests lie in joint struggle against the generals, militants must also agitate for the formation of soldiers' committees linked to the *comissões operárias*.

Workers control, workers commissions, militant factory occupations, armed defense of strike pickets, a central council of strike and factory committees, the formation of soldiers committees—all of these measures point to an inevitable direct confrontation with Spínola and the junta. Given the present disorganization of the workers movement the time is not propitious for a head-on collision now, and revolutionaries must therefore seek to avoid adventurist armed clashes with pro-junta troops (something the Maoists and semi-Castroite elements might well attempt).

Nonetheless, the masses must be educated to beware of the junta and its puppet provisional government; they must be won away from the treacherous pro-Spínola misleaders of the Communist Party and the Intersindical. A call for massive unitary demonstrations (preserving the right of all organizations to carry their own signs and slogans) defending the right to strike, against censorship, for immediate elections to a constituent assembly, for unconditional independence to the colonies and for immediate withdrawal of the troops from Africa can aid this

process of political clarification.

The CP reformists have no intention of breaking with the generals and their provisional government and fighting for a workers government based on a national council of workers commissions. The Stalinist traitors' refusal to fight for a workers government demonstrates concretely to the working masses just whom these fake communists really support—not the workers they claim to represent—but the "democratic" bourgeoisie of the Spínola regime.

But the key to taking the struggle forward is not simply a demonstration or slogan, but the fundamental question of revolutionary leadership. Although large segments of the Portuguese working class have rejected the leadership of the strikebreaking CP, there is neither a recognized alternative leadership of the militant workers nor a party which has demonstrated its ability to take the struggle forward to victory. The construction of that party, which can only be built on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and the Trotskyist Transitional Program, as part of a reborn Fourth International, is the fundamental task facing revolutionists in Portugal today. ■

Continued from page 12

## CWA...

amendment; right-wing opposition to détente (for example, Nixon should be impeached not for Watergate but because he visited China!); and supplanting strikes by more "modern" unionism that "serves the national interest." But it is unclear whether Watts has the authority to consolidate the bureaucracy.

Just one year ago at the Miami convention MAC was able to wage a successful united-front campaign to defeat the proposed "19-2C" amendment, originally posed as an anti-red clause and subsequently turned into an omnibus anti-dissent measure, the vague wording of which threatened any mildly independent local bureaucrat. But in Kansas City, virtually every independent-leaning local leader had been lined up behind "national bargaining." In a bargaining year with strong rank-and-file sentiment for a strike, which could easily escape the bureaucracy's control, the plea for unity among squabbling bureaucrats fell upon sympathetic ears.

### For a Class-Struggle Opposition

The harassment and threats against MAC were an indication of the fact that none of the nervous bureaucrats wanted to mount even the most timid opposition to the present CWA regime in this explosive period. Much less were they interested in defending the rights of a real class-struggle opposition group which calls for a fight not only against Beirne and his successor, but also against the several "independent" local bureaucrats in various militant big-city locations and the various reformist fake lefts who tag along in their wake. MAC has consistently fought for policies not of "mutual responsibility," but for class struggle; not for reliance on the Democratic and Republican twin parties of capital, but for taking the fight to the political arena through a labor party based on the trade unions.

Also present in Kansas City were members of the Progressive Labor Party-backed Workers Action Movement. MAC requested that WAM join a bloc to defend the right of opposition at the CWA convention. WAM, however, turned down this request, explaining that it wanted united fronts only with the masses. With the exception of WAM and MAC, no other left opposition groups in the phone union were present in Kansas City.

Noticeably absent were the IS-supported United Action Caucus and the RU-supported Final Warning from Local 1101 in New York. This was an indication that neither has a serious

perspective for building a national opposition caucus and waging a fight for alternative leadership of the union. Instead they opt for blocs with lesser-evil bureaucrats like 1101 President Ed Dempsey. Dempsey not only failed to oppose the International's "national bargaining" scheme at Kansas City, but was also a big star in the COPE awards, indicating his special zeal in the service of the Democratic Party.

Had these phony opposition groupings been present at this convention, they would no doubt have leapt at the chance to wrap their tails around Dan Archaletta, Western Electric Local 9490 president, who made a grandstand play for militant sentiment in support of the CWA resolution backing the United Farm Workers and denouncing the Teamster-grower alliance. Not satisfied with just words, Archaletta wanted...not actions, like hot-cargoing of scab goods, and a California-wide general strike in defense of the UFW (both of these measures have been advocated by MAC)...but stronger words. This same Archaletta was a prime mover behind last year's proposed anti-red clause in 1973.

### Contract Sellout Prepared

The International avoided the inevitable yearly battle with the historically more militant and dissident Western Electric Manufacturing unit by at long last acquiescing to its demands for its own national division.

A resolution on impeachment stood to the right of that passed by the AFL-CIO executive board, calling not for impeachment, but only for quick resolution of the matter, the sooner to bolster up the sagging authority of the government.

An anti-democratic feminist proposal to appoint more women to union posts on the basis of sex was defeated from the right when delegates argued that women are not specially oppressed in the CWA! A more watered-down proposal, to "study" the question, was passed. A debate on racial discrimination followed similar lines and was resolved by creating a post of vice president to "study" ethnic affairs.

On the key issue for 1974—the contract—there was virtually no opposition to the International's determination to ram through a settlement similar to the betrayals of the 1974 steel and 1973 auto contracts. The adoption of "national bargaining" was simply accepted as a fait accompli, not even put up on the floor for a vote. Nor was there opposition to the shelving of every critical contract demand, including the full cost-of-living escalator, end to absence control, for no layoffs but more jobs to fight unemployment, the agency shop, and for an end to discrimination through union control of hiring and

upgrading.

