

## Sectarian Atrocities Rock Ulster

JANUARY 11—On Tuesday, January 5, a wave of sectarian murders in County Armagh, Northern Ireland (Ulster), culminated in the massacre of ten Protestant workers and the serious wounding of an eleventh. A minibus taking the workers home from a textile factory was flagged down near the village of Whitecross, the Catholic driver was asked to step aside and a dozen gunmen opened fire on the passengers.

The following day a group calling itself the "South Armagh Republican Action Force" claimed responsibility for the massacre, stating that it was in retaliation for the murder on the night of January 3 of five Catholics in two isolated farmsteads, one near Whitecross and the other near the village of Gilford in County Down. All five farmers were members of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), a strictly reformist, parliamentary and anti-terrorist party which, while predominantly Catholic, has close ties with the British Labour Party.

These killings, in turn, were probably committed in retaliation for the New Year's Eve bombing of a pub in Gilford in which three Protestants were killed; and this outrage was probably committed to avenge two separate bombings of Catholic pubs during the Christmas holidays. On December 19 a Catholic bar in Silverbridge in south Armagh was attacked, resulting in the murder of three people, including the 14-year-old son of the owner. On December 26 another Catholic bar was attacked and a man fatally injured.

While the Irish Republican Army (IRA) Provisionals have neither taken credit for nor repudiated the "South Armagh Republican Action Force," south Armagh is known as "Provo" territory. The Provisionals have declared this area the "Independent Republic of South Armagh." Here road maintenance workers and even school buses dare not travel without passes from the Provos. Catholic neighborhoods, in the guise of "contributions for the Republican cause," pay the Provisionals protection money.

The IRA is an illegal organization in both Northern Ireland and the "Republic" of Ireland, where the mere word of a police chief can put a suspected Republican Army man in jail for up to two years. But Ulster is the land of Protestant supremacy; the "Orange establishment" constitutes the organized state power, supplemented by and subordinated to 15,000 regular British troops.

The response of Harold Wilson's Labour government in London to the January 5 massacre was to bolster



Minibus which carried ten Protestant workers murdered on a country road in south Armagh, Ulster, on January 5.

British forces in south Armagh with 600 reinforcements, including a contingent of Special Air Service (SAS) troops. This elite army unit of professional killers had not been used up to now for fear of public reaction both in England and Northern Ireland. The death sentence may not yet be reinstated in the confines of British prisons, but the SAS will see to it that capital punishment is meted out in the streets of south Armagh's pastoral villages.

Additionally, the Labour government has introduced a special squad of the Orange Order-dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and called out additional members of the part-time Ulster Defense Regiments. The latter are reserve units consisting, in the main, of Paisleyite Orange ultra-rightists put in uniform and marching beside the RUC and British Army. Prior to the January 5 massacre there were already

1,200 UDR members on duty in south Armagh.

### Playing the Green Card

With British imperialism at its height at the end of the 19th century, Lord Randolph Churchill could "play the Orange card." But the defenders of British imperialism in its decay—both the Tory heirs to Lord Randolph and its lackeys in the workers movement, who lead the Labour Party and currently run the government—are forced to make a pretense at also playing the Green.

In early December, Wilson's secretary of state for Northern Ireland, Merlyn Reeves, ended the 52-month policy of both Tory and Labour governments of imprisoning suspected terrorists in Ulster without trial (internment). The last 47 detainees were released from the wire cages of the notorious and hated

*continued on page 8*

**China Backs  
U.S./South  
Africa**

**Maoists  
in  
Turmoil  
Over  
Angola**

**SEE PAGE 5**

## THE STORY OF MONROE, N.C.

*Workers Vanguard:* What would have happened if you...had not organized in your own defense?

*Williams:* Oh, I'd be dead now... We wouldn't have lasted any time. We would have been completely devoured by racist elements.

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# Editorial Notes

## I.S. Jilts LO

It seemed as if there could never be a political issue of sufficient gravity to cause a rift in the potpourri of disparate groups which get together every year at the invitation of the French Lutte Ouvrière (LO). About the only thing in common between the Italian Maoist-syndicalist Lotta Continua, the British social-democratic International Socialists (I.S.) and LO was the view that at least some of the Soviet bloc countries are "state capitalist."

