

## Neither Military Dictatorship Nor Capitalist "Democracy"

# For Workers Power in Portugal!

JULY 14—On Friday (July 11) the Socialist Party resigned from the Portuguese coalition government reportedly, according to a UP dispatch, "to protest efforts by military rulers to set up a communist 'dictatorship'." The news agency quoted SP leader Mario Soares as saying, "We don't want a dictatorship of a class, which leads to a dictatorship of a party and finally to one man." Earlier Soares had said the Socialists would lead a campaign of demonstrations to "paralyze the entire country" to protest "the manipulation of news by minorities." The ruling Armed Forces Movement (MFA) responded to the SP ministers' resignation by calling a full-scale military alert.

The events of the last week dramatically highlighted the on-again, off-again conflict between the Socialists and leftist leaders of the MFA which has been recurring since the beginning of the year. The bourgeois press has generally painted a picture of the SP as the only defenders of "freedom" in Portugal, locked in combat against "socialist" generals who are either captives of the Kremlin or partisans of a "Cuban solution." Pro-Moscow Stalinists, on the other hand, portray the SP's actions as simply a front for the intrigues of imperialism and domestic counterrevolutionaries, and hail the Communist Party-hacked MFA as the chief bulwark against a return to "fascism."

In accepting one or the other of these stories, many would-be leftists (including Maoist and ostensibly "Trotskyist" organizations) have lined up more or less uncritically behind the SP or CP/MFA. But despite the myths propounded by social democrats and Stalinists, the reality is that *neither* side in the current confrontation intends to overthrow capitalism & install a socialist regime. *Both* sides, i.e., the proponents of "Western-style" capitalist "democracy" and backers of a leftist military dictatorship, are violently opposed to a struggle for proletarian socialist revolution and workers democracy. The interests of the working class will not be served by miserably tailing after the present misleaders of the Portuguese masses, but only by struggling to build an independent Trotskyist vanguard party.

### The Socialist Party as "Defender of Freedom"

The first sharp disagreement between the Portuguese Socialist Party and the leftist leaders of the MFA came in



Troops guard offices of the República newspaper, closed on orders of MFA.

January with the dispute over a "trade-union unity" law. This law made it illegal for any other union federation to be set up aside from the existing Intersindical, which is bureaucratically controlled by the Communist Party. As CP leaders have repeatedly opposed strikes, the generals naturally preferred to strengthen the hand of these tested labor fakers.

While the Stalinists were able to mobilize several hundred thousand demonstrators in the streets of Lisbon on

January 14 in favor of this bill for government control of the unions (under the phony claim that the issue was simply "unity"), the Socialists in opposing it were able to tap widespread dissatisfaction in the ranks of several key unions. After seeing the CP act as open strikebreakers in the June 1974 postal strike, Stalinist support has fallen sharply in such centers of labor militancy as the Lisnave shipyards and TAP airlines. The CP former minister of labor, Avelino Gonçalves, for

instance, was defeated in a bid for reelection as leader of the bank workers' union.

But while the SP poses as an opponent of government control of the unions and the CP as the champion of unity, both are only attempting to deceive the gullible. The CP has used its influence in the ministry of labor to remove and arrest the Maoist leadership of the chemical workers' union, and last month did everything in its power to defeat the strike by Lisbon telephone workers. Some "labor unity"! The "freedom-loving" SP, in turn, was part of the government which last August issued a decree forbidding strikes under all except the most restricted conditions. And with their influence increasing in some unions, the Socialists have now decided that government-enforced bureaucratic "unity" may not be so bad, and supported the "single federation" law when it was promulgated in May.

A second area of conflict between the SP and MFA has been over the fate of the constituent assembly elected this past April 25. The Armed Forces Movement agreed to hold the elections only with extreme reluctance, and called for casting blank ballots (which only about 5 percent of the electorate did). The SP won 38 percent of the votes, and its "social-democratic" bourgeois ally, the Popular Democratic Party (PPD) won another 26 percent. Last month the SP/PPD majority pushed through a rule in the constituent assembly providing for a daily discussion period on national issues, while the Supreme Council of the Revolution (CSR—the leading body of the MFA) torhade it to do anything but write a constitution.

In announcing the SP resignation from the government Soares proclaimed, "We are not going to lick the hoots of soldiers." But that is just what it has done for the past year, and may do tomorrow if there is a slight shift in the political alignments at the top of the MFA. The bonapartism of the MFA regime is a mortal danger to the Portuguese working class, but the SP cannot wage a consistent fight against it because the social democrats and demagogic generals share a common aim: the maintenance of capitalist rule.

Last April the Socialist Party signed the "MFA-party pact" which provided that for a three to five year transition period all key powers will be in the hands of the president and Supreme Council of

*continued on page 8*

## Organizing the Unemployed in the Great Depression

### Part 1/Fighting for Unity

### Page 6



Workers move back tenant's furniture in Chicago South Side eviction battle.



# Stop Indira Gandhi's Repression!

JULY 11—In the last weeks Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has employed the draconian laws inherited from British colonialism to arrest thousands of her critics and political opponents, from left militants to the most respectable bourgeois politicians. When the parliament meets on July 21 to rubber stamp the proclamation of the state of emergency, as many as 20 seats will be empty, as oppositional Members of Parliament sit in jail without right to counsel or even to specification of charges. In addition, on July 4 the government banned 26 right-wing and left-wing parties, including the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

While the working class and poor peasants have felt the lash of government repression for years, the arrest of prominent political figures like Jaya Prakash Narayan and Morarji Desai and the total censorship of the press have given the coup de grace to the Indian regime's

treacherous misleadership was hardly about to make a bid for power, the Indian labor movement's reputation for combativity and increasing strike activity coupled with largely spontaneous mass violence have undermined the bourgeoisie's confidence in the Congress Party. The influential *Times* of India delivered, the bourgeoisie's ultimatum to Gandhi last year:

"The ruling party will have to realize that corruption is fast breeding a distaste for democracy, distorting the priorities, stoking the fires of inflation, making the problems of disciplining labor well-nigh impossible and creating a dangerous chasm between the elite and the common people."

quoted in *New York Times*, 27 June 1975

Indira Gandhi's elaborate maneuvers to stay within the outer limits of the constitution while smashing her parliamentary opponents, and to lull her plebeian supporters with more promises

where political corruption translates into critical grain shortages and starvation, and the ruling party is severely discredited. Narayan's promise of clean government through "partyless democracy" has mass appeal. Narayan, untainted by party affiliation or past government posts, is the perfect broker for such an alliance.

While not yet participating in the *Janata Morcha*, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) and other smaller left parties have been sniffing eagerly at Narayan's heels. On June 5, 14 parties, including the CPI-M, held an anti-Congress rally of 200,000 in Calcutta. Burying their reformist program for the sake of a phony unity, the CPI-M joined hands with the reactionary Jan Sangh in this "flagless rally" where the only speaker, Narayan, called for a mass civil-disobedience campaign against "the corrupt regime and its undemocratic laws." However, following a similar mass demonstration on July 9 in the southern state of Kerala (the CPI-M's only base outside West Bengal), the top leaders and cadres of the CPI-M and other left parties were arrested (*New York Times*, 12 July).

*Janata Morcha* is ostensibly based on the "people's charter" of demands that Narayan unveiled in March during his months-long agitation in Bihar. This minimal program of electoral and educational reform, restoration of democratic rights, elimination of economic inequality and political corruption is no more radical than the Congress Party program and, like the latter, promises to be worth less than the paper it is written on. In fact, Jan Sangh—the second largest party in India and the strongest party in the opposition front—held its national convention a few days before the charter was issued and voted down certain of its demands (such as extension of the ceiling on land holdings and "fair price shops" which must publish the prices of essential commodities).

Further indication of the pervasive cynicism of the opposition bloc was its willingness to accept post-election support from the Kisan Mazdoor Lok Paksha (Peasant-Worker People's Party—PWPP) in order to form the new cabinet in Gujarat. The PWPP is headed by one Chimanbhai Patel, former chief minister of Gujarat bounced out of the Congress Party by Indira Gandhi when massive student protests, general strikes and violent food riots toppled his corrupt government last year (see "Report from India, Part I: Protests Against Hunger and Corruption Plague Gandhi Regime," *WV* No. 51, 16 August 1974).

It is the responsibility of the criminally opportunist and reformist workers parties that the smoldering fury of the Indian masses has been exploited by venal bourgeois politicians. The pro-Moscow Communist Party of India (CPI), in the service of the foreign policy objectives of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Kremlin, firmly guards the left flank of the Congress Party while denouncing all opposition to Gandhi, whether from the left or right, as a reactionary conspiracy fomented by the CIA. On July 4 the CPI became the first (and, so far, only) non-government party to endorse Gandhi's strong-arm measures. The Socialist Party in turn, in its pursuit of Narayan's utopias, helps to build the Jan Sangh, a party based on Hindu chauvinism and the most reactionary aspects of peasant backwardness. The CPI-M, with a long history of popular-front blocs with small bourgeois parties, has flirted with the grand alliance of opposition parties. Only a total break with all the parties of the bourgeoisie and the construction of a revolutionary Trotskyist party can pave the way to a real alternative to Gandhi: a workers and peasants government that will grant land to the tiller and rip industry from the hands of the bourgeoisie. ■



Anti-government demonstration against corruption in India last month. UPI

attempts to posture as the champion of democracy in the backward countries. At the same time, economic stagnation, starvation, illiteracy and the unshaken caste system have exploded the Stalinist myth of the "non-capitalist road of development."

Shaken by the Congress Party defeat in Gujarat elections in June and massive demonstrations calling for her resignation following conviction on two minor counts of corrupt electoral practices, Gandhi took a giant leap toward a full-fledged bonapartist regime without, however, overstepping the bounds of Indian law. Although a new proclamation was made, citing "a grave emergency...whereby the security of India is threatened by internal disturbances," India has officially been in a state of emergency since the December 1971 war with Pakistan.

Since that time thousands of "Naxalites"—members of the CPI-ML and other banned Maoists—and insurgent peasants have been rounded up, imprisoned and tortured. Fifty thousand workers were held without trial during last year's railway strike, and some 20,000 "detainees," most of them left political prisoners, were already in jail when the new state of emergency was declared on June 26. Expenditures for the build-up of the police force have doubled in the past five years and state after state has seen its elected administration dissolved and replaced by presidential rule. In the face of her sharply declining popularity and the prospect of national parliamentary elections early next year, Gandhi has unleashed all of the legal powers at her disposal to dismember and intimidate her opposition.

The economic significance of Gandhi's turn to naked bonapartism is her announcement that no strikes or labor disputes will be allowed to disrupt the drive for increased production and stability. Already a scheduled strike of 650,000 power workers has been called off. Although the working class with its

of reforms while arresting left and labor leaders and splitting skulls of workers and peasants who take to the streets, are designed to demonstrate to the capitalists that only one party is capable of governing India in their interests and of quelling popular unrest. Armed with dictatorial powers, with her opponents of the left and right in jail, Gandhi is launching a program that will plunge even more millions below subsistence-level existence, while stringing up a few smugglers and black marketeers just for show.

## Popular Front

The suppressed opposition is itself a heterogeneous collection of right and left parties, united only by their appetites for power. The new government in the state of Gujarat was widely seen as a harbinger of the future pattern of opposition blocs. Jaya Prakash Narayan—once a pioneer Socialist and leader of the independence movement and now nationally revered exponent of reactionary-utopian Gandhian social work—engineered a five-party coalition, the *Janata Morcha* (People's Front). It consists of the Congress Party (Organization), a formation of old Congress bosses who split with Gandhi in 1969; the Jan Sangh (People's Party), a reactionary Hindu communal party; the Akali Dal, a regional party of rich peasants; the Bharatiya Lok Dal (People's Party of India), a regionally based caste party; and the Socialist Party, a social-democratic formation which led last year's railway strike.