Watts was even allowed to dodge the question of whether the union would strike at all in a year when inflation, massive layoffs and attacks on union seniority rights (through preferential hiring administered by the government) constitute a sharp attack by the bourgeoisie against the membership and the union itself. Not to strike in 1974—when the morally discredited government is able to continue its wage-slashing, union-busting policies solely through the cooperation of the labor tops—is to openly betray the union to the interests of the bosses.



Joseph Beirne (right) and Glenn Watts.

But more than just a strike, it is necessary to raise a program of demands which can serve to unite the union ranks in struggle against the companies and the capitalist offensive. In the June-July issue of *Militant Action*, distributed at the Kansas City convention, MAC raises the following demands which are of particular importance in the 1974 contract bargaining:

- "1. For a huge wage increase and a REAL cost-of-living clause! Narrow the wage gap—One nationwide payscale!"
- "2. Shorten the work week with no loss in pay—No layoffs—No forced transfers—No forced overtime!"
- "3. For union control of the shop floor, hiring, upgrades and transfers!"
- "4. No punishment for being ill—End absence control!"
- "5. For a one year contract with full right to strike!"
- "6. Full Company paid medical, dental care—Paid maternity leave!"

Such a program would make the bosses, not the workers, pay the cost of inflation; it poses the need for *real* national bargaining, not the CWA tops' disguised plan to eliminate local contract ratification. The benefits of automation would accrue to the workers instead of increasing profits by speed-up and layoffs; hiring and upgrading of

minority and women workers would be accomplished not by the token "preferential" schemes which divide the ranks, but by creating more jobs for all. In short, it is a program calling for a basic reorientation of the CWA to a policy of consistent class struggle.

MAC does not limit its fight to issues of simple trade-union militancy, but sees the need to broaden the struggle into a political battle for working-class leadership. The same issue of *Militant Action* contains an article on "The Democratic Party—CWA's Slot Machine That Never Pays Off!" which points out that impeaching Nixon, while supportable, simply means putting the anti-labor reactionary Gerald Ford in the White House! Instead MAC calls on the unions to use industrial action to force Nixon out and bring about new elections, for a militant labor candidate opposed to the two bourgeois parties and for an independent party of labor. Another article, entitled "Why Is The AFL-CIO Known As The AFL-CIA In Latin America" details the activities of the Meany/Beirne-led AIFLD, which trains anti-communist "labor leaders" to cooperate with vicious military dictatorships, as in Brazil and Chile.

The fight for a new, class-struggle leadership of the labor movement requires the formation of national caucuses in the unions based on a principled program such as that of the Militant Action Caucus in the CWA. (Militants who wish to contact MAC can do so by writing to Militant Action, P.O. Box 462, El Cerrito, California 94530.) ■

## WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Bi-weekly of the Spartacist League

### Editorial Board:

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

Circulation Manager: Anne Kelley

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

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

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



Continued from page 6

## ...Portuguese Revolution

reimposition of censorship (*O Seculo*, 27 June).

Yet another important democratic demand would be for the *expulsion of criminals of the Salazarist dictatorship from the factories and state agencies, for their trial by democratically elected people's tribunals*. If fully implemented this would lead to the dissolution of the bourgeois state apparatus which, despite the alleged dismantling of the political police (PIDE), is wholly a creation of the Salazarist epoch. Thus neither this nor the other democratic demands can be accomplished without mobilizing the working class against the bourgeois state.

### Transitional Demands and Revolutionary Struggle

In the course of recent strikes, one of the most common demands was for workers participation in management.

*minimum wage*. With giant monopolies claiming inability to pay the workers' wage demands, it is necessary also to raise the demands of *workers' inspection of the corporate records and expropriation of the banks, industry and monopolies under workers control*.

Militant strikes for such transitional demands will naturally be exposed to attacks by the CP-organized scabs and goon squads and possible intervention by the army; therefore it is necessary to call for *armed defense of the picket lines*. Simultaneously it is crucial to undertake work inside the armed forces to win over the ranks through the formation of *soldiers and sailors committees* linked to the workers movement.

And as the struggle escalates, the workers defense guards must be transformed into a unified *workers militia*. The central council of strike and factory committees must function as an alternative power, a workers govern-

ment counterposed to the military junta and provisional government of the bourgeoisie. In other words, transformed into a *soviet*, the seeds of a future proletarian state, it will create a situation of dual power. But this will not occur spontaneously, and requires above all the intervention of the revolutionary party, its winning over of a majority of the decisive sectors of the working class and consequently of the soviets.

Another key political demand which must be raised is *Portugal out of NATO*, and *Down with the Iberian Pact*. Not only is the CP's agreement to a coalition government tied to anti-communist military pacts a scandal of the first magnitude, but it is precisely from Spain and NATO that foreign intervention to squelch the Portuguese masses is most likely to come. Spínola's secret conversations with Nixon last week are one indication of this obvious point.

At present the Portuguese armed forces are probably too untrustworthy for the junta to use them against the workers. In a crisis the bourgeoisie might appeal to the Spanish army for aid—an eventuality for which Franco is already preparing—witness the firing of the "liberal" Spanish defense minister Díez Alergría last month. But in this case the forces of nationalism could be allied with the working class, for it is obvious that Spanish "aid" would spell the end of the greatly weakened Portuguese state. Thus the agitation against NATO and the Iberian Pact is a crucial struggle against developing bourgeois counterrevolution.