But after six years of unprincipled cohabitation, something has finally broken up that old state cap gang. At its last phony "international conference" in November, a dispute broke out between LO and the I.S. over Portugal. Lutte Ouvrière, quite correctly, accuses the I.S. of "hitch[ing] its own carriage onto the train of the Portuguese revolution, in the hope of becoming the main beneficiaries of it in Great Britain." After heatedly debating the issue, the International Socialists picked up their marbles and stalked out of the meeting in a huff, refusing even to present or vote on counterposed resolutions.

LO is particularly critical of I.S. cheerleading for the Portuguese Proletarian Revolutionary Party (PRP). British I.S. leader Tony Cliff referred to the PRP (in his pamphlet, "Portugal at the Crossroads") as "a genuine revolutionary Marxist organization" whose "emphasis on the self-organization of the working class" is "refreshing." As LO points out:

"When you know that the leading article in a recent issue of *Revolution*, the organ of the PRP, was an open letter to 'Comrade Otelo' (that is, General Otelo de Carvalho) asking him to make the revolution, you realize what credit can be given to International Socialism's judgment on the real place of the 'self-organization of the working class' in the PRP's policy."

—*Lutte de Classe/Class Struggle*, November 1975

In fact, the PRP's dissemination of dangerous illusions about "revolutionary" officers has so discredited it that even the British I.S. felt the need to cover its tracks by obliquely criticizing its Portuguese friends for adventurism ("armed forces substituting for the proletariat," "speaking only to the soldiers and to a very narrow section of the working class") and calling for "a sharp change in the attitude of the PRP from top to bottom towards party building" (*Socialist Worker*, 11 and 25 October). Some "genuine revolutionary Marxists" these are!

But if this striking contradiction reveals the "lack of seriousness" LO rightly attributes to the British I.S., what can be said of the U.S. International Socialists (another sometime participant in the LO's annual gab fest) which refuses to jeopardize its long-distance love affair with the PRP by voicing even such mild criticism? This reached the point that in the 28

November *Workers' Power* the American I.S. announced (based on a phone call from Lisbon) the outbreak of proletarian revolution in Portugal, only to claim the next week (another phone call) that it was all a Stalinist coup. The PRP's own role in fostering the adventurist November 25 revolt was completely whitewashed.

Simultaneously with its split from the I.S., LO has suddenly begun talking of the need for a more homogeneous international grouping (currently consisting of itself plus satellites). But it has not therefore abandoned any of its traditional "family of Trotskyism" practice. Thus, in response to the announced plans of Alain Krivine's Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, French section of the "United Secretariat," to launch a daily paper next month, LO has graciously offered to liquidate the extensive publicity (posting, newspaper ads, etc.) for its own weekly paper, in order "not to interfere with launching the *Daily Rouge*!" The fact that one of its principal opponents may soon expand from a weekly to a daily represents to the ever-so-polite mock-revolutionaries of Lutte Ouvrière a fortuitous event, for which political self-liquidation is the only appropriate homage. *Après toi, mon cher Alain!*

## I.S.' Latest: Teamsters for an Indecent Contract

As part of its recent "Worker Recruitment Campaign" to entice unwary militants to join up on the basis of pure activism, the International Socialists (I.S.) held a series of self-described "impressive" rallies in several cities around the country last fall. With all the hoopla of an old-time medicine show and apolitical testimonials more appropriate to a revivalist meeting than socialist politics, these phony "mass" meetings turned out to be by invitation only, with supporters of the Spartacist League, in particular, excluded.

Already last May the I.S. National Committee had resolved: "We intend to stop the Sparts... by excluding known Sparts and calling (for questions only, not discussion) only on workers who are close to the I.S. to speak from the floor." There would be no heretics allowed at these revivals for reformism, R.S.V.P.!

Along with rock music and exhortations to "dig down deep in your pockets and help the workers' cause," the audience at the New York meeting on November 14 was treated to self-serving "testimonies." Typical was the supporter who told how he had seen the light and now recognized the slow radicalization of the working class in the 1960's, "almost imperceptible, except to the eyes of the I.S."