Discredited in the eyes of the broad masses by their years of electoral opportunism, these parties are scrambling onto Narayan's bandwagon. Narayan had even proposed a merger or federation into a new party to contest next year's election. Although such a popular-front alliance is inherently unstable, its success in Gujarat and the massive support to the anti-Indira demonstrations that preceded the government crackdown indicated the potential to displace the national dominance of the Congress Party. In a country



J. P. Lafont/Sygma

Jaya Prakash Narayan

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Marxist Working-Class Bi-weekly of the Spartacist League

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Published by the Spartacist Publishing Company, Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, N.Y. 10001  
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Opinions expressed in signed articles or letters do not necessarily express the editorial viewpoint.



# "Socialist-Feminist" Conference: Nothing Learned, Going Nowhere

Replete with the usual "Third World" demagoguery and lesbian activists disillusioned by the "lack of concern" for their oppression among "straight" women's liberationists, the "Socialist-Feminist Conference" held over July 4th weekend at Antioch College in Ohio could well have been a boring rerun of any one of dozens of New Left feminist get-togethers held since the mid-1960's. While the large attendance at the conference (about 1,000) may testify to the importance and potential of the women's liberation issue, and the cast of characters changes somewhat from time to time, the petty-bourgeois subjectivity, anti-political prejudice and liberal rhetoric remain essentially identical.

The organizers of the conference, several local "socialist-feminist" groups and the women's caucus of the social-democratic New American Movement, demonstrated organizational as well as political incapacity. On one day they turned back numerous women arriving for the conference at airports and bus stations because the turnout could not be accommodated, only to register more participants the following day. General disgruntlement was further exacerbated by the high-handed undemocratic behavior of the planning committee.

The conference was exclusionist on more levels than one. Men ("of course!") were not allowed. In addition, three "Principles of Unity" were included in pre-conference publicity with the intention of keeping out all non-feminists. At no point in the conference were the participants permitted to discuss, much less modify or vote on, these basic premises. And in case anyone should miss the point, the planning committee privately decided that three organizations were to be specifically banned: the National Caucus of Labor Committees, the Revolutionary Union and the Spartacist League. Of the three, only the SL bothered to show up, whereupon our comrades were refused permission to register.

But neither the exclusion of the SL nor the ubiquitous "sisterhood" rhetoric could cover over the enormous political confusion and absolute lack of direction of the "socialist-feminists." Scheduled workshops dealt with such issues as: "Womancraft (Spirituality, getting in touch with our inner energy and using this energy in revolutionary ways)," "Developing a Lesbian Community (Lesbians Only)," "Creating a National Rape Movement," "Women in Farming: Past-Present-Future," "Building an Anti-Capitalist Women's Business," and "Who Runs the Parks?" These workshops, however, were generally bypassed in favor of the "Anti-Imperialist Caucus" meetings attended by about 200-300 women.

## Anti-Imperialist Caucus: Cynical Opportunists

While many groups participating in the Anti-Imperialist Caucus stood in blatant violation of the exclusionist "Principles of Unity," at no time did they attempt to challenge the "socialist-feminist" credo openly on the conference floor. The three principles prescribed by the conference organizers were: 1) "the necessity of the

autonomous women's movement throughout the revolutionary process"; 2) "all oppression—whether based on race, class, sex, or sexual preference—is inter-related and... fights for liberation from oppression must be simultaneous and cooperative"; and 3) "socialist-feminism is a strategy for revolution."

In contrast, elements in the Anti-Imperialist Caucus, a loose coalition including Workers Viewpoint, Prairie Fire, the Asian Women's Study Group of Chicago, El Comité and other feminists of generally Maoist political coloration, put out a statement calling not for an autonomous women's movement, but for "mass women's organizations... under the leadership of a revolutionary communist party." It was for opposing "autonomy" in favor of building a women's section of the revolutionary vanguard party that the Spartacist League was excluded from the conference. All the groups endorsing the statement placed themselves outside the principles of unity, yet none of them protested the exclusions, and their opportunist desire to remain in the conference at any price prevented them from making a principled fight to defeat the concepts of "autonomy" and "socialist-feminism," which many of them also oppose.

A Spartacist League supporter present  
*continued on page 11*

## CORRECTIONS

In our last issue (*WV* No. 72, 4 July) several lines were dropped in the article entitled "Gotbaum Accepts NYC Lay-offs." The first sentence of the paragraph beginning at the top of the fourth column on page 12 should have read: "The cops' militancy, seemingly greater than that of Gotbaum, DeLury et al., stems precisely from the fact that they are *not* workers but armed agents of the capitalist state who correctly view themselves as indispensable to the very same oppressors who are the cause of the 'crisis'."

Also, a photo on page 3 of the same issue was incorrectly credited to *WV*; the photographer is Luis Carballar. In an introduction to the appeal of the Bolshevik-Leninist Group of Vietnam on page 7 we stated that following the DRV/NLF victory neither the minority nor majority of the "United Secretariat" had seen fit to mention the assassination of Vietnamese Trotskyists by the Stalinists in 1945-47. We have since received the May issue of *Revista de América*, published by the Argentine PST (supporters of the USec minority), which does protest the murder of the Vietnamese Trotskyists. Nevertheless, the silence on this subject by other sections of the USec dramatically reveals the hollowness of their Trotskyist pretensions.

Finally, the article "India in Crisis" refers to "Gandhi's landslide electoral victory in 1971, which... came in the flush of chauvinist hysteria triggered by the India-Pakistan war." Actually, the Congress Party's parliamentary election victory was in March 1971, while the India-Pakistan war came at the end of the year. However, Gandhi's until recently unchallenged political dominance was greatly reinforced by the nationalist war hysteria. ■

## "Sisterhood Is Powerful"



Sygma

Greeting one another above at the recent UN-sponsored International Women's Year conference in Mexico City are Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and Imelda Marcos, wife of the president of the Philippines. Bandaranaike, who mouthed platitudes of "peace and harmony" at the conference, brutally crushed the 1971 Ceylonese youth uprising and heads a viciously anti-working-class regime. In turn, Madam Marcos' husband Ferdinand is responsible for the slaughter of thousands of Communist, peasant and Muslim rebels in years of anti-guerrilla warfare in the Philippines.

The hollowness of conference rhetoric of social emancipation was also illustrated by the attendance of other "sisters" such as Silvia Pinto of Chile, whose military junta devised vile tortures for women as well as male political prisoners after the bloody 1973 coup. Françoise Giroud (Secretary of State for the Status of Women in France), Leah Rabin (wife of the Israeli prime minister), Jihan el-Sadat (wife of Egypt's president), Princess Ashraf Pahlavi (twin sister of the Shah of Iran) were among others who supposedly represented the plight of the world's oppressed women.

Though the "sisters unite" rhetoric was heavy, there was precious little unity at the conference. Petty-bourgeois feminists from the U.S. initially turned a deaf ear to the concerns of women from Latin American, Asian and African countries to deal with the realities of imperialist exploitation. But Betty Friedan, who recently declared Farah Diba, wife of the Shah of Iran, to be a "feminist empress," came up with a "solution": that the U.S. Embassy hold an "each one bring one" get-together party.

The total uselessness of the conference epitomizes the hoax of the UN's International Women's Year. It is not the Bandaranaiques, Marcos, Rabins, Sadats or Farahs who will free women from their oppression. The liberation of women will only come through the liberation of all mankind from the yoke of capitalism—through socialist revolution—a goal to which the majority of the women at this conference were unalterably opposed.

## Letter

Houston  
June 11, 1975

To the Editor:

On June 10 Peter Camejo went on trial here on a charge of interfering with a police officer stemming from an incident during his campaign swing through Texas last March. If anyone thought that the publicity-stunt subpoenaing of the mayor, the chief of police, FBI agents, etc. indicated that the SWP was going to turn the tables on their accusers, however, they were sadly mistaken. Of course none of these people showed up and the SWP did not see fit to protest their non-appearances.

I had never heard Brother Camejo before, but I had heard that he is an aggressive speaker. He was nothing of the sort in the witness stand. He was extremely meek, even obliging, and made no political statements whatsoever. He told the court that when a cop barged into the car under the pretense of looking for

narcotics, he said, "Sir, what are you looking for? Maybe I can help you." He said he was just trying to communicate with the officers. When asked if he knew he had no right to interfere with a policeman, Camejo said yes, he knew.

Even during closing arguments, the defense abstained from going after the systematic police harassment to which the SWP has been subjected by Houston police. In an initially aggressive style, Houchins (Camejo's attorney) pointed to the cops and asked, "Are these two guys gods?" More subdued later in the summation, the lawyer averred that, "These officers are probably well meaning," but that they just weren't courteous and the least we can expect from our law enforcers is common courtesy.

The jury believed Camejo's account, as opposed to the conflicting stories concocted by the police. Afterwards Camejo hailed his acquittal as "A victory for the First Amendment" and said the jury had upheld the right of every American to choose his own presidential candidate.

Faternally,  
Kurt G.



# Only Union Ranks Can Stop Corruption

# Hands Off the NMU!

JULY 13—A federal grand jury has been convened in Newark, New Jersey, to investigate allegations of corruption among present and former officials of the National Maritime Union. According to the 9 July *New York Times*, a government official identified Shannon Wall (president of the union), Mel Barisic (secretary-treasurer), and Joseph Curran (NMU president from 1936 to 1973). William Perry, long-time Curran assistant, is not presently listed, although numerous charges have been leveled against him in the past, because he decided to turn state's evidence. But while seamen can have no love for bureaucrats who, working hand-in-glove with the companies, have repeatedly sold out their interests, this government move to "clean up" the NMU is in fact an attempt to exercise greater state control of the labor movement and must be vigorously opposed by all class-conscious union militants.

Among the allegations are charges of possible kickbacks by the union's attorney to NMU officials over many years; personal use of the labor of union employees and union equipment by NMU officials; payoffs by shipping

companies; bribes to NMU tops by investment brokers seeking business from the union's pension and welfare funds; and claims that Joe Curran was not in attendance at many executive board meetings where he was marked present.

One of the main areas of investigation concerns financial dealings between NMU officers and the union's lawyer, Abraham E. Freedman. Allegedly, Freedman's law firm paid tens of thousands of dollars to various bureaucrats in return for receiving personal injury cases of NMU seamen. There also exists a sworn statement by the former president of American Export Industries that he "imagined" \$500,000 in cash was paid by the AEI to the NMU pension fund when the shipping company wanted to lay up two liners, the *Constitution* and the *Independence*, in 1968. This money—which the administrator of the pension fund at the time denies ever receiving—was allegedly paid to keep the union brass from putting up any fight for the jobs lost.

Fighting the companies to prevent loss of jobs is not exactly what the present or past leadership of the NMU is known for!

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NMU President Shannon Wall (left) with Mel Barisic, union secretary-treasurer.

## Tsar-Lover Feted by AFL-CIO Tops

# Solzhenitsyn Fuels Anti-Soviet Crusade

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the emigré Russian novelist who has rapidly become the bourgeois media's favorite kept cold warrior, was recently wined and dined by the reactionary Meanyite bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO. At a July 9 luncheon in New York Solzhenitsyn launched a ferocious assault, rivaling any from the McCarthyite era, against the Soviet Union:

"Soon they will be twice as powerful as you and then five times, and then ten times. And some day they will say to you: 'We are marching our troops into Western Europe, and if you act, we shall annihilate you.' And the troops will move, and you will not act."