### MRPP: Two-Stage Revolution

Maoism is a reformist current within the workers movement, a specific "third-world" variant of Stalinism. Mao himself has consistently opposed the Leninist-Trotskyist call for proletarian revolution in the backward countries, in which the working class would lead the peasantry and other exploited sectors of the population in solving the national and democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution by establishing a *workers state*, concomitant with the socialist tasks. But despite its backwardness, Portugal is no "third-world" agrarian country; it has a large working class and is itself an imperialist power, albeit a rather pathetic one. Under such circumstances there is little to distinguish Maoism from the Moscow-line Stalinism of the CP.

A consequence of this ambiguity is the existence of a number of "left-Maoist" groups in the advanced countries. One such group is the Movement for the Reorganization of the Proletarian Party, the largest organization to the left of the CP. The MRPP claims that "the revolution is on the order of the day" and the "dominant class is now unable to govern." But at the same time it declares that "the working class is not yet in a condition to take power" (*Luta Popular*, 6 June). The solution is simple for any well-versed Stalinist: Portugal must have a "democratic" revolution.

At a general level, the Maoists' policies are hardly distinguishable from the pro-Moscow CP:

"The mission of the working class is to apply the scientific theory of the proletariat to the concrete characteristics of revolution in its country. In the case of Portugal, the actual phase of the revolution is the Democratic and Popular Revolution and not, as the Trotskyists and other opportunists would have it, already the phase of socialist revolution.

"The significance of this is that in order to make the socialist revolution, the Portuguese working class has to first conquer certain objectives, from which it can prepare and begin in the fight for its final objectives. These intermediate objectives are Bread, Peace, Land, Liberty, Democracy and National Independence."

—Luta Popular, 6 June

However, at a slightly lower level the MRPP leadership attempts to give this slogan of Democratic and Popular Revolution a very "left" interpretation. While Mao concluded from the supposed "inability" of the proletariat to take power that one should make alliances with Chiang Kai-shek, the Portuguese Maoists attempt a mechanical imitation of Lenin's policies during the October Revolution of 1917.

This creates difficulties since, as Lenin clearly stated in the April Theses, the Bolsheviks' aim in 1917 was to carry out a *proletarian* (not "popular-democratic") revolution. This ("Trotskyist") position is reflected, although in a distorted manner, in some of the MRPP's pronouncements. For instance, explaining its main demands it states:

"Only the popular revolutionary program is in the interests of the people, only it puts an end to all exploitation. *For Bread*—expropriation of the monopolies and large enterprises by the working class; *For Peace*—complete independence for the peoples of the colonies and return of the soldiers; *For Land*—confiscation of the holdings of the latifundists and rich peasants and their distribution among the agricultural workers and poor peasants; *For Liberty* for the people and dictatorship over the bourgeoisie; *For Democracy*—constitution of popular organizations in the organs of state power; *For National Independence*—expulsion of the imperialists from Portuguese soil... this is the road of Popular Revolution. "FOR BREAD, PEACE, LAND, LIBERTY, DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, no bourgeois power can give this to the people. Only the workers, peasants, youth, women, soldiers and remaining elements of the people, under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party and organized in a powerful popular revolutionary front, can put an end to the reactionary power of the bourgeoisie and construct a popular power, a popular government, a popular dictatorship, a popular Republic."

—Luta Popular, 6 June

The MRPP's actual practice is in accord with its overall Stalinist line and in stark contradiction to this left verbiage. Thus in the recent strike wave it called for a central objective of the 40-hour week, a classic demand of the social-democratic/Stalinist "minimum program."

However, in the quotation above, the measures advocated would, if carried out, result in the destruction of the bourgeois state and, despite the fantasies of some kind of intermediate "popular-democratic" stage, the establishment of some deformed version of a workers state. The fact that the MRPP nowhere agitates for the formation of democratically elected workers committees, as the foundation of the future soviet state, is an indication that what these Maoists have in mind is a bureaucratically deformed workers state on the Chinese model.

Nevertheless, their call for expropriation of the monopolies and destruction of the bourgeois state constitutes a contradiction which can be used by revolutionists to make clear to the masses (and the MRPP's own militants) what is the real content of Maoist politics. For instance, during the Lisnave strike at the end of May, a Bolshevik party would have challenged the MRPP to join it in calling for the expropriation of the CUF trust (which owns the shipyards), a demand that would appear to be in harmony with the Maoists' program. If they refused and insisted the "minimum" demand of a 40-hour week, then the Maoists' leftist pretensions would be exposed as simple hypocrisy.

### PRP: Guerrillaism and Workerism

The Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat—Revolutionary Brigades (PRP) is the second largest group of the "far left," after the MRPP, and is in many ways a unique phenomenon. Broadly speaking it can be termed "Castroite-workerist"—a strange combination since the Castroites characteristically seek to substitute the guerrilla band for

continued on next page



PRP demonstration

WV PHOTO

While this demand expresses widespread distrust of the bourgeoisie revolutionists must point out its reformist content and instead call for the implementation of *workers control*, to expel all the bosses. This, in turn, can be implemented only through the *creation of factory committees* (the *comissões operárias*) to administer the workplace and organize the workers in united struggle.

To date, the individual strikes (of shipyard workers, textile workers, watchmakers, postal employees, transit workers, etc.) have had no central coordination. The trade-union federation, the CP-led Intersindical, has lined up solidly on the side of the government in sabotaging the strikes. To provide coordination and defense of the strikes it is necessary to form a *national council of strike committees, workers commissions*, etc. whose delegates are *recallable at any time*.