When it came to politics, the rallies touted the I.S.' equally phony "mass work" and especially the "Teamsters for a Decent Contract" (TDC), one of the most wretchedly sub-reformist in a long line of I.S.-backed alliances with two-bit "reform" bureaucrats, out-bureaucrats, aspiring bureaucrats and any other brand of sellout artist they can sign up. In mid-December the I.S.' *Workers' Power* announced yet another counterfeit club, the "Coalition for a Better Contract: UAW."

In its newspaper the I.S. has extravagantly lauded the TDC as representing a "revolution in Teamsters," and at the recruitment rallies the audiences were treated to boasts that truckers and warehousemen were flocking into the new group by the score. The I.S. organizers conveniently neglected, however, to tell their listeners that the TDC is so anxious to attract backward elements in the union that it takes no position on Hoffa or even on the Teamsters' scab raids against the United Farm Workers!

In our article "Another Lesson from the I.S. School of Labor Reformism" (*WV* No. 87, 28 November 1975) we wrote that Teamsters for a Decent Contract "is nothing more than a weak attempt to pressure Fitzsimmons to go for a little 'more' in the upcoming negotiations." We pointed out that with contract proposals centering on a \$2 per hour increase, the TDC had not broken from simple trade unionism and was simply playing a game of one-upsmanship with the incumbent bureaucrats.

Now it seems that Fitzsimmons has decided that two can play this game, and in mid-December the Teamster chief announced his opening wage demand for the 1975 negotiations: \$2.50 per hour! No doubt this caused some embarrassment for the "Decent Contract" group, and we are awaiting their next move with bated breath. But to class-conscious workers interested in waging a *real* fight against the treacherous pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy, rather than opportunistic maneuvering with its disaffected elements, we can only repeat Karl Marx's admonition: "Instead of the *conservative* motto: 'A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!' they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword: 'Abolition of the wages system!'"

Unlike the social-democratic I.S., which saves its talk of revolution for invitational "mass rallies" and occasional mentions in its hogus "mass paper," the Spartacist League is unique on the American left in insisting that socialists must fight in the unions on the full Marxist program. With Trotsky we believe in telling the workers the truth, no matter how bitter, both in big things and small. And we warn: whether it is a "fair," "better" or "decent" deal with the bosses that they seek, those who restrict themselves to business unionism (whether more or less militant) will never abolish the exploitation of wage slavery.

# Letters

## Anti-Spínola Demonstration in Toronto

Toronto  
29 December 1975

*Workers Vanguard*

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to correct several factual inaccuracies which appear in your coverage of the demonstration to protest the visit of General Spínola (Sunday, 23 November) in Toronto. The report of the Toronto events was printed in *WV* No. 87, 28 November 1975, as part of an article which covered protests against the butcher Spínola initiated by or participated in by the SL/U.S. and SYL and the Trotskyist League of Canada. While in general the article gives a correct account of the TL's intervention, these small errors should be corrected in the interest of maintaining a clear record of the events.

The article reports that no advance publicity had been given to Spínola's visit. In fact, a small amount of publicity had been given to the event, shortly before its occurrence and largely confined to the Portuguese community. Also, due to misinformation here in Toronto the article reports that Spínola spoke to a select audience which did not fill the hall in which he spoke. While the attendance figure given (800) is accurate, the St. Lawrence Center was, in fact, filled to its capacity.



Spartacist Canada

The article noted that, after the TL had proposed a united-front demonstration, a Communist Party-backed group hastily called a separate demonstration. (The sponsoring group was the Committee for a Democratic Portugal nô, as reported, the Portuguese Democratic Association, which is another CP-supported group in the Portuguese community.) The CDP called their demonstration at the same meeting at which the TL distributed its united-front call. TL members had requested to announce the planning meeting to those attending the CDP meeting, but were prevented from entering by a large goon squad. The CDP demonstration, called for the same time, two

blocks away, was announced with no mention of the Trotskyist League's united-front proposal.

As reported, the TL did not let this obvious sectarianism stand in the way of building a forceful show of opposition to the butcher Spínola. Our well-organized contingent stood out in sharp contrast to the disarray of the larger CDP/PDA forces. In response to the disgusting pacifist, anti-revolutionary chant by the Stalinist leaders of the demonstration, "no civil war," numerous supporters of the CDP/PDA picked up the chant of the Trotskyist League, "Smash Spínola, Workers to Power."