—*New York Times*, 10 July

The reactionary fat cats who run the American labor movement had extended the invitation to Solzhenitsyn shortly after his arrival in the U.S. Meany, who is proud that he "never walked a picket line in his life," has every reason to want to fan the flames of anti-Communist hysteria. Millions of U.S. workers have been forced into the ranks of the unemployed during the past year and more are on their way, but this labor faker and his crew of hangers-on have not once mobilized militant labor action to resist the ruling-class onslaught.

Many workers are enraged by these betrayals. The New York City sanitationmen's wildcat, which was greeted with spontaneous support from the rank and file of the other city unions, showed that the workers are impatient and frustrated by the bureaucrats' enforced policy of passivity and sellout. Meany, who played a leading role in mobilizing the crusade against Communism in the late 1940's and early 1950's, would dearly love to see a similar witchhunt today to cut across the resentment building among the base of the union movement.

The warm welcome proffered to Solzhenitsyn, which has brought with it no mean assortment of privileges and profits, is payment for his espousal of the

most blatantly counterrevolutionary views and his advocacy of a policy which can only be termed imperialist warmongering. This tsar-lover peddles the purported virtues of the Russian Orthodox Church and extols the culture of Old Russia. The charming idyl he presents, of



Brack/Black Star

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

course, has nothing to say about the knout, the pogroms and the poverty.

The liberal and not-so-liberal mass media have trumpeted Solzhenitsyn's views on the danger of détente, with none of the reserve usually afforded the pronouncements of literati who venture into the field of military speculation. Feeding directly into U.S. "Defense" Secretary Schlesinger's present bellicose "first-strike" theme, Solzhenitsyn

"mocked the negotiations for a Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with withering sarcasm, asserting that the American Government was being constantly deceived about the Soviet Union's illegal use of radar and the size of its missiles and nuclear warheads."

—*New York Times*, 10 July

Employing rhetoric which might give pause to the professional imperialist apologists themselves, the emigré author

invoked the bogey of Soviet intentions of "destroying capitalist society." (Were the USSR and the other deformed workers states not headed by conservative, nationalist bureaucratic cliques, world capitalism, and with it reactionary table-thumpers like Solzhenitsyn, would have been swept away long since.) In defense of the capitalist system and the gravy it has brought him, Solzhenitsyn wants nothing less than an imperialist invasion of the USSR:

"Communist leaders say, don't interfere with our internal affairs, let us strangle our own citizens quietly. But I tell you, interfere. Interfere as much as you like."

—*People*, 14 July

Although a maudlin buffoon and a theoretical neanderthal, Solzhenitsyn is far from toothless as far as the workers movement is concerned. In the USSR, where every worker is as acquainted with the benefits of the October Revolution as he is with the counterrevolutionary bureaucracy which feeds off its gains, Solzhenitsyn may have seemed merely a beleaguered intellectual. Here, armed with the authority of "having lived there" and of having suffered in Stalin's slave-labor camps, and in concert with the AFL-CIO bureaucracy which has proven itself willing to use every means (CIA plots included) to stifle the workers movement, Solzhenitsyn could play a more important role in building an anti-communist witchhunt in the unions than could all the insurance men of the John Birch Society.

Currently, mainstream bourgeois politicians are wary of associating themselves with Solzhenitsyn because of the very virulence of his anti-détente posture:

"When they are burying us alive in the earth, do not give a shovel to our grave-diggers! Do not send them the very best equipment. The entire experience of the slave masters stands on western economic aid! On this the entire Soviet economy is based. Do not help a police state!"

—*Novoe Russkoe Slovo*, 10 July

President Ford recently spurned meeting with the emigré author, not because of

any difference in fundamental aims, but because Ford still hopes to milk more concessions from Brezhnev & Co. and because trade with the USSR does not directly contradict current foreign policy objectives. But this could change, and Solzhenitsyn, whose "mental stability" was questioned by administration authorities (*New York Times*, 3 July), could quickly become the spearhead of a virulent anti-Communist ideological crusade on behalf of the ruling class.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has paved the way for Solzhenitsyn's popularity. In its role as "consistent" civil libertarians the SWP touted this arch-reactionary jackal, along with Andrei Sakharov, as the victims of a "Stalinist slander campaign" whereby their statements were often taken out of context "to portray them as proimperialist and antisocialist" (*Militant*, 19 October 1973). The Spartacist League, which defended Solzhenitsyn and other persecuted writers against the punitive forays of the repressive Russian bureaucracy, at the same time carefully exposed the chauvinist and counterrevolutionary character of Solzhenitsyn's preachments. The SWP's formal posture of defense of the Soviet Union against imperialist attack is dead in all but name; it has become only an embarrassing impediment to the SWP's single-minded pursuit of respectability in the eyes of the liberal bourgeoisie and the trade-union bureaucracy.

The defense of the Soviet Union is a cornerstone on which the Fourth International was built. Only those with an unshakeable commitment to preserving and extending the gains of the October Revolution can oppose the crimes of Stalinism from the standpoint of the interests of the international working class, through the Trotskyist program of proletarian revolution against capitalism and political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucratic betrayers. The Spartacist League stands on that program, the program of a reborn Fourth International.■



## June Elections:

# Report from Italy

by Marcello Braccini

After the period of relative stagnation which the working-class movement experienced following the prolonged upsurge of 1969, numerous symptoms point to a resurgence. This reversal of trend was already apparent at the time of the vote on the divorce referendum in March 1974.

On that occasion a broad mass upsurge became evident which, escaping from the traditional control of the Christian Democracy (DC) and of the church (supported by the fascists), gave a 6 million vote margin (out of a total of 32 million) in favor of the supporters of divorce....

...Today the PCI is the leading party in five of the most important Italian cities, namely, Rome, Milan, Naples, Turin and Genoa. It also has a relative majority in Venice, Bologna, Florence and at least 26 other provinces. In addition, the PCI is the leading party in seven of the 19 regions, and in the central belt of Italy including Liguria, Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany and Umbria regional left bloc governments can be formed (a PCI-PSI-PDUP alliance). In percentages—attempting to find a comparison which underlines the political meaning of these elections—we have the following results by comparing the 1975 regional totals with those of the general elections of 1972:

Party	Percent Change
Communist (PCI) .....	+5.1
Socialist (PSI) .....	+2.2
Social-Democratic (PSDI) ..	+0.4
Radical (PRI) .....	+0.3
Liberal (PLI) .....	-1.4
Italian Social Movement (MSI—fascists) .....	-1.7
Christian Democrats (DC) ..	-3.1

...At the political level, the elections revealed an objective shift to the left among the popular masses: Christian Democracy took a loss, the minor center parties retained their position, the Liberals were almost reduced by half. The fascists, [who have been] very active at the level of goon squad attacks against isolated leftists and [are] the authors of the extremely bloody incidents of the "strategy of tension"...are politically isolated, discredited among the petty bourgeoisie and saved only by the open complicity of various sectors of the state administration, police and courts....

...As was to be expected, the PCI interpreted its electoral success as a sign of approval for the strategy of the "historic compromise"...Thus the PCI persists in seeking collaboration with "popular antifascist forces"—among which it includes the Christian Democrats. It even opens the door to collaboration with the



Enrico Berlinguer, head of Italian Communist Party, greets supporters on election day.

Il Mondo

DC in those regions where it has an absolute majority, as in Emilia-Romagna....The PCI has left the antifascist fight to the [centrist] groups, renounced any manner of opposition to NATO, clamped down on the struggle for civil liberties (divorce, abortion, etc.) and has not engaged in any concrete action defending the workers from unemployment and inflation. Nevertheless, it received the votes of the workers, the intellectual petty bourgeoisie, youth and women. Such a broad consensus in the face of such a poverty of programmatic content cannot but direct one to the other side of the question: the political bankruptcy of the centrist organizations of the far left. The programmatic crisis and the consequent turn to the right of the centrist organizations (essentially Lotta Continua [LC—Continuing Struggle], Avanguardia Operaia [AO—Workers Vanguard] and the PDUP [Proletarian Unity Party], but we could also add—if it amounted to anything—the Italian section of the United Secretariat) were evident on this occasion with particular clarity.

...The PDUP and Avanguardia Operaia ran together in several regions under the label Proletarian Democracy; elsewhere, either one or the other of the two formations presented candidates, sometimes in alliance with local groups. The result was clearly negative. The lists of the "far left" received an average of 1.7 percent, an outcome which represents a decrease by one half compared to that received in the preceding elections by the left reformists of the PSIUP [Italian Socialist Party of Proletarian Unity], which has since disappeared. Only in Milan the presence of a combative student movement...permitted Avanguardia Operaia to reach 3.5 percent.

The centrists participated in the elections on a program which [was only a left version of the PCI's]: it even included a call for financing small or medium enterprises! The delirious headlines with which they received the success already indicate their subordination to the reformists, as well as amounting to a miserable cover for their own failures. The *Quotidiano dei Lavoratori*, organ of Avanguardia Operaia, after having cheered on 17 June the "Proletarian Victory," continued on the same note with "Italy Goes Red," accompanied by insipid articles of its top political

leaders who have turned to claiming that "struggles pay off even on the electoral terrain" (!) and that June 15 "is a vote that says no to the historic compromise and advances the alternative." The PDUP was no better. The principal headlines give an idea of the electoral triumphalism of this formation: on June 17 they write,

movement at present lacks class objectives: [it is] out of rhythm with the contract renewals of the autumn (chemical workers, metal workers, etc.), incapable of taking a centralizing role in the clashes of the unemployed of the South and of the underemployed of the small and medium enterprises of the North



Gamma

FIAT workers demonstrate during general strike in Milan.

"An enormous shift to the left; the PCI is the leading Italian party; our lists made the grade in the main regions of the country. The PCI grows, the DC is knocked out, the right has collapsed."...

...Lotta Continua, the political formation which most insistently follows the centrist policy of giving a left cover to the reformism of the PCI, did not hold back from this orgy of tailism. Lotta Continua openly called for a vote to the PCI, consistent with its strategic plan of favoring the formation of a government which has as its pivot the PCI....This perspective is that of subordination to the popular front. Lotta Continua now appears to have acquired its own centrist stability, with a program of integration into the strategic perspective of the popular front, while substantially renouncing the occasional flights of the PDUP and the empty verbalism of AO.

...The upsurge of the mass movement in Italy, which finds an indirect response in the electoral success of the PCI, today dramatically poses the problem of leadership. The

Central area, incapable of giving life to a serious opposition to the reformist leadership of the unions, unable because of the lack of a comprehensive political perspective to provide a resolute answer to the fascists.

The bourgeoisie, for its part, is today not in a condition to confront the proletariat in open battle: the Christian Democracy is in a crisis without precedent in its history, the fascists are finding enormous difficulties in obtaining a mass audience. In this situation the leading personnel of the bourgeoisie must open the door to collaboration with the PCI. It will be a gradual process rather than immediate, allowing time for the regroupment of the bourgeois forces under a single leadership while the reformists reduce still further their already meager program, at the same time multiplying their efforts to preserve their control over the mass movement.

It is in this period, in opposition to the perspective of a popular front, that the essential instruments of the party to lead the masses must be forged.





1931 hunger march on Washington organized by the CP-led Unemployed Councils.

National Committee Unemployed Councils of U.S.

# Organizing the Unemployed in the Great Depression

## Part 1/Fighting for Unity

By Len Meyers and Chris Knox

The onset of depression in the early 1930's posed a test of monumental importance for every working-class political tendency and for the labor movement as a whole. Mass unemployment, caused by the capitalist system itself and obviously affected by the political actions of the ruling class and its state, became a political question of the highest order. Today, as millions once again face the prospect of long-term joblessness due to another worldwide capitalist depression, revolutionists should pay close attention to the political lessons of communist unemployed organizing in the 1930's.