Such a council could serve as a launching pad for *strikes to achieve a sliding scale of wages and hours* (to protect the working masses against inflation and unemployment), for *equal pay for equal work*, for doubling the

ment counterposed to the military junta and provisional government of the bourgeoisie. In other words, transformed into a *soviet*, the seeds of a future proletarian state, it will create a situation of dual power. But this will not occur spontaneously, and requires above all the intervention of the revolutionary party, its winning over of a majority of the decisive sectors of the working class and consequently of the soviets.

As Marx noted in the *Communist Manifesto*, every class battle is ultimately a political battle. The various democratic and transitional demands must be generalized in a program of class struggle against the bourgeois regime and centralized in the demand for a *workers government based on democratically-elected workers committees* (soviets), which will expropriate the capitalist class and destroy the bourgeois state.

However, this demand must not be left suspended in space as a "maximum program" for the distant future. At present the prime obstacle to political independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie is the Stalinist Communist Party which is participating in

## SUBSCRIBE TO Young Spartacus

Organ of the Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth section of the Spartacist League

\$1

6 ISSUES

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make payable/mail to: RCY, Box 454, Cooper Station, N. Y., N. Y. 10003



Continued from page 9

## ...Portuguese Revolution

the struggle of the working masses, and true workerists would tail after the proletarian masses on every available occasion. Nevertheless, it is precisely this combination which is the PRP.

Under the severe repression of the Salazarist dictatorship the PRP chose not to attempt to mobilize the masses around a program of democratic and transitional demands—for instance, the freedom to form trade unions and freedom of the press. Instead it chose to carry out isolated terrorist actions, such as the bombing of army headquarters, supply stations and warships. The PRP's explanation of this terrorist policy is an interesting link to its current workerist practice: it concentrated on bombings because "this was what the workers were talking about!" (*Revolução*, 8 June)

(In the context of a colonial war and a bonapartist dictatorship, acts of sabotage are not unimportant. But the key perspective must remain the organization of the working class to overthrow the bourgeoisie. How much more effective than a bomb explosion on a ship would be, for instance, a refusal by dock workers to load cargoes of arms and supplies bound for Africa.)

Now the PRP believes that the terrorist phase is over, since the coup of April 25 "made the working class the principal motor of the evolution and future development of the political situation in Portugal" (*Revolução*, 1 June). The principal task of the moment is the organization of the workers around economist trade-union demands:

"It is necessary to interpret simply the profound anxieties of the working class and enunciate in clear terms its political grievances. The question is the organization of workers everywhere. It is only this way that it will be possible to construct the necessary and indispensable unity of the proletariat, independent of political groups and parties." [emphasis ours]

—*Revolução*, 8 June

The last phrase is no accident. *Revolução* goes on to explain that "the workers in a particular factory will know better what they want than any political party, the PRP included." One begins to wonder if the "Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat" has any reason for existence at all!

In actuality the PRP is dedicated to promoting syndicalist "self-management" schemes, and sings the praises of the Lip strike in France last year. (See *WV* No. 42, 12 April 1974 for the story of how the Lip strike was sold out.) Unlike the Catholic trade unionists who led that strike, however, the PRP claims to be committed to socialist revolution. Thus the PRP Central Committee's "Manifesto ao Proletariado Portugues," issued on 12 May, ends with slogans calling "For Total Destruction of the Fascist State Apparatus; For an alliance of soldiers and sailors with the organized workers in struggle for socialism; For the Revolutionary Unity of the Working Class; For the Socialist Revolution; For the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; For Proletarian Internationalism."

There is very little Marxist clarity here, but the PRP seems to be saying that it doesn't want simply a minimum program. The problem is that it does not manage to connect democratic and trade-union demands to its maximum program. Again there is a contradiction here which can be exploited. By presenting a program of transitional demands, Trotskyists can point out to these Castroite-workerists that, no matter how many times they repeat dictatorship of the proletariat, they will get nowhere until they can link the present struggles of the working class with the struggle for proletarian revolution.

### LCI: Tailing the "New Mass Vanguard"

The Internationalist Communist League (LCI—supporters of the European majority of the "United Secretar-

iat") is the only group in Portugal which claims to be Trotskyist. While dutifully supporting the adventurist actions/positions of its international affiliates (such as the Ligue Communiste's bash with the French police on the occasion of a fascist meeting last June, or the Spanish LCR's "total support" to a bomb assassination of the Spanish premier by a Basque nationalist organization in December), the LCI rejects terrorism for Portugal despite the fact that such actions have been widely supported by other left organizations.

Likewise, the LCI asserts that the only road to the Portuguese revolution lies through organization of the working class and actually takes an abstentionist attitude toward student struggles. Its newspaper contains programmatic calls for demands such as a sliding scale of wages and hours, opening the books of industry, expropriation of industry under workers control, workers militias and armed defense of picket lines, and "creation of 'United Committees of Working-Class Struggle' to be transformed into organs of dual power in the course of overthrowing the dictatorship" ("Problemas gerais da estratégia revolucionária," *Accão Comunista* No. 2, February 1974). On paper the LCI seeks to maintain an appearance of Trotskyist orthodoxy.