At the conclusion of the demonstration, those militants who continued with the march heard TL speaker Murray Smith address the central issues facing the Portuguese workers, ending with the call to break with popular-front illusions, split the army and arm the workers, and for a Trotskyist party in Portugal. There were no other speakers.

It is unfortunate that so many small inaccuracies appeared in the article. *None* of them in any way changes the impact which the Trotskyist League had in protesting Spínola's tour, nor in any way changes the wretched performance of the several fake-revolutionary groups. This exemplary activity of the TL is an important part of the fight to build a vanguard party capable of leading the Canadian working class as part of a revolutionary International.

For the rebirth of the Fourth International,  
M. Daniel



# Drastic Pay Guarantee Cut Contested Local Elections in ILWU

SAN FRANCISCO, January 11—The first round of local elections in the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) was held in San Francisco Local 10 yesterday amidst a cloud of bureaucratic intrigue and sabotage, tying the hands of the Local in the face of vicious new employer attacks.

Larry Wing, fake "oppositionist" who was removed from his office of Local 10 president last August on trumped-up charges by the pro-Bridges forces currently running the Local, tried to halt the elections by going to federal court a few days beforehand. Wing and a few other "oppositionists" have been excluded from the ballot on technicalities, thereby setting a dangerous new precedent of political exclusionism in ILWU elections. But Wing merely further discredited himself by trying to make use of the anti-labor Landrum-Griffin law to halt the elections. Fortunately the suit was thrown out by the federal court.

The pro-Bridges forces naturally seized on Wing's use of the capitalist courts against the union in order to discredit Wing. In the January 8 Local 10 "Longshore Bulletin" acting president Watkins hypocritically denounced such actions, but at the same time tried to make use of the federal court decision by noting that the election would be held on January 10 "BY FEDERAL COURT ORDER" (original emphasis). With several "oppositionists" off the ballot, the Bridges forces were eager to go ahead with the Local election.

But on January 8 the Local 10 executive board met and some of its members were interested in seeing an honest election take place. Board members Stan Gow and Howard Keylor, publishers of the opposition newsletter *Longshore Militant*, presented the following motion:

"WHEREAS, recent decisions have denied the membership its right to democratically control election procedures and,

"FURTHER, have started the practice of exclusion from the ballot for political reasons,

"THEREFORE:

1) We condemn acting president Watkins for excluding Wing, Mills and Dulaney from the ballot and demand their inclusion on the ballot;

2) We condemn acting president

Watkins for undermining the special and regular membership meetings in December, thereby preventing membership election of the Balloting Committee;

3) We demand a membership meeting be held tomorrow, Friday, January 9, to elect a Balloting Committee and consider these other questions of improper procedure."

When acting president Watkins arbitrarily ruled this out of order, a similar motion was made by another member. According to a leaflet by Gow and Keylor (January 9) the new motion condemned the political exclusionism, insisted on a membership-elected balloting committee instead of an appointed one, postponed the elections until January 31, and asserted that the membership meeting of January 15 would elect a balloting committee and decide whether the excluded candidates would appear on the ballot.

In an act of sheer bureaucratic sabotage, the pro-Bridges forces, including acting president Watkins and secretary-treasurer Smith, walked out of the executive board meeting in order to destroy a quorum. A quorum remained, and the motion passed, but even this did not stop the pro-Bridges forces from going ahead with the elections in spite of the executive board vote!

Gow and Keylor published a leaflet immediately following the executive board decision, informing the membership that the elections were to have been postponed, but not calling for a boycott of the voting in the event of expected defiance of the decision by the pro-Bridges leadership. Unfortunately, in what is by now a typical display of their endless vacillation, other members of the executive board who had remained to pass the motion published a weak-

kneed leaflet which aided the defiance by falsely asserting that the motion "was not acted upon" by the executive board!