The legions of jobless and homeless were the most dramatic human manifestation of a general economic crisis which was unprecedented in its severity, duration and international extent. Of the major nations, only the Soviet Union, with its collectivist property relations, escaped the dire effects. In the United States unemployment rose continuously, peaking in 1933 at nearly 18,000,000 and creating what was increasingly understood to be a permanent mass of surplus labor. The obtuse administration of Herbert Hoover reflected the quandary of its capitalist masters by seeking to publicly deny the existence of a serious problem as long as possible. Having come to office promising a new era of permanent prosperity, Hoover ended his term in 1933 following a 50 percent decline in industrial production since 1929, with agriculture bankrupt and the entire banking system of the country closed. Lacking any form of unemployment insurance, or even adequate temporary relief, the unemployed faced total destitution.

For labor the question of unemployment was intimately connected with organizing the great mass of unskilled production workers in the big factories into industrial unions. Left to themselves, growing numbers of desperate unemployed provided a ready pool of scab labor for strikebreaking employers. The fear of unemployment alone was sufficient to have a severely depressing effect on the struggles of employed workers: in 1930 the number of strikes was 618, down from 349,400 in 1927, with an equally precipitous decline in numbers of workers involved. Mass organization of both employed workers and unemployed was needed to unite the working class in struggle against a system which by protecting the profits of a few industrial

and financial moguls subjected the masses of working people to untold privations.

Leadership of the initial protests of the unemployed fell to the Communist Party, largely because of the default of the official trade-union organizations of the American Federation of Labor. Unprecedented numbers of unemployed were ready to march in political protests as early as 1930, but the hidebound AFL bureaucracy under William Green detested nothing so much as masses of workers in militant action. The AFL's drastic decline in membership (down to three million in 1929 from an earlier peak of nearly twice that), and concentration in the skilled crafts to the exclusion of the overwhelming majority of unskilled workers, only made the union "leaders" all the more cautious and conservative.

At the very beginning of the crisis, the AFL bureaucracy pledged cooperation with the employers: at a 1929 White House conference with business tycoons and the Hoover administration, they pledged not to seek wage advances or strike during the crisis. As late as 1932, the third year of the great depression, the AFL still officially opposed the introduction of federal unemployment insurance. This "alien" scheme, said Green, was an attack on the "freedom" of the American worker.

### Early CP Unemployed Organizing

At first the Communist Party dived into the job of organizing the unemployed with vigorous determination and a program which, on paper, reflected the needs of the unemployed by combining reform demands for relief and unemployment insurance with a call to unite the unemployed with employed workers in a struggle to overthrow capitalism. In March 1930 the CP press (with perhaps a bit of exaggeration) reported hunger marches in numerous cities totaling one and a quarter million workers and unemployed—100,000 in New York and Detroit, 40,000 in Boston and Chicago, etc.—under the slogan "work or wages." The marches were met with frenzied violence by the ruling class. In New York the entire police force was mobilized, including mounted patrols and machine gun units, and a ferocious attack launched on the marchers.

In 1931 CP Unemployed Council (UC) organizers led the first hunger march on Washington, with 1,500 delegates from around the country, to present their

demands: for unemployment insurance equal to full wages and immediate relief for each unemployed worker, to be paid by government and the bosses; for the seven-hour day without reduction in pay; and for unity of the employed and unemployed in struggle against hunger, wage cuts, mass layoffs and Hoover's "stagger plans." The Communist Party continued to lead militant actions throughout the early 1930's. It must be credited with first arousing American workers from their shock and pressuring enactment of the first large-scale unemployment compensation measures. The heroism, dedication and sacrifice of its cadres was brought home by incidents such as the brutal murder of four marchers, including two young Communists, by police and company thugs during a march on the giant Ford River Rouge plant in 1932.

But in the final analysis the Communist Party pursued an adventurist and sectarian policy which isolated it from the masses of workers, both employed and unemployed, and disorganized its own movement. After a decade of factional struggle, the CP entered the 1930's as a degenerated caricature of its former self, homogenized into a monolithic instrument of the ruling bureaucratic stratum of the USSR. This parasitic bureaucracy headed by Joseph Stalin, while preserving the economic conquests of the October Revolution, had politically expropriated the working class by eliminating soviet and party democracy in the mid-1920's. Following the Stalinization of the Communist International, the American CP expelled its Trotskyist opposition led by Cannon, Shachtman and Abern, and then its right opposition under Lovestone.

In response to the catastrophic consequences of his earlier rightist policies—and in order to undercut sympathy in Communist ranks for the persecuted left opposition—Stalin now embarked on an equally disastrous adventurist and sectarian course. The CP's refusal to fight for a united proletarian front with the Social Democrats against the mounting fascist menace produced a historic catastrophe of monumental proportions in Germany with Hitler's accession to power in 1933 and the consequent destruction of the entire labor movement.

### "Soup Consciousness"

The sectarian turn launched by Stalin in 1929 produced a sudden about-face in



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One of thousands of "Hoovervilles" which sprang up in vacant lots everywhere during the depression to house destitute families.

the U.S. Communist Party's already flawed program and practice, laying the basis for the later sharp right turn embodied in the "popular-front" policies of the late 1930's. Since Stalin's rigid schema presumed an uninterrupted course toward revolution (the so-called "Third Period" was supposed to bring the inevitable demise of imperialism), Leninist tactics of united front and work within the established mass organizations of the workers were completely thrown out. The AFL was denounced as a "fascist" organization, and the rest of the left (such as the Socialist Party and Trotskyists) was dismissed as "social-fascist." The CP for the most part abandoned work in the AFL unions and pulled its relatively small number of supporters out into "revolutionary" dual unions under its own federation, the Trade Union Unity League (TUUL).

Since most unorganized workers still looked to the AFL as the official union movement (many joined the AFL directly through "federal locals"), the "dual" unions stagnated in increasing irrelevancy. When an economic upturn of modest proportions in 1933 coincided with

maneuvers by President Roosevelt to enhance the AFL unions (in order to head off the threat of more radical developments), the "duals" served to isolate class-struggle militants from intervening in the repeated mass strikes that set the stage for the building of industrial unions. In unemployed organizing, where the key need was for uniting the jobless with the social power of the unions, the CP's turn amounted to self-imposed isolation from the employed workers.

The impotence resulting from this isolation led the Stalinists to capitulate, almost in desperation, to the lowest forms of struggle of the unemployed. After the initial mass demonstrations of March 1930 support for mass protests trailed off considerably, down by more than 50 percent the next year. Seeking to build its own unemployed movement under the leadership of the TUUL and Unemployed Councils, and lacking a tactical approach toward the official unions, the work of the UCs degenerated to the lowest form of barter and "self-help"—what the Trotskyist paper, the *Militant*, described as the "planned economy of garbage picking." The CP also fell into a one-sided

propaganda concentration on its "Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill," as a reformist panacea to the effects of the capitalist economic crisis.

The CP's unemployed work was obviously floundering in early 1931 when Communist Party head Earl Browder called for "the direct caring for starving workers" (*Daily Worker*, 12 March 1931). But four months later he was complaining that the UCs had degenerated to "dragging behind the most miserable bourgeois charity policy" (*Communist*, July 1931). Unable to point to the cause of this impasse—the self-imposed isolation brought about by Stalin's "Third Period" policies—Browder did catalogue its effects:

"In the Unemployed Councils, while we have registered some advances, there are relatively few examples of positive achievements...they remain narrow cadre organizations which do not have intimate day-to-day contact with the masses, which have not yet established themselves as permanent centers for work among the masses and in most cases, with the removal of 2 or 3 comrades assigned by the party, these organizations would completely collapse."

—*Communist*, October 1931

### Socialists and Musteites

Thus Stalinist policy during the "Third Period," despite many mass marches and militant actions, failed to build a broad unemployed organization linked to the established unions. The vacuum left by the CP was partly filled by other organizations with centrist or reformist programs, such as the Socialist Party. Starting out with "self-help" activities and a generally rightist thrust (Norman Thomas supported financier J.P. Morgan's "block aid" plan) the SP gradually grew more militant until after 1933 it became an apparent left-wing alternative to Stalinism. The SP led the Workers Committee on Unemployment in Chicago, its biggest local base, and founded the Workers Alliance of America (WAA) in 1935.

Also occupying this terrain was the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (CPLA), founded in 1929 by A.J. Muste, which later became the American Workers Party (AWP). The CPLA included many left-wing trade-union organizers (the ex-minister Muste had also organized textile workers and formed a labor college) left out of the picture by the CP when the latter pulled out of the AFL unions in the late 1920's. Impressed by the possibilities of mass "self-help" work such



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as that organized in Seattle by a CPLA member, Muste turned the CPLA in the direction of militant unemployed work as a short-cut to the creation of a "mass labor party" dedicated to establishing a "workers republic."

Lacking a coherent Marxist program for revolutionary social change, the Musteites groped their way leftward only under the persistent blows of experience. Their initial self-help orientation was modified later with the recognition that the scourge of unemployment could not be solved without addressing the question of who holds power and without organizing the working class to seize state power. Yet, capitulating to anti-communist sentiment, they continued to shy away from the conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In their unemployed work, the Musteites adapted to backward sentiment among the masses in order to enhance organizational success. Louis Budenz, the main CPLA theorist who later went over to Stalinist popular-frontism, called for an "American Approach" (!) to mass work. But for this

Communist League of America (CLA) had suffered years of isolation enforced, often violently, by the much larger Communist Party. Attempting to warn the ranks of the official party of the CP's disastrous "Third Period" course, the CLA argued against the sectarian attempt to keep the unemployed movement within the narrow bounds of the TUUL, calling instead for an orientation toward drawing AFL unions into united-front actions around unemployment. The need for a united-front unemployed movement on the broadest possible basis, drawing in all political tendencies, became more and more urgent as the CP, SP and Musteites each developed their "own" unemployed movements. But the CLA never called for unity at the expense of program. It attacked the opportunist errors of the CP (and other tendencies) and gave no quarter to reformist concepts.

The Trotskyists began their analysis by debunking the "Third Period" myth of a final crisis of capitalism; there would be new economic upturns, followed by renewed downturns, until capitalism was



CPUSA

Open-air meeting in Chicago suburb of Unemployed Council Branch 54 during the early 1930's.

capitulation to nationalist prejudices the Musteites paid a heavy price. Their Unemployed Leagues, which were strongest in Ohio and Pennsylvania, became temporary havens for anti-communists seeking to build a bulwark against the CP.

At the 1933 founding conference (on July 4th!) of the National Unemployed Leagues held in Columbus, Ohio, the leftward-moving Musteites were horrified at the display of flag-waving, religious revivalist and even fascist (KKK) sentiment their "American Approach" had netted them. The podium was seized for a time by right-wingers who had to be repulsed, and the Musteites were obliged to silence all criticism, even from left-wing delegates (notably the Trotskyists), in order to maintain control. However, the NUL was founded on a strictly anti-capitalist basis despite stylistic concessions to the "American Approach" in its founding declaration, and the rightists quickly drifted away.

The Musteite-led Unemployed Leagues chalked up notable accomplishments. Peaking in membership during 1933, the leagues managed to halt all evictions (which were rampant nationally) in Columbus during the summer of that year. Following the leftward course of the CPLA/AWP, the ULs moved programmatically from exclusive concentration on "practical" reforms to setting the unemployed struggle in the context of the need for "the abolition of the entire capitalist system." Seeing the limitations of unemployed work without links to employed workers, the Musteites led a militant strike struggle in Toledo in 1934, one of the three great labor battles of that year. Their Unemployed League took leadership of the foundering Auto-Lite strike and led it to the point of a city-wide general strike, blazing the way for later sitdown successes in Detroit and the formation of the first mass industrial union in auto.