However, when it comes to practical actions, it is a different matter altogether. The LCI believes, together with its mentor Ernest Mandel, that there exists a "new mass vanguard" which has broken with reformism and only needs to be organized for struggle. In much of West Europe this theory leads to a practice which, on occasion, can even have adventurist traits, as the Mandelites tail after the Guevarist-Maoist-New Left youth. But in a pre-revolutionary situation in Portugal, the same theory proves to have reformist consequences. Like the MRPP and PRP, which refuse to raise anything but the 40-hour week, the LCI systematically abstains from raising political demands in the context of the workers' strikes.

The only political demand it ever raises in the working class is the call for workers control. But even this is a some-time matter: in an interview with a *WV* reporter, LCI spokesmen said that this demand should be raised "only when the situation warrants it." For example, "it was possible to raise workers control in the context of the Timex strike," but "only in personal conversations with workers!"

Portuguese workers have already gone beyond these demands. Calls for a minimum salary of 6,000 escudos and a 40-hour week have been common to most of the strikes since the coup: the postal workers demanded not a 40-hour week, but 35 hours; and Timex workers have instituted the 40-hour week themselves. Workers have even been groping toward the demand for workers control, although they have been seduced by the CP into reformist formulations such as "participation in management." Yet the LCI declares it is "too soon" to raise political demands.

In fact, the opposite is true. During the Lisnave strike in late May, for instance, it was necessary to call not only for workers control (as opposed to participation or "self-management"), but for linking up with the workers commissions and strike committees of the other plants on strike, which included Lisbon transport workers, tens of thousands of textile workers, Timex workers, etc. Out of a central committee of strike and factory committees a soviet organ of dual power could have emerged which would provide a means to organize working-class resistance to the junta's counterrevolutionary plans. In short, the Transitional Program is not simply words on paper but the key tool for intervening in the mass movement to win the workers from their present reformist misleaders. ■

## At Maoist-Backed Steel Conference:

# Reformists Favor Taking Unions to Court

CHICAGO—A conference of about 100 oppositional local officials and their left-wing supporters in the Steelworkers' Union met over Memorial Day weekend in Chicago. Although ostensibly focused on opposition to Steelworker president I. W. Abel's "Experimental Negotiating Agreement" (ENA) no-strike deal and the government/company/union "consent decree" (a fraudulent anti-discrimination measure), the main purpose of the conference was to cement an alliance to promote further court suits and "rank-and-file delegates" at the upcoming USWA convention in September.

Conference leaders representing the "Rank and File Team" (RAFT), an oppositional grouping led by local officials in Youngstown, Ohio, spoke in militant tones against Abel's no-strike pledge and the consent decree, but had no program to do anything about them. While RAFT hypocritically claims to be concerned only with trade-union issues, it is politically indistinguishable from the incumbent pro-capitalist trade-union bureaucracy, having supported bourgeois Democrat McGovern in the last presidential elections. Among its supporters, however, there are some would-be radicals and socialists.

The RAFT outfit promises to travel the same path as the Brotherhood coalition which was elected to office in the Fremont, California, UAW Local last year. In the Brotherhood would-be bureaucrats and would-be radicals combined to form an opportunist bloc for the Local elections. Once in power the Brotherhood dropped its "people power" rhetoric and obediently toed the Woodcock line, expediently dissociating itself from its more militant backers. The right-wing Maoist October League, however, continues to virulently defend the Brotherhood bureaucracy. Predictably, the OL's paper, the *Call*, hailed the Memorial Day conference. Likewise, the 5 June *Guardian*, which follows the OL line, gave favorable coverage to the event.

Other union groups present besides RAFT included Steelworkers for Equality, the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Steelworkers and the District 31 Right to Strike Committee. Notable by its absence was the National Steelworkers' Rank and File Committee (NSRFC), affiliated with Trade Unionists for Action and Democracy (TUAD), which is supported by the Communist Party. According to steel workers interviewed by *Workers Vanguard*, the CP-backed elements boycotted the meeting in sectarian fashion because it was backed by Maoists.

Though there is little essential political difference between the two groups, the NSRFC has been unable to secure an alliance with RAFT and is independently running George Edwards of Lorain, Ohio, against Abel for the union presidency. Though their programs in the last June's union elections ironically failed to take a stand against the ENA, RAFT and the NSRFC were the chief backers of the recent court suit to overturn the ENA. Predictably the suit failed miserably in the courts, though it did succeed in destructively sidetracking steel worker opposition to the no-strike agreement.

Playing a prominent role in the conference, defending the anti-ENA suit and explaining new plans for court action, were the lawyers who had pressed the suit. During the workshop on discrimination one of these lawyers suggested the outrageous possibility of a

suit to de-certify the union for not representing its black members! A brilliant proposal—for the bosses, anyway! Empower the courts and government to determine the right of unions to exist! Thus the strategy of relying on court interference to bring about democracy in the unions is carried to its logical conclusion. Neither the CP nor any of the Maoist groups backing the conference, however, have voiced any objection to such "tactics."

Neither has the ex-Trotskyist SWP, which also had a supporter or two at the conference. A guest column in the 28 June *Militant* ignorantly claimed that the Maoist Revolutionary Union had opposed court suits against the union. In fact, RU-supported elements at the conference were exhibiting the hypocritical nature of their opposition to discrimination against minorities and women by arguing against the Equal Rights Amendment.

A principled motion condemning the use of the bourgeois courts against the union was presented at the plenary session by a rank-and-file militant who evidently disagreed with the opportunist mood of the conference. His motion was not supported by any of the organized groups at the conference. As noted by the *Guardian*, RAFT spokesman John Barbero, a plaintiff in the recent anti-Abel suit, defended the court action not on the grounds that it might have been successful, which he said had not been expected, but simply because Abel had been forced to give "damaging testimony"! Thus RAFT cynically advocates that workers place confidence in the "neutral" bourgeois state, knowing full well that this "expedient" tactic is actually bound to fail.