All this bureaucratic wrangling makes the results of the January 10 elections dubious, at best. Acting president Watkins lost the presidential spot with only 234 votes. The two top vote-getters, Cleophus Williams and Jack Hogan, who were forced into a run-off scheduled for February, were well-known compromise candidates standing in between the Bridges and Wing cliques. In the elections for Coast Caucus and convention delegates, no significant changes were reflected, with all the various contenders receiving more or less what they received in previous elections. Running on their record of intervention for a class-struggle program over the last year, Stan Gow and Howard Keylor made a good showing with 108 and 89 votes respectively. Also not elected was well-known Communist Party supporter Archie Brown who ran mostly on his opposition to the class-struggle program of Gow and Keylor. He received 184 votes, somewhat down from a year ago. Brown's frequent bloc partner Leo Robinson trailed with 86 votes. In short, the election reflected indecisiveness—against Bridges, but unsure of what to do.

The election included a referendum which resulted in the exoneration of Larry Wing of the charges upon which he had been tried and dumped out of office. The vote of 375 to 338 represented a repudiation of a vicious raiding maneuver which Bridges forces had tried to pull off against rival maritime unions while Wing was still in office. Wing's resistance to this cheap ploy to grab jobs at the expense of other workers prompted the phony charges against him. Wing is now in a position to reclaim his office, while the Bridges forces are no doubt having second

thoughts about the January 10 elections. Thus there is a good possibility that the entire election will be challenged by both pro- and anti-Bridges forces. Both sides are probably already racing each other to see who can get to the bosses' court first!

The paralysis caused by this intra-bureaucratic knife-wielding could not come at a worse time. Just before the election, Bridges released word that, henceforth, in order to qualify for "guaranteed" pay (PGP), a man must work 200 hours per quarter instead of 800 hours per year! Part of Bridges' openly announced collusion with the companies' Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) to drive longshoremen out of the industry and cut the costs of the Pay Guarantee Plan, the intent of this move is to make it far harder to remain qualified. In addition, those who don't qualify for PGP will lose all health and welfare benefits. This will not only greatly accelerate the drive to push men out of the industry, but also represents a dangerous manipulation of the ILWU/PMA contract wording. As was pointed out by Gow and Keylor on January 9, "NEVER HAS IT BEEN SO CLEAR THAT WE MUST MILITANTLY DEFEND OUR JOBS AND LIVING STANDARDS AGAINST PMA ATTACK BY A COAST-WIDE STRIKE FOR JOBS FOR ALL AT A LIVING WAGE" (original emphasis).

The election that was held is a patent fraud, conducted with an appointed Balloting Committee, with several candidates arbitrarily excluded from the ballot, and in open defiance of a legitimate executive board decision. The Bridges regime has a long history of such defiances, but only an aroused membership—not the courts—can put an end to such bureaucratic manipulation, through building a class-struggle leadership to replace the bureaucracy itself, in all its manifestations, from Wing to Bridges. ■

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# For A D.C. General Strike!

# Washington Post

# Strikers Face

# Vicious

# Union-Busting



Michael McCarthy/Action

Post management used helicopters to get scab pressmen past picket lines.

JANUARY 12—Now previewing in theaters around the country is "All the President's Men," a film about Carl Bernstein and Robert Woodward, two *Washington Post* reporters who broke the Watergate story. Bernstein and Woodward may be able investigative journalists, but they (along with prominent cartoonist Herblock) are also scabs, daily crossing picket lines at the *Post*.

Katherine Graham's *Washington Post*, celebrated for its liberal, independent and even "pro-labor" views, is now engaged in a vicious union-busting campaign. As the bitter strike enters its fourth month, management has reaffirmed its decision to permanently oust its principal antagonist, the pressmen's union. The *Post* flatly rejected a desperate appeal by an ad hoc Committee for a Fair Settlement, consisting of church leaders, labor leaders and liberal Democrats like Vance Hartke and George McGovern. The committee had called for round-the-clock federal mediation of the dispute, to be followed by establishment of a "neutral" fact-finding board and arbitration, if necessary. John Dower, *Post* vice president for communications, in responding to the committee's appeal and a supporting statement from AFL-CIO president George Meany, replied, "It's a little too late for the pressmen, that's all."

The *Post* management has become increasingly confident of its position. A decisive moment occurred December 14 when the *Post* Guild unit, which represents reporters, editors and clerical employees, voted for the fifth time not to respect the picket lines of striking craft workers. Guild members who have refused to scab had hoped that the *Post* decision to replace the pressmen would spur a reversal in Guild sentiment. Instead the margin of 361 to 219 represented a substantial defection to management. Buoyed by this support and now (after some minor repair work on the presses) able to do most of its own printing, the *Post* is seeking to drive a further wedge in the ranks of its employees by negotiating separate settlements with the mailers and photoengravers—also formally on strike—at the expense of the pressmen.