### Early Trotskyist Unemployed Organizing

Prior to the strikes of 1934 and a later fusion with the Musteites, the Trotskyist

overthrown. Trotsky predicted a business upturn before it occurred in late 1933, but pointed out that because of the increasing proportion of constant capital over variable capital—increasing mechanization of industry and rising productivity of labor—unemployment was bound to remain a permanent feature of the economy ("Perspectives of the Upturn," *Writings*, 1932).

Already in 1933, veteran Communist and CLA leader Arne Swabeck, in the pamphlet *Unemployment and the Working Class*, was analyzing the CP's swing from sectarian isolation to the opposite extreme of opportunist methods. The CP never conceived of the unemployed movement as "founded upon a united front of the whole working class," and was now abandoning its quixotic "conquest of the streets" adventurism for a crassly reformist program of legalism and dependence upon bourgeois politicians. Instead, the Trotskyists urged a united-front policy and demands which would be "stepping stones to the revolutionary goal."

Among these, Swabeck specified immediate relief and unemployment insurance paid by the employers and the state; a six-hour day, five-day week with no reduction in pay (the Stalinists had earlier elevated this demand to a seven-hour day in order to seem more "practical"); and the extension of large-scale credits to the Soviet Union, a concrete expression of solidarity with the world's first workers state. Most important, Swabeck pointed out that the unemployed movement couldn't achieve success in isolation: "Its objectives must be general working class objectives, its struggle part of the general working class struggles for the revolution."

To the best of their ability, the Trotskyists attempted to undertake mass work in the trade unions and among the unemployed even during what James Cannon termed the CLA's "dog days" of isolation and persecution by the Stalinists in the early 1930's. The Trotskyist Gerry Allard was a founding leader of the Progressive Miners of America (PMA), a

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# Portugal...

(continued from page 1)

the Revolution. Thus the SP is formally committed to coming up with a constitution which merely rubber stamps the present military dictatorship. Last week, however, the SP vehemently objected to the decision of the assembly of the Armed Forces Movement to set up a system of "people's assemblies," alleging that this is intended to bypass the parties and the constituent assembly.

Yet on June 23 the Socialists organized a demonstration to support the CSR's "Plan of Political Action" which the "popular assemblies" are intended to implement! The reason: the "Plan" reaffirmed Portugal's membership in NATO, called for a crackdown on "uncontrolled leftism" and advocated "socialist pluralism" (including participation of capitalist parties) rather than the dictatorship of the proletariat. In other words, it confirmed the MFA's commitment to capitalism despite its leaders' "socialist" rhetoric.

## The República Affair

The chief bone of contention between the generals and the social democrats has been the so-called *República* affair. On May 19 printers at this Lisbon daily occupied the newspaper offices demanding a change of administration and editorial policy. The printers' union is CP-led (as is the *República* shop committee) while the editor, Raul Rego, is an SP leader and the paper generally reflected Socialist views. Rego refused to leave his offices, whereupon the military closed the paper.

The issue became a cause célèbre in West Europe and caused considerable debate in the MFA leadership. The CP denies responsibility for the workers' actions and its paper, *Avante!*, has so far

issued only a single small statement on the subject which does not even explicitly support the call for a change of administration. On the other hand, the CP-led union has been quite active in trying to prevent Rego from publishing the paper in another shop, and there is no doubt that behind the scenes the CP was firmly behind the printers' actions (*Jornal do Casa República*, 12 June, carried an account of the graphic arts union's attempt to stop *República* from appearing).

After three weeks, the MFA finally decided to reopen *República* under Rego's editorship in mid-June. However, Rego refused to accept the keys unless the MFA agreed to fire all "dissident" workers, name a new composing room foreman and bar the workers from trying to influence the paper's editorial policy. Thereupon, the offices were sealed and the paper remained closed until it reappeared on July 10 with a military officer as editor. The CP-led workers hailed this as a victory and the SP left the government as a result.

The polemics over the *República* affair have contained considerable distortion on both sides, with the Socialists claiming that the "last voice of freedom" in Portugal was being silenced and the Communist Party claiming that it was nothing but a labor conflict, the workers being concerned that the circulation of the paper was dropping because of its anti-government political line and they might therefore lose their jobs! As we have reported earlier, *República* is not the Socialist Party organ (*Portugal Socialista* is) but rather a capitalist, profit-making newspaper with an SP editor and editorial policy. Moreover, while most of the Lisbon daily press is now government-owned as a result of the nationalizations of banks in March, and their editorial staffs are CP-dominated, there is also a *Jornal Novo* which is connected to the Portuguese Confederation of Industry.

On the other hand, the dispute was not a "labor problem" but a clear case of political censorship, initiated by the CP and enforced by the MFA. The subsequent CP-initiated efforts to stop Rego from publishing a paper at other shops only underline this obvious point. The suppression or curtailment of bourgeois-democratic rights under capitalism must be opposed. Whether initiated by Stalinist bureaucrats or directly by the government, it is the capitalist state which ultimately will enforce such censorship. Moreover, even if initially directed against conservative forces, censorship laws and other abridgements of democratic rights will ultimately be used above all to suppress the labor and socialist movements.

## Communists and Freedom of the Press

We wrote in *WV* No. 71 (20 June) concerning the *República* affair that "Marxists must oppose such arbitrary restrictions of freedom of the press by the bourgeois state, even if the newspaper in question is a capitalist paper." However, reply some Maoists and fake-Trotskyists, in this case the MFA acted after the workers moved to throw out the editorial staff because of its rightist policy. Therefore, they conclude, revolutionaries must approve of this act, or at least adopt

a "comradely" attitude toward the *República* printers.

This is not the first time that Stalinists have sought to close newspapers in capitalist countries. In Mexico during the late 1930's CP-influenced union leader Lombardo Toledano launched a drive to censor or ban the reactionary press. Leon Trotsky attacked this Stalinist campaign in an article ("Freedom of the Press and the Working Class," August 1938), where he wrote:

"Both theory and historical experience testify that any restriction of democracy in bourgeois society is, in the final analysis, invariably directed against the proletariat, just as any taxes that are imposed also fall on the shoulders of the working class...."

"But only the blind or feebleminded could think that as the result of the ban on the reactionary press the workers and peasants can free themselves from the influence of reactionary ideas. In reality, only the greatest freedom of speech, of the press, and of association can create favorable conditions for the advance of the revolutionary movement of the working class."

"It is essential to wage a relentless struggle against the reactionary press. But workers cannot let the repressive list of the bourgeois state substitute for the struggle that they must wage through their own organizations and their own press. Today the state may appear to be 'kindly' disposed to the workers organizations; tomorrow the government may fall, inevitably will fall, into the hands of the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie. In that case, whatever restrictive legislation that exists will be thrown at the workers. Only adventurers with no thought other than for the needs of the moment would fail to heed such a danger."

"The most effective way to combat the bourgeois press is to expand the working-class press."

These same lines could have been written about Portugal today. But, Stalinist apologists will say, does that mean we should let the openly counter-revolutionary press carry on agitation? Trotsky answered this as well:

"This objection," we reply, "comes down primarily to trying to identify a workers state with a bourgeois state.... However, even from the standpoint of the interests of the dictatorship of the proletariat, banning bourgeois newspapers or censoring them does not in the least constitute a 'program,' or a 'principle,' or an ideal setup. Measures of this kind can only be a temporary, unavoidable evil."

"Once at the helm, the proletariat may find itself forced, for a certain time, to take special measures against the bourgeoisie, if the bourgeoisie assumes an attitude of open rebellion against the workers state. In that case, restricting freedom of the press goes hand in hand with all the other measures employed in waging a civil war."

We have only to add that should the social democrats place themselves in the camp of the counterrevolutionaries in such an armed conflict, similar measures would have to be taken against newspapers publishing their propaganda. But the situation in Portugal today is not one of civil war between socialist forces and capitalist reaction.

## Opportunists Masquerading as Trotskyists

The duty of all revolutionary Marxists during the recent *República* affair was to oppose the Stalinist/MFA suppression of the views of Socialists, while warning against placing any confidence in the treacherous, pro-capitalist SP leaders. This, however, was not the policy of either wing of the fake-Trotskyist "United Secretariat of the Fourth International." The legalist/reformist minority, led by the American SWP, lined up behind the SP while totally ignoring the class issues in its total support of bourgeois democracy. *Militant* accounts failed to mention the fact that *República* is a bourgeois paper, and ignored Rego's demands that MFA guarantee bourgeois property rights by allowing him to fire "dissidents."

The centrist majority, in contrast, is inclined toward the leftist officers of the MFA. Its leading section, the French LCR, denies that the CP is behind the campaign to censor Socialist views and does not protest suppression of the paper

by the MFA. On the contrary, although gently criticizing censorship, the LCR remarks that "the battle of the workers of *República* could coincide with the general interests of the Portuguese workers" if only they had demanded expropriation of the press, paper mills, etc. (*Rouge*, 30 May).

The rapidity of events in Portugal brings into sharp focus the truth of Trotsky's understanding of the crisis of revolutionary leadership. Today the working masses are in the streets. But in the absence of a revolutionary party committed to the overturn of capitalism, they follow their existing "leaderships": the Stalinists, who preach reliance on the bonapartist generals, and the social democrats, who organize ever more brazen anti-communist campaigns. The Church, the CIA, the domestic far right stand poised.

Now more than ever the masses of Portugal need not pathetic tailists but an authentic Trotskyist vanguard that can swim against the stream, willing to tell the truth, however bitter, and thereby meet the crisis of revolutionary leadership by preparing the masses for the difficult tasks that lie ahead. ■

## LETTER:

## FREE JOAN LITTLE!

New York

11 July 1975

To the Editor:

The 4 July *Workers Vanguard* prints an urgent appeal on behalf of Joan Little, a 20-year old black woman charged with murder for her act of elementary self-defense against an attempted rape by an ice-pick-wielding North Carolina jail guard. If convicted she faces capital punishment. Therefore the appeal makes the timely call upon socialists and labor militants to oppose the death penalty in the hands of the capitalist class. It demands that, "The murder charge against Little must be dropped" and that "Joan Little Must Be Saved from Death Row," but unfortunately omits a call for her freedom.

Omitting this necessary demand could have serious implications. Thus, for example, during the McCarthyite witchhunt the Communist Party called for saving the Rosenbergs from death row and quite deliberately did *not* call for their freedom. Likewise, the main thrust of the CP defense work around Angela Davis was to request a "fair" trial rather than calling for her freedom. This only builds illusions in capitalist "justice." Capitalist courts, prisons and police exist to maintain, through organized terror and violence, the rule of the exploiters over the exploited.

In particular, prisons represent a concentrated form of the repressive power of the state. Joan Little's act of individual defiance against the humiliating submission that is imposed upon prisoners, in this case compounded by sexism and racism, was by its nature also a protest against the capitalist prison system. Unlike the Stalinists, we call for freedom for anyone victimized for their actions in behalf of the exploited and the oppressed.

Comradely,

Reuben Shiffman

for the Partisan Defense Committee  
*WV replies:* The point is correct, and our article should have also demanded "Free Joan Little!"