The courts are tools of the bosses! The behavior of the "radical" supporters of RAFT plays not only into the hands of labor's capitalist enemies, but also into the hands of the entrenched reactionary labor bureaucracy and Abel specifically. The courts may at times rule in favor of an individual careerist or even a whole new bureaucratic layer (as represented by Arnold Miller of the Mineworkers, who was considered a great example at the conference), but never in favor of fundamental advances for the rank and file.

Missing from the proposals and resolutions finally passed was any mention of the key issues faced by steel workers: "productivity"; social-patriotic protectionism vs. international working-class solidarity; the infamous incentive system practiced in the steel industry and speed-up; rejection of the workers' weapons of class struggle. In favor of reliance on arbitration, the courts and Democratic Party "friends of labor" in the government.

But, of course, a program in the workers' interest on such issues would directly challenge the labor bureaucrats, including RAFT local leaders, unlike the fake-militant rhetoric which bureaucrats occasionally embrace when expediency indicates a verbal shift to the left. Steel workers don't need fake-militant out-bureaucrats on the make, but a class-struggle alternative to Abel. The pattern of class collaboration and betrayals of the Abel bureaucracy will not be broken until it is replaced with such a leadership that will fight not only for immediate economic gains, but to secure political power for the working class. Oust the bureaucrats! For a workers party based on the trade unions! For a workers government! ■



## Continued from page 3 ...Chile Defense

of the NMU, which had also requested to speak, was refused.

The SWP leaders of USLA (and in the May 11 CAC) thus made quite clear that while they were willing to give in under pressure from the SL, they were absolutely opposed to recognizing the Leninist principles for a united front. As the "Theses on the United Front," published by the Executive Committee of the Comintern in December 1921, noted:

"Imposing on themselves a discipline of action, it is obligatory that Communists should preserve for themselves, not only up to and after actions, but if necessary even during action, the right and possibility of expressing their opinion on the policy of all working class organisations, without exception. The rejection of this condition is not permissible under any circumstances. While supporting the watchword of maximum unity of all working-class organisations, Communists, in every practical action taken against the capitalist front, must not on any account refrain from putting forward their views, which are only the logical expression of the defence of the interests of the working-class as a whole."

### Reconstructing the Popular Front

The political essence of reformism is support for the continued existence of capitalism. For the SWP reformists this is expressed in their "single-issue" civil libertarian (USLA, CODEL), feminist (WONAAC) and anti-war (NPAC) coalitions whose limited programs are aimed at attracting support from and participation by bourgeois liberals (former Attorney-General Ramsey Clark on civil liberties issues, Abzug for WONAAC, Senator Vance Hartke for NPAC). Rather than integrating struggles for democratic demands into the broader working-class struggle for socialist revolution, the SWP prefers building a series of miniature popular-fronts. These ongoing "coalitions" have programs that are a series of reforms in no way incompatible with the continued existence of capitalism.

The Stalinists such as the Communist Party, and the various Chile Solidarity Committees led by them, prefer big-time class collaboration instead of the bush-league SWP variety. Thus they seek to build political support for Allende's UP coalition which ruled Chile from 1970 to 1973. By preaching faith in the "constitutional officers" and the "progressive" sectors of the bourgeoisie, the UP government lulled the masses and systematically prepared the way for the victory of the bloody rightist coup. Now the Stalinists seek to build political support for these treacherous policies in their Chile defense work.

A prime example was the May 11 demonstration in San Francisco which was dominated by the CP and the New Left—"radical" NACLA (North American Congress on Latin America) and NICH (Non-Intervention in Chile). The official rally leaflet sang the praises of the former Allende government and its treacherous "peaceful road to

socialism":

"When the people of Chile elected Salvador Allende to be their president, they were embarking on an experience new to the world: attempting to create a just, socialist society by peaceful means. To the workers and poor of Chile, Allende and his government represented them...."

The demands of the demonstration included the call for "support to the Chilean resistance." When this demand was raised at an earlier planning meeting for the demonstration, SWP/USLA forces argued vociferously against it (in favor of restricting the demonstration to civil liberties issues). When the motion passed, they left. The SL critically supported the demand, noting its vagueness, and proposed a clarifying motion, which was passed, stating that this demand did not mean "political support to any particular group or coalition of groups within the resistance, or support to any specific

pite the explicit statement adopted by the steering committee on April 27 that "support to the Chilean resistance" did not mean support to any particular groups, coalition or strategy, the official demonstration leaflet had an explicit endorsement of the reconstituted popular front in exile:

"There is a resistance in Chile: parties of the Popular Unity coalition, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MLR) and many people who previously opposed Allende, are struggling, together, in the resistance against fascism. United we will win!"

### Searching for the "New Mass Vanguard"

A comic sidelight on this maneuvering was provided by the antics of the "Revolutionary Marxist Collective," a local group in the Bay Area which supports the politics of the Mandelbrot majority of the "United Secre-



CP goon squad confronts Spartacist/RCY supporters at Chicago Chile march.

strategy or tactical orientation." In the sense of "support to the struggle against the junta and defense of the victims of the junta," this demand could be supported.