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# Socialist League (DC) Slanders Militant Auto Workers

# Cagle's Red- Baiting

We reprint below excerpts from a letter (printed in the 9 June issue of the *UAW Militant*) from the Committee for a Militant UAW, an oppositional grouping in UAW Local 1364 at the General Motors Assembly Division plant in Fremont, California, to Tom Cagle, a recent candidate for president of that Local. We have chosen to bring this letter concerning Brother Cagle to the attention of the working-class movement for the following reasons:

First, Brother Cagle is a supporter of the views of the Socialist League (Democratic Centralist), a self-proclaimed "Trotskyist" organization, which issued out of the remnants of the Workers League's San Francisco Bay Area branch. Brother Cagle is a contributor to the SL(DC)'s monthly paper, *Labor News*, in which his activity in the trade unions is held up as an example of the kind of activity that class-conscious militants should pursue in the labor movement.

Secondly, while the Socialist League is a minuscule grouplet confined entirely to the San Francisco area and has negligible influence in the labor movement, Cagle and the SL(DC) do provide an exceptionally clear example of the kind of opportunist liquidation of the struggle for the Transitional Program that is endemic to nearly the entire spectrum of ostensibly Trotskyist organizations, both in the U.S. and internationally.

Finally, we reprint portions of the CMUAW's letter to Brother Cagle to contrast it to his own vitriolic, lying, red-baiting attack on these militants published in the latest issue of *Labor News*. After putting forward the red-baiting lie that the Spartacist League "sent" a couple of supporters to join an opportunist grouping called the Brotherhood Caucus, Cagle lapses into hysterical, foam-flecked anti-communism. Commenting on the disintegration of the Brotherhood after

its election to the leadership of Local 1364, he fumes:

"...within a year after this triumphant victory the Brotherhood radicals disintegrated. Out came the Maoists; out came the Spartacists like rats deserting a sinking ship when they could no longer defend their position. The Maoists emerged in two groups, 'Stand Up' and 'On The Line,' and the Spartacists as 'Committee (of two) For a Militant UAW.'"

"James Robertson was now hitting his strides when he could attack Tom Cagle with a caucus paper inside the Fremont plant. Radicalism was given free rein and poured down a barrage of abstract propaganda on the auto workers at Fremont."

*Labor News*, 15 June 1975

To this slander we reply: the Spartacist League has never supported the Brotherhood Caucus hut, on the contrary, has denounced it from the beginning as an opportunist bureaucratic formation (see "Out-Bureaucrats Seek to Co-opt Angry Ranks in Fremont UAW Elections," *WV* No. 21, 25 May 1973). Nor have the founders of the Committee for a Militant UAW ever sought to join the Brotherhood, *unlike Cagle* (see CMUAW letter below). But most importantly, from this quote it can be seen that when Tom Cagle hits his stride he is the equal of such anti-labor, red-baiting scum as Victor Reisel. Such fulminations are more appropriate to anti-labor rags such as New York's *Daily News* than to a self-proclaimed "Trotskyist" newspaper. Their only purpose can be to set up "Stand Up," "On the Line" and the CMUAW for a purge by the rabidly anti-communist UAW bureaucracy which works hand-in-hand with the FBI and the employers to drive union militants out of the labor movement.

And lest anyone should think that the SL(DC) simply permitted Cagle a bit of "polemical excess" we need only point to the same issue of *Labor News*, where, in an article covering a recent Bay Area trade unionists' conference on Chile, ILWU militants who opposed the presence of Democratic Party Congressman Leo Ryan are labelled "Spartacists." The Socialist League engages in such despicable red-baiting in spite of the fact that these militants, as it well knows, are under attack by the ILWU bureaucracy as people who must be denied "...the right to exploit our democratic processes to continue their unrelenting attack against us" (*Dispatcher*, 18 April, quoted by the 15 May *Labor News*).

This criminal red-baiting is the true measure of the Socialist League and Tom

Cagle. Such McCarthyite slander has no place in the workers movement and *must not be tolerated or permitted to continue*. By adopting such foul-smelling practices the Socialist League shows itself a fitting graduate of the Healy Wohlforth school of slander and falsification, and places itself in the camp of the enemies of revolution, in the camp of the Eherts, Noskes and Victor Reuthers. These actions are of a piece with the Healyite International Committee's labelling of various of its opponents within the workers movement as CIA agents, and its repeatedly demonstrated willingness to call the cops on those who disagree with its views and practices. This syphilis must be unmercifully eradicated from the workers movement, by political exposure as well as militant defense of the principles of workers democracy.

## CMUAW Open Letter

June 6, 1975

Dear Brother Cagle,

We are writing this letter to elaborate on why we have found no basis to support your current campaign for President of Local 1364.... Despite the fact that last year you refused to support our own campaign for convention delegates, even though you withdrew your own candidacy and resolutions, and you claimed to support the substance of the full program that we ran on (including resolutions for a Workers Party and National Strikes Against Layoffs), we would support your campaign if we had sufficient agreement.

...Our Committee's program has as its goal the abolition of the capitalist system and the formation of a workers government. We believe in a full program that clarifies for UAW members and the rest of labor the necessity, obstacles, and means to achieve that goal: economic demands, like a sliding scale of hours and wages that point the way to a planned economy, addressing unemployment and inflation; against racial and sexual discrimination that divides the workers against each other; keeping the unions independent from the bosses' government and its cops and courts; for industry wide strikes against layoffs; occupations of closed plants, imposing workers control by factory committees; against import quotas and deportations that break down international workers solidarity and encourage national chauvinism; for the expropriation of auto and all basic industry and banks; and in order to struggle politically for this program, a Workers Party based on the trade unions. Clearly all of these points intersect the reality of the problems facing the UAW today and are a *precondition* for the establishment of an oppositional union caucus, whose main purpose is to expose, discredit, and *counterpose* itself to the union bureaucracy. We have raised and fought for every one of these points as they have arisen concretely in the life of the union.

...You on the other hand have consistently minimized program, relying almost entirely on economic demands. This was true as far back as the 1970 contract fight, when the principal demand of your short-lived United Action Caucus was \$1.65 an hour wage increase. Was this on the theory that "the crisis" made wages a program in itself? Regarding the trade union leadership, you seem to have the dangerous and illusory notion that under the objective impact of an economic crisis, the existing leadership will be *forced* into playing a progressive role, eg. forming a labor party, in spite of itself. Putting these together, one comes up with the program of your first leaflet: 30 for 40, 100% COL, and independent labor candidates. And if your first leaflet was ambiguous as to how (or if) the UAW bureaucracy's break with the capitalist

parties would take place, your second leaflet certainly clears it up: by a "legal" constitutional, referendum vote! You have managed to take the most important strategic battle of class struggle union militants—breaking the UAW and all the unions from the capitalist parties—and reduce it to the nickel and dime reformism of a "legal referendum"....

...It is difficult for us to draw any other conclusion except that your perspective is one of acting to pressure the existing bureaucracy into more militant stands, instead of preparing the membership programmatically to throw them out. Further your opposition to running on or supporting a full program like CMUAW's, referring to it as a "laundry list", seems based on the notion that the membership "isn't ready" for such a program, and/or such "radical" demands will limit your ability to effect compromise blocs with sections of the trade union bureaucracy. (We would add here that one reason you are not taken seriously by militants in the plant and have remained an isolated individual is that your minimal public positions over the years are at variance with the broader demands similar to ours you are known to hold privately. This has even on occasion exposed you to red-baiting by opponents to the right of you, who seek demagogically to exploit that contradiction.)

In addition to the above there are several more questions we would like you to reply to:

- What exactly do you have in mind when calling for "labor's own independent candidates" to run in local municipalities? Is it comparable to the farcical and short-lived San Mateo Labor Party, a "labor party in one county" whose "members" and "candidates" were not prohibited from supporting the Democratic Party in other spheres?

- Given the present massive layoffs of autoworkers and the imminent threat of more plant closures, don't you think it is crucial to pose the question of *workers control* connected with sit-downs and occupations of closed plants, which raises the question of which class shall rule society?

- Are you willing to spell out unambiguously your position on racial oppression, especially on the issues of busing and the racist terror against desegregation? Or is your silence on racial discrimination an attempt to "accommodate" to those who have backward racist views?

- You say you oppose the women's lawsuit, yet you abstained on our motion (which carried the local) opposing that suit and posing instead jobs for all through national strikes for a shorter work week at no loss in pay. Why?

- Since court suits against the union often arise in the absence of a real union program to fight racial and sexual discrimination, what is your position on sexual discrimination? Or do you think the women in the plant (who you refer to as "girls") never had it so good?

- Is the Brotherhood Caucus any different now than it was a couple of years ago, when according to your own account you were prepared to join it, having purchased the membership patch, only to be turned down by the caucus itself?

- We believe that cops are not workers and should not be permitted membership in any union or workers organization, and that "strikes" by cops for "Better working conditions" are in fact dangerous political mobilizations ultimately directed against the labor movement. The police are our enemies. Previous discussions have left it unclear what your position is on this.

- At a time when Woodcock and the whole U.S. labor bureaucracy is whipping up social-patriotic hysteria around import quotas, "Buy American" campaigns, deportations of foreign-born workers, etc., why does the program for your "labor party" (or candidates) avoid taking on this obvious and dangerous preparation for another World War?...

Fraternally,

The Committee for a Militant UAW

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# Unemployed Organizing...

(continued from page 7)

militant union based on a 1932 revolt of 40,000 miners in southern Illinois against the bureaucratic regime of John L. Lewis in the United Mine Workers. However, the PMA quickly fell under the sway of a new set of "militant" bureaucrats who became indistinguishable from the old Lewis machine. When the UMW ignored the need to organize the unemployed in Illinois, Allard and the Trotskyists played a leading role in building the Illinois Workers Alliance (IWA) which entered the SP-dominated Workers Alliance of America at its founding as the most powerful state section. The IWA soon outstripped the long-established Unemployed Councils as the strongest unemployed organization in the Midwest. It stood for the abolition of capitalism, and

in the middle of the decade led militant marches on the state capital against relief cuts.

On the West Coast a patient intervention into the Los Angeles Unemployed Cooperative Relief Association beginning in 1932 gave the Trotskyists leadership of a diverse left-wing bloc. This leadership transformed the UCRA from a "cooperative" self-help movement into an organization which militantly fought evictions, at times roping off whole city blocks to stop dispossession. In 1933 CLA militant Jane Rose led a protest against the cutting off of free milk distributions to the unemployed by taking over the city council and delivering speeches all day on the "class nature of the unemployed question" (*Militant*, 10 June 1933).

The Trotskyists began to achieve successes in 1933 which increasingly lessened their isolation. Hitler's unopposed march to power, facilitated by Stalin's suicidal sectarianism, had a traumatic impact. Though the CP was heading rapidly toward eventual subservience to Roosevelt's New Deal (formerly seen as "slavery"), its turn temporarily gave the Trotskyists a chance to intervene in Stalinist-led mass meetings.

## Stalinists Sabotage the NFUWL

One important opportunity to form a united-front unemployed organization came at the founding conference of the National Federation of Unemployed Workers Leagues in May of 1933. Chicago, where the meeting was held, had a year earlier been the scene of a successful, broad united-front movement to reverse a 50 percent relief cut. On that occasion, the Stalinists were forced to abandon their sectarianism and unite with "social fascists" around immediate demands. Now they, the SP, Trotskyists, Musteites, Lovestonites and innumerable other tendencies met and founded the first national unemployed organization having the potential of becoming a truly mass organization.

The Trotskyists led in preventing anti-communist exclusion of the Unemployed Councils from the conference, and succeeded in getting their formulation for a united-front movement passed. This called for the NFUWL to seek "the closest relationship with the *Employed* workers through the trade unions" while guaranteeing "the right of minority expression and freedom of criticism" (quoted in the *Militant*, 20 May 1933). Graphically demonstrating its quandary, the CP delegation supported this conception after having voted against it only a few months earlier at a conference to establish a united front to free jailed labor hero Tom Mooney.

Unfortunately, however, the NFUWL was stillborn because the major tendencies were still determined to build their "own" unemployed bailiwicks in place of any united-front organization. The very next month, Stalinists and Musteites blocked at the Columbus conference of the National Unemployed Leagues to defeat a Trotskyist motion for affiliation to the NFUWL (*Militant*, 15 July 1933). Since the Trotskyists were still much weaker than CP and SP forces in the NFUWL leadership, they were unable to carry the broad grouping forward themselves. Meanwhile the CP continued to degenerate to the right, so that by the time a united unemployed movement was founded under the name Workers Alliance in 1936 (a year after origination of the WA by the Socialists) it rapidly became a subservient appendage of the Roosevelt government.

Although only a year before they had aided the CP in wrecking the NFUWL and opposing the Trotskyists' efforts to

build a broad united-front national unemployed organization, the Musteites' gradual programmatic movement to the left laid the basis for their fusion with the CLA in late 1934. Both tendencies came to the fusion fresh from the field of class battle: the Musteites leading auto workers in Toledo and the CLA at the head of Minneapolis Teamsters.

Although many leading elements of the CPLA/AWP, including Budenz and Muste himself, clung to reformist notions picked up during their checkered political course, the unification was made on the basis of what Trotsky described as a "rigidly principled program." As a result, while Budenz, Muste and others left the WP in a matter of months, the bulk of their erstwhile followers remained. The attendance of 1,200 at the founding convention of the Workers Party of the U.S. represented a significant step in overcoming the Trotskyists' former isolation. The WP now led the National Unemployed Leagues, representing 130,000 unemployed in Ohio, another 25,000 in Pennsylvania, and a strong base in West Virginia.

## Trotskyists Lead the National Unemployed Leagues

At once the WP sought to purge the NUL of remaining bangovers from the period when its course was one of limitation to immediate reform issues and opportunist capitulation to backward prejudices among the masses. A "Resolution on the Unemployed Question," passed by a WP National Committee plenum in October 1935 specified that

"The next step in the development of the unemployed movement must be an increased educational and agitational campaign throughout to root the organizations solidly in the principles of the class struggle."

Analyzing the different unemployed organizations, the resolution noted that the NUL was "the leading organization in the unemployed field," having pursued a policy of mass, class-struggle militancy and "vigorous participation of the rank and file in the life of the organization." Its weaknesses included failure to penetrate major industrial centers and consolidate organizationally, leading to "great fluctuations" in membership. In addition,

"Nuclei and fractions of revolutionists have not been built systematically within the local leagues. And the organization is not in a genuine sense national in scope."

The resolution called for WP efforts toward solving the two major problems of the unemployed movement, that of achieving a real united front of the numerous unemployed organizations and unity with employed workers. The resolution called for orientation toward the Workers Alliance, which was making overtures to which the Stalinists were responding (and which itself represented leftward development of the Socialist Party).

The NUL also took a serious stance toward the race question and organizing in the South. Symbolic of its concern with the organizing of black unemployed was the selection of E.R. McKinney, a black National Committee member of the Workers Party and former Musteite, as vice-president of the NUL and editor of its weekly paper, *Mass Action*. The NUL adamantly refused to grant charters to segregated locals, and led thousands of blacks and whites in National Unemployed Day marches in 1934 in Gulfport, Mississippi, Ashland, Kentucky and other parts of the South. The NUL recognized "that a local organization may force up relief standards many times, but if it fails to overcome the racial division then it has failed fundamentally and is a menace to the Labor movement" (1934 convention minutes).

The NUL supported certain legislative action, such as the Frazier-Lundeen Workers Unemployment Insurance Bill,

but not with the fixation on reformist legislative panaceas characteristic of the CP-led Unemployed Councils. The Workers Party's *New Militant* (1 January 1935) denounced the Stalinists for "making only one demand—the Lundeen Bill—the single issue, [and thereby] dividing the ranks of the unemployed and workers." The WP insisted that the fight for legislative reforms be "a class-struggle fight, not a class-collaboration lobby." However, some slogans used by the NUL and the Illinois Workers Alliance (such as "tax the rich") could have led to the impression that workers' interests lie in reforming the capitalist state apparatus, and should have been left behind with the rest of the Musteite "American Approach" reformist baggage.

Small though they were, during the early 1930's the Trotskyists had made an impressive contribution to communist unemployed work, both on the theoretical and practical levels. While the much larger CP frittered away its influence and opportunities for leadership of the masses by "Third Period" excesses, only to turn later to reformist "popular-front" betrayals, the Trotskyists had provided a correct understanding of Leninist tactics for organization of the unemployed, and realized the goals in the form of mass organization. Concurrently they won over leftward-moving centrists repelled by Stalinist sectarianism as well as by AFL and SP do-nothingism. In their struggle to forge a new revolutionary vanguard party they were in the latter half of the decade to provide additional examples of revolutionary work among the unemployed while the CP sank to the depths of its pro-Roosevelt, pro-war capitulation.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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## NMU...

(continued from page 4)

As a result of its class-collaborationist policies, some 22,000 shipboard jobs—almost twice the present NMU deep-sea membership—were lost between 1960 and 1972 (AFL-CIO *American Federationist*, April 1973). And the new contract railroad through last month by Shannon Wall and his flunkies contains not one word about job protection despite continuing losses due to automation and foreign-flag "runaways."

As for corruption, the items listed in the *Times* account are only the tip of the iceberg. A leaflet by the Militant-Solidarity Caucus, a class-struggle opposition in the NMU, charges: "For years our caucus has exposed and fought the things the grand jury is now 'discovering,' such as the building fund hoax and the sale of the 'Joe Curran Mausoleum' on Seventh Avenue" (*Beacon* supplement, 11 July). But the militants immediately add: "The government must keep its hands out of unions! Only working seamen can get rid of corrupt racketeers running our union and making deals with the company.... We call on all NMU members to oppose this phony grand jury investigation which is an attack against our union!"

The leaflet points to other examples of government intervention in the unions:

"The Teamsters Union is no less corrupt since the government got Hoffa—incidentally just after he won the first national over-the-road contract in history. Government investigations of and charges against the SIU [Seafarers' International Union] and its officials like Paul Hall and Hal Banks (in Canada) have ebbed and flowed, depending on which Administration in Washington was getting paid off from the SIU coffers.... The intentions and interests of the government are clearly demonstrated by strike breaking injunctions, wage controls, business tax privileges, the screening of militants out of our union, funds supplied to bust labor unions in other countries, the massacre of unionists in Chile and working people in Vietnam!"

And for those who have illusions that the courts can be used by oppositionists to reform the unions, the Caucus points to the example of "one of these hotshot hucksters, Morrissey, who through a recent suit, just won a decision to take the NMU treasury for \$100,000 of seamen's hard-earned dues money!"

The capitalists' government is the enemy of all working people. In intervening in labor disputes or "cleaning up" the unions its role is not that of "neutral" arbiter but rather the enforcer of the interests of the class enemy. The fight for independence of the labor movement from the bourgeoisie and its government is the first principle of militant unionism. As part of the fight to replace the present pro-company bureaucracy with a leadership dedicated to waging the class struggle through to victory, militants must join in a united call to Stop the Grand Jury Attack on the NMU! ■



# "Socialist/Feminist" Conference...

(continued from page 3)

at the Anti-Imperialist Caucus sessions remarked that in opposing feminism, the anti-imperialist women had jumped right over the question of the special oppression of women and had liquidated a women's program altogether. This was no accident, she pointed out. The Anti-Imperialist Caucus disagrees with Engels that the family is the primary unit of women's oppression and thus it does not see the necessity of launching a fight around a consistent program that would

free women from the chains of the family. The Spartacist League, however, following the policies of the early Communist International, calls for special work among women and the creation of a women's section of the Bolshevik party.

Not surprisingly, the diverse amalgam of the Anti-Imperialist Caucus found itself so divided over its proposed statement that "men are not the enemy" that its Stalinist leadership found it necessary to bureaucratically squelch

discussion on this point and force the position through without a vote, demagogically claiming that Asian and other Third World women were unable to stay because they had to meet early the next morning to discuss "their own problems."

Because the Third World Women's Caucus itself wished to raise criticisms of the conference, it allowed a semi-open microphone at its workshops. Because many women came to the conference looking for real political discussion instead of the sterile scheduled agenda, these workshops became the political center for the conference. At these sessions, a trade unionist from Detroit

CWA Local 4001 drew applause when she declared herself in disagreement with both the main principles of unity and the Anti-Imperialist Caucus statement. What "autonomy" really means, she said, is separation from the working class and its political parties. In speaking of political links to any party, the question is *to what kind of party*. None of the parties discussed by the Anti-Imperialist Caucus women had programs which went beyond reformism; none, for example, called for the nationalization of industry, or the formation of an independent party of labor to fight for a workers government.

## Radical Women Choose Tailism

Free speech at the Third World Women's Workshop turned out to have its limitations when *their* politics were criticized. By Sunday morning, the Chicana spokesman on the Third World Women's Panel, a member of Radical Women, was thrown off the panel for "Trotskyism." Though the Radical Women group from Seattle participated on the planning committee where they claim to have privately opposed the decision to exclude the SL, they refused—despite repeated requests—to openly defend our right to participate. In contradiction to their talk of workers democracy and the need for men to fight alongside women, Radical Women capitulated on the exclusion question down the line and even accepted without protest their own silencing in the Third World Women's workshops.

In a document prepared for the conference, Radical Women had warned of just this kind of capitulation by leftists to bureaucratic witchhunting in CLUW (Coalition of Labor Union Women):

"... Their failure to defend the rights of other left groups is tantamount to acting as accomplices with the bureaucrats in their witchhunt. It is a suicidal course of action which can only lead to the ouster of all radicals. There will be no place in CLUW for the 'good' radicals once the process has been set in motion for driving out the 'bad' radicals."

These "radicals" would do well to study their own words. Though they claim to be Trotskyists, their grovelling tailism and embracing of feminist anti-communism is more indicative.

## What Are the "Socialist-Feminists" Afraid Of?

Despite repeated frenzied threats and attempted physical harassment, the SL fought against its exclusion throughout the conference. By the final day conference leaders were in such a state of political disorientation and bureaucratic confusion that they could hardly implement their policies. During the conference the SL set up a literature table, circulated a protest petition and distributed a leaflet, "Women's Liberation Through Socialist Revolution!" which outlined the SL's unmatched ten-year record of serious and uncompromising struggle for the emancipation of women. We pointed out:

"The Spartacist League is excluded because it is the only tendency that dares alienate our 'sisters' by consistently raising a socialist program which exposes the contradictions inherent in the term 'socialist-feminist.' In fact, there is no such thing as a 'socialist-feminist.' As we have said in our press, the logic of feminism is sex war just as surely as the logic of Marxism is class war, and there is no way that these two can be reconciled. But, now that 'socialism' is more fashionable than it used to be, there is such a thing as feminism painted over with a light veneer of socialist rhetoric..."

"The most ludicrous excuse of all for the exclusion of Spartacists is that a program for women's liberation inhibits discussion among those women whose politics are still in a formative stage. Well, we do have a program; moreover, we have a strategy which we can articulate clearly and apply more and more effectively. The feminists, on the other hand, including those of the 'socialist-feminist' variety, have been trying to 'get it together' for a decade, but have never yet succeeded. They 'come together' and 'exchange experiences' and 'share skills'—but no program and no strategy! That is why the feminist movement is a revolving door—recruiting new women, demoralizing them with dead-end activities and watching them drift away." ■

# Sanitation Wildcat

(continued from page 12)

hours, a union gain dating back to the 1920's. But while Gotham has been brutally frank about his collaboration with the mayor, the more "left"-talking bureaucrats have been no more combative. Pat Knight of SSEU Local 371, a DC37 affiliate, is officially on record for a strike against layoffs but simply sat on his hands during the sanitation strike.