However, the steering committee then refused to permit the Spartacist League a speaker at the rally on the grounds that the SL is not an "ongoing Chile group"! (This in itself is absurd, for in the last six months SL-initiated demonstrations have probably brought out as many or more militants to oppose the junta as all the demonstrations of the rest of the groups on the steering committee combined!) The SL replied to this unprincipled maneuver with a leaflet to the May 11 march which stated:

"We warn that a rejection of this proposal [for a real united front, in which each of the sponsoring groups would have representatives on the steering committee and equal speaking time] would open the road to turning the demonstration into an open endorsement of the popular front politics that had already led to the victory of the junta and the deaths of thousands of Chilean workers."

This is exactly what happened. Des-

tariat" (as against the SWP's social-democratic reformist appetites). The RMC first introduced the demand for "support to the Chilean resistance" into the local Chile Solidarity Committee, which in turn brought it to the steering committee for the May 11 demonstration. At the April 27 planning meeting the RMC voted against an SL amendment to change the clause to "support the Chilean resistance of workers and peasants..." labeling this "sectarian."

Having authored the maneuver (by granting speaking rights only to "ongoing Chile groups") the RMC felt constrained to give a political explanation for this bureaucratic trick. Consequently, the group's pamphlet "Chile" was reissued for the occasion of the May 11 demonstration with a new preface which included the following statement:

"Speakers at the May 11 rally in the Bay Area were selected on the political basis of solidarity with the resistance to speak on the meaning of Solidarity with the Resistance; the current situation in Chile, etc. One spokesperson from the minority position represented by USLA was delegated to speak on political prisoners."

Aside from the presence on the speakers platform of a representative of USLA (which had argued vociferously against including the demand of support to the resistance at the earlier planning meeting), the RMC was further embarrassed by the appearance of a genuine bourgeois politician, former Senator Gruening, who started his remarks by noting, "I am in complete accord with the purposes of this rally."

Wishing to appear to the left of the ultra-reformist SWP without taking up a struggle for consistent Trotskyist opposition to popular-front politics, the less experienced maneuverers of the RMC are simply sucked into a mainstream Stalinist-line demonstration. "Solidarity with the resistance" turns out to be solidarity with Senator Gruening and President Allende! While rally organizers emphasized the nationalist slogan "Chile Sí, Junta No," it was up

to the Spartacist League to respond with the class slogan, "Obreros [Workers] Sí, Junta No."

### Popular Frantism and Suppression of Revolutionary Politics

Stalinist perfidy and the capitulation of various fake lefts to it go beyond a mere question of slogans and speakers. One of the sharpest confrontations between CP reformism and revolutionary Trotskyism in the course of Chile defense activities came with the May 11 demonstration in Chicago.

Having been outmaneuvered by the numerically stronger Stalinists in early planning meetings, the local SWP more or less ignored the demonstration, sending a token contingent of 10 supporters; similarly the Revolutionary Socialist League and Class Struggle League sent only perfunctory sales teams of two people each. The SL/RCY, in contrast, mobilized two dozen members and supporters with banners calling for defense of Van Schouwen and Romero, "No Pop Front Illusions, For Workers Revolution," "Free Corvalán," "For a Trotskyist Party in Chile" and others.

As soon as the SL/RCY contingent arrived at the assembly point a leading Communist Party hack rushed up to demand that we leave, followed by about 10 CP goons. In the tense confrontation which followed the SL was first told it could not raise its signs and banners and then, when we made clear our determination to stay and defend our banners, that we had to march behind the rest of the demonstration. While the goons were busy trying to provoke a fight, another CPer went to the police and convinced "Chicago's Finest" to enforce this undemocratic exclusionism. During the march a cop was stationed in front of the SL contingent to make sure it got no closer than 50 feet from the CP-led demonstration.

RSL and CSL and Revolutionary Workers Group supporters present marched with us in protest against the Stalinist exclusion. However, the SWP marched with the CP while claiming it would "send Gus Hall a letter" protesting the incident. Earlier, when the SWP was approached for the purposes of forming a defense bloc at the height of the tense confrontation, its only response was "we will have to consult!"

Throughout recent Chile defense demonstrations the Spartacist League has consistently combined principled united-front action with a full presentation of the Trotskyist program for Chile. While defending all victims of the junta's repression, we have put particular emphasis on those standing to the left of the UP coalition, especially the MLR leaders who had been effectively ignored by the U.S. left until our campaign in mid-March.

In contrast, the reformists quibbled over whom *not* to defend (the SWP initially ignoring Van Schouwen and Romero, the CP for a time refusing to defend Vitale). And while the SL/RCY sought to integrate the defense of the junta's prisoners in a broader perspective of class struggle ("Hot-Cargo Military Goods to Chile"), the SWP and CP oriented their protest toward bourgeois public opinion, with "big-name" (i.e., capitalist politician) speakers and liberal demands ("No Recognition of the Junta," "Cut Off U.S. Aid to the Junta").

In order to make clear their intent to suppress revolutionary Trotskyist politics, both the SWP and CP sought to exclude SL/RCY speakers, although they were forced to give way in the face of our determined resistance. And when the Stalinists physically exclude Trotskyist militants from a public demonstration, in the process appealing to the cops and trying to provoke a fight, the SWP promises only to consult and, finally, to write Gus Hall a letter—while marching with the CP.