## Cops Out of the Labor Movement!

The viciously anti-labor reaction by New York cops to the announcement of layoffs should help to rip the mask of "fellow workers" off these dangerous class enemies. After pushing their racist "Fear City" campaign in June, laid-off police responded to the pink slips with a fury directed against the working class and ordinary citizens. Laid-off cops

rampaged into traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge during the afternoon rush hour, letting air out of tires, throwing beer bottles and screaming obscenities as they threatened the trapped motorists. Reports of physical assaults directed at ghetto residents were rampant. In one case, two ex-cops were arrested for beating a black youth who refused to break into a liquor store for them following a farewell party in the local precinct (*New York Times*, 2 July)!

True to their vocation of enforcing capitalist law and order, the police broke up picket lines of striking sanitationmen at the landfills. And when the workers returned to their jobs, Patrolmen's Benevolent Association head Ken McFeeley announced that cops' tempers were raw because garbage men were alleged to be getting double-time for cleaning up the mess. But the police "indignation" was evidently assuaged, as they received almost one third of the extra funds allotted by the state legislature and almost 40 percent of the laid-off cops

have already been called back. It is clear that all sections of the ruling class are agreed that their hired guns must be protected.

While many militant unionists continue to harbor illusions about the possibility of support from the cops, and while most left organizations remain silent on this vital issue, the Spartacist League has been virtually alone in warning workers of the dangers of allowing the professional gunmen of the bourgeoisie into the ranks of labor. All class-conscious workers must demand, Cops Out of the Unions!

## For an Alliance of City Workers and the Poor

During the late 1960's the gross insensitivity of Albert Shanker, head of the United Federation of Teachers, to the needs of the city's minority poor assisted city officials in mobilizing large numbers of community residents to break the 1968 teachers' strike. Yet this summer, in spite of the racist labor bureaucracy, community sentiment has been overwhelmingly with the strikers. A moving expression of this elementary sense of solidarity took place when residents of the Bushwick section of Brooklyn held 14 firemen hostage (not unwillingly) in a station scheduled to be closed, then kidnapped the commissioner who came to demand their release. Residents released the firemen only when the commissioner agreed to keep the fire station open!

While city officials are doing their level best to jack up taxes on the working people of New York City—to pay off bonds sold by the recently created Big MAC (Municipal Assistance Corporation) at sky-high interest rates—a call for the cancellation of the municipal debt and expropriation of the banks without compensation could win massive public support. A city-wide general strike against layoffs should mobilize not only city workers and other key sectors of the labor movement, such as phone workers, but also their potential allies—the unemployed, ghetto poor and beleaguered petty bourgeoisie whose security and living standards have suffered grievously as a result of the capitalist crisis.

City workers lost this round in the showdown over the "budget crunch," but the battle is not over. The labor movement has not suffered—yet—a crushing defeat which would lead to rampant demoralization. On the contrary, for a brief moment it saw the power of united class action and was able to gauge the panic of the frightened ruling class. But the political lessons of betrayal of the sanitation strike must be drawn.

The DeLurys, Gotbaums et al. are the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class. They regularly support the twin parties of capital—Democratic and Republican—at the polls and sabotage every move toward militant, independent labor action whether in politics or industrial disputes. A revolutionary leadership, guided by a vanguard party and committed to a full program of class struggle, is necessary to break the unions from the stranglehold of the sellout bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. The alternative is to endlessly repeat the recent fiasco, threatening the jobs and conditions of the workers and ultimately the very existence of the unions themselves. ■

# Protest Popeye Jackson Assassination!

Wilbert "Popeye" Jackson, head of the United Prisoners Union—a prison reform group—and a companion Sally Voye, who is a schoolteacher and UPU member, were assassinated June 8 in San Francisco. Shot at point-blank range while they were sitting in a car outside Jackson's Mission district home, this cold-blooded murder is being used by the cops as an excuse for hauling in radicals with the intent of pinning the murder on the left. Reprinted below is a statement issued by the Bay Area Spartacist League following the slayings.

June 12, 1975

United Prisoners Union  
San Francisco

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

We are writing to express to you our deepest revolutionary solidarity. It is not clear now, and may not be for a long time to come, exactly who is responsible for the brutal murder of Popeye Jackson and Sally Voye. But it is clear who will benefit from Popeye's death and who will lose. It is the capitalist class with their cops, courts and prisons who will rejoice. It is the working and poor people, blacks and minorities, and all of the oppressed who have lost a fighter in the struggle for revolutionary change.

We had many differences with Popeye—principally on the centrality of the working class and the need for a Leninist Party. Nevertheless, Popeye was a resolute foe of the repressive capitalist order.

We in the Bay Area left and labor movement must join ranks against any attempt of the cops and the slate to use Popeye's death to set in motion a wave of repression—whether through a frame-up or some sort of grand jury "fishing expedition." Should this occur, the left and labor movement must stand together against such attacks. "An attack on one is an attack on all."

Brothers and Sisters! We have lost a fighter in the struggle for revolutionary social change.

FORWARD TOWARD THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

In Solidarity,

Bay Area Spartacist League



People's World



# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Gotbaum Gives Away "Summer Hours" After Sanitation Strike Rocks NYC

JULY 12—City workers in New York were greeted on July 1 with 19,000 "pink slips," courtesy of Mayor Abraham Beame. Sanitationmen, enraged by the layoffs of almost one third of their union, immediately began to wildcat. Within 24 hours garbage collection had stopped and pickets barricaded several of the city's landfills. Labor action rapidly spread to other unions. Construction workers tied up morning rush-hour traffic on the West Side Highway when they refused to remove barriers used the previous night to close lanes for repairs. Park and beach maintenance crews failed to report to work, leaving July 4th vacationers with somewhat less-than-desirable surroundings. Firemen, faced with 2,000 layoffs and numerous station closures, began sick-ins and work-to-rule slowdowns while ghetto residents set fire to the garbage piling up in the streets.

Although by week's end the strike had been halted with layoffs left standing, thanks to the treachery of the municipal union bureaucrats, not since the 1970 postal strike had such combativity been seen in the labor movement here. The sanitation strike made headlines across the continent and provoked a frenzied response from the ruling class. New York City, a strong labor town and center of the public worker militancy of the late 1960's, is seen as the test case for ruling-class attempts to impose substantial job and wage cuts on government employees during the current economic downturn. To the labor movement, whose recent passivity has baffled economists, the impact of the sanitation strike was nothing short of electrifying.

### "Off With Their Heads!"

On the first day of the wildcat NYC Mayor Beame rushed to court for an injunction against the strikers. Invoking the hated anti-labor Taylor law, which calls for penalties against strikers in government employ at a rate of twice the daily wage and loss of seniority, the mayor tried to frighten workers back. The *New York Times* first moaned that "only" 13,000 pink slips were actually handed out, then launched an "off-with-their-heads" editorial barrage demanding every strikebreaking measure in the book including calling up the National Guard:

"This is near anarchy, an unconscionable assault against the city by those who have been entrusted to preserve and protect it. The reaction from city hall must be fast, firm and reasoned...."

"If the garbage men fail to heed the court, the sternest disciplinary actions should be taken at once, including the dismissals that are permitted under law. There are plenty of jobless people in this recession-ridden city who would not turn up their noses at the opportunity to earn nearly \$14,000 a year, plus lavish fringes, for helping to keep their city clean and healthy."

"Meanwhile city and state officials should be preparing the use of the National Guard."

—*New York Times*, 3 July

Behind the facade of legislative action the bourgeoisie was drawing the guns for a display of massive repression against the strikers. The New York Supreme Court, supposed "neutral" arbiter of justice, reaffirmed that law in capitalist society is, in the final analysis, determined

by the purse strings, and ruled against a motion by the firemen's union to block the layoffs saying it could not stop the mayor when city coffers were bare. Meanwhile Beame was arranging contingency plans for the Coast Guard to move in should bridge tenders repeat their 1971 strike action. Community controlniks in the Office of Neighborhood Services were instructed to organize scabbing under the guise of "community trash disposal procedures."

### DeLury Betrays the Strike

While preparing for a showdown, the government was hesitant to deploy naked force until absolutely necessary to halt escalation of the strike into a multi-union city-wide action. And, in fact, it was *not* capitalist repression that defeated the strike but rather the union bureaucracy, the agents of the bosses within the labor movement. John DeLury, president of the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association (a Teamster affiliate), first gave implicit support to the wildcat in order to ward off pressures from below, only to then turn savagely against his membership. Not only did he call off the strike on July 3 without obtaining the slightest guarantee against layoffs, but he agreed to contribute \$1.6 million in union funds to the city to sustain laid-off workers for a

support from the other main contingents of NYC labor, the militant sanitationmen were forced to grudgingly end the walkout.

At stake in the present confrontation between the unions and the city are not only the jobs of 19,000 workers but the gains of the past 40 years of trade-union struggle, including working-condition standards, collective bargaining, seniority and the union shop. No one realizes this better than the capitalists themselves. The *New York Times* (6 July) commented: "...the trade unions' supremacy now appears weakened by the dismissals. In this sense, the number of union members permanently laid off is less significant than the fact of the membership's apparent vulnerability."

### "We've Got to Stop Acting Like Soviet Heroes"

For the 19,000 laid-off workers, for the sanitation strikers left out on a limb, for the deep concessions made by the municipal unions during the last seven months, class-conscious workers will have many accounts to settle with Victor Gotbaum, president of AFSCME's District Council 37, the city's largest municipal union and head of the municipal labor council. Gotbaum was in a key position to make or break the strike. He broke it.



Residents of the Bushwick section of Brooklyn "captured" Engine Company 218 until Fire Commissioner agreed to re-open the fire house.

few weeks while Beame decides how many will be finally axed!

Sanitation workers were outraged by DeLury's call for a return to work. At garages throughout the city, workers argued heatedly with their union stewards who combined threats and make-believe promises, such as the possibility of financial help from the federal government. Steeled against such threats and bombast in their victorious 1968 strike, sanitationmen were ready to fight. "There will be no national garbage men," said a worker at the East 73rd Street garage. Crews threatened to blow up the trucks before letting the National Guard pick up the garbage (*New York Post*, 2 July). But in the absence of a committed class-struggle leadership and lacking organized

Last week he not only failed to call for even the mildest solidarity action to support the sanitationmen but also let layoffs of his own union members go through without a fight. Why? "I happen to like the Mayor," Gotbaum told the *Times* (12 July). "I happen to think he's a very decent guy." He added: "We've got to stop giving ultimatums and acting like Soviet heroes." Earlier this year Gotbaum had announced he was joining the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee in order to "work to make good men like [Democratic city council president] Paul O'Dwyer understand the human suffering the crisis is causing."

Prepared to go to any lengths to prove that he is no "Soviet hero" — a fact which just about everyone would be willing to



Hamburg—New York Daily News

concede—Gotbaum last December first called for the forced retirement of older workers, then acquiesced in thousands of layoffs. In June, sounding more like Beame's comptroller than a union president, Gotbaum added that city workers would have to give up some of the "crap" they had won in the past. Last week this phony "socialist" rang up another first in his incredible string of nakedly anti-labor actions, calling for the firing of 13,000 "provisional" workers!

Gotbaum's capitulation at every step has only encouraged city officials, who have been walking roughshod over the union. Beame's latest (but not last) gambit is to unilaterally rescind summer

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