Thus on the question of defense of endangered Chilean militants, as on the question of revolutionary policy in Chile, principled Trotskyism is constantly counterposed not only to class-collaborationist Stalinism but also to the various fake lefts and pseudo-Trotskyists who yap at their tails. ■

# WORKERS VANGUARD

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**includes SPARTACIST** ☐ Enclosed is \$5 for 24 issues  
☐ Enclosed is \$1 for 6 introductory issues

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



# WORKERS VANGUARD

Goons Attack Militant Action Caucus at Convention

## CWA Bureaucracy Nervous, Strongman Beirne on Deathbed

KANSAS CITY, June 27—Amid a prevalent mood of uncertainty the Communications Workers of America bureaucracy is scrambling to consolidate itself following the resignation of President Joe Beirne. Forced because he is dying to give up the post he has held for the past 26 years, Beirne will never realize his dream to succeed George Meany.

That no opposition will be permitted to interfere with the "new unity" of Beirne's bureaucratic successors was demonstrated in Kansas City last week when members of the Militant Action Caucus were subjected to a campaign of massive bureaucratic harassment at the 36th Annual CWA Convention. The West Coast opposition group, which has a four-year history in the union, was subjected to a three-day terror campaign by a 15-mangoon squad mobilized by the International.

MAC members narrowly avoided being beaten up on the steps of the convention hall, and a *Workers Vanguard* reporter who witnessed these events and tried to photograph the goons had his film confiscated. He was himself followed on the streets by a 10-man squad the next day.

When the convention opened Monday morning the International boasted of the "non-Watergate" atmosphere. However, after a few hours of watching the MAC distribute its paper, *Militant Action*, the International apparently felt democracy had gone a little too far. Following several initial scuffles when sergeants-at-arms claimed MAC had to have permission to distribute literature (while ignoring the Committee on Political Education [COPE], which continued to sell plastic coasters at the very next table and whose salesmen admitted they had no specific permission), an appropriate opportunity to get rid of MAC arose. When a notorious right-wing chief steward from Oakland, California, Local 9415, L.R. Hawkins, moved to overturn the MAC table, the International intervened. To "protect" the MAC table from Hawkins, an International representative picked it up



New York Telephone workers' demonstration during the seven-month 1971 strike.

WV PHOTO

and carried it out of the auditorium! (The Spartacist League, which had brisk sales during the first few hours of the convention, was also told to remove its table.)

During much of Monday afternoon Hawkins and several of the International representatives and sergeants-at-arms whispered and pointed at the MAC. Later Hawkins and 15 of his cohorts, having spent much of the remaining part of the afternoon in the Holiday Inn bar, advanced on five members of MAC as they were distributing papers on the sidewalk, threatened them with violence unless they left the area, then followed them for several blocks.

### MAC Objects to Elimination of Local Ratification

MAC immediately fired off telegrams to its Local president and the

International demanding a guarantee of physical safety at the union convention. This elementary demand for union democracy was ignored. In addition, letters of protest were sent to several CWA locals, the AFL-CIO and to the press, pointing out that the goon harassment had occurred in full view of the delegates coming out of the session. Speaking with a WV reporter, caucus spokesman Kathleen Burnham said that MAC's *Militant Action* contained articles critical of the union leadership, such as one documenting CWA support to the CIA-backed, government-funded "American Institute for Free Labor Development." One issue in particular that has drawn the ire of the International bureaucracy expressed MAC's opposition to "national bargaining"—Beirne's scheme to eliminate ratification of the contract by the locals in order to prevent strikes in a critical contract year. Under this set-up bargaining is totally controlled by six handpicked national officers.

The threats in Kansas City were evidently triggered by the nervousness of the CWA bureaucrats in Oakland where the Local recently passed two important motions introduced by MAC. One was a condemnation of the "national bargaining" scheme, which it characterized as an attack on the rights of all union members; the second called for a labor rally to call off Operation Zebra, the stop-and-search South African-style police dragnet that San Francisco's Mayor Alioto was hoping to use to bolster his bid for the California white racist vote. Following the passage of these motions, the Local received a sharply worded letter from the union president. The Oakland Local officers, anxious not to overstep their bounds as Beirne's "loyal" (i.e., "kept") opposition, forced through a retraction of the condemnation of national bargaining at the next meeting.

By the time they reached Kansas City the 9415 bureaucrats apparently had gotten the word from the Inter-

national to clamp down on the caucus. Beirne's letter evidently gave the green light to L.R. Hawkins to get together his vigilantes. According to Burnham, Hawkins is a notorious racist whose decertification was sought two years ago by a group of black stewards, with the support of MAC, after he racially insulted several black women working in one of the Plant centers. Normally Hawkins is isolated too far to the right to enact his fantasies; but intersecting the jumpy mood of the assembled bureaucrats in Kansas City, he was able to find some support.

### Vacuum of Leadership

The retirement of Joe Beirne visibly augmented the restlessness felt for months in the phone industry, which is beginning to be heavily affected by the general malaise of the economy. Spiraling inflation has been eating into the phone workers' meagre pay checks; layoffs have hit the Western Electric Division nationally, with workers having up to six years seniority being laid off in New York, and larger layoffs loom in the next few months.

Beirne, who throughout the 26-year history of the CWA has run a tight machine, allowed little room for internal bureaucratic bickering. The union, born during the period of the cold war, spawned little in the way of opposition. Proud of his top connections in Washington and his role on the President's Commission on Productivity, Beirne has been hailed by virtually every U.S. president as a "responsible labor statesman." No one presently in CWA can take his place, and the instability of the situation following Beirne's departure was evident at the convention.

The new CWA head Glen Watts (his former secretary-treasurer) is a tepid, colorless long-time Beirne hatchet man who appears poorly equipped for the job. He is, of course, dedicated to the same politics as his mentor—support for the Jackson

continued on page 8



MAC supporters at 28 April 1973 labor rally, Bay Area.

WV PHOTO