The *Post* is now conducting bargaining sessions with the mailers. Previously it succeeded in having a contract accepted by the paperhandlers local, which is affiliated to the same International Printing and Graphic Communications Union to which the pressmen belong! The International leadership refused to ratify the contract, and the paperhandlers local is split, with

some members scabbing and some respecting the picket lines. The unions must maintain a solid front against the *Post*—joint negotiating, with no bargaining as long as management refuses to rescind its ouster of the pressmen's union!

By far the greatest stumbling block to strike solidarity is the scabbing majority of the 800-member Guild unit at the *Post*. The split in the Guild has antecedents in earlier events, particularly a disastrous strike in 1974 in which the leadership failed to set up picket lines or ask for the support of craft workers. Demoralization from this has now turned up in the form of mass rejection of the leadership's unanimous position in favor of honoring the picket lines. The scabbing Guild members have formed an insurgent group, the *Washington Post* Guild Majority, and won a federal court order temporarily barring the Guild leadership from proceeding with union trials against 337 scabbing members. The effect of this ruling is to delay possible expulsion or other discipline which would prevent the scabbing turncoats from participating in upcoming union elections.

The precedent of court intervention into the unions, ostensibly to protect the democratic rights of aggrieved members, has been created over the years by many cases of disgruntled members and out-bureaucrats going to the courts to settle internal union matters. The *Post* Guild unit is now reaping the fruits of this "tactic" in the form of a government order allowing scabs to run in the local elections. It is in the interest of the entire labor movement that this order be smashed, together with all the anti-labor laws which allow government interven-

tion in the union movement. Furthermore, there must be no wavering on union discipline for the scabs: they have betrayed the labor movement and should not only be prevented from running in the elections, or in any other way claiming to be the "legitimate" Guild unit at the *Post*, but should also be immediately expelled from the union for their actions!

The rapid growth of automation in the newspaper industry has given publishers an impetus to sweep away traditional craft-union restrictions on shop-floor conditions. When the *Post* got its compositors, members of the International Typographical Union (ITU), to accept unlimited cutbacks in jobs through attrition, the pressmen became the major obstacle to management's new drive against its workforce. As *Post* executive vice president Mark Meagher told the *New York Times*, its aim in the current negotiations was to change union practices in the pressroom "over a short period of time rather than an extended time."

Many of the *Post* pressmen are already veterans of this kind of union-busting "negotiations." Up to one third of them have been run out of other press rooms by publishers who used the *Post*'s tactics. The *Post* pressmen, by a vote of 249 to 5, rejected the humiliating "final offer" of the *Post*, which calls for elimination of current overtime provisions, reduction to "floater" status of 63 members, abolition of virtually all shop-floor control and freedom to bring in non-union labor. And today management openly admits it had prepared for a strike by cross-training over 100 employees over a two-year period in craft operations at a notorious Oklaho-

ma scab-training facility.

The *Post* has continued to helicopter supplies and scabs in and out of its building and has prevented mass picketing through court injunctions. It is clear that unless production is halted at the *Post* the strikers will become demoralized and divided, the pressmen will be permanently ousted and the other unions prostrated. There is considerable sympathy in Washington for the pressmen, and a December 13 rally against the *Post* drew 3,000 unionists and supporters. This sympathy must be channeled into a city-wide general strike to halt the *Post*'s union busting!

However, the union leaders, from Pressmen's head James Dugan through AFL-CIO chief George Meany, have relied on a consumer and advertiser boycott coupled with pathetic appeals for government intervention. A boycott can be an effective secondary tactic, but is not a substitute for shutting down production. Although there has been some decrease in circulation, the boycott has not prevented the *Post* from publishing a full edition daily and from recouping 85 percent of its advertising revenues.

As for the Committee for a Fair Settlement proposal, signed by various international union officers from the steelworkers, postal workers, clothing workers, communication workers, AFSCME, paperworkers, IBEW and operating engineers—and supported by George Meany—it is a pathetic display of impotent class collaborationism. Government intervention and arbitration works in the favor of capital, not labor. By inviting it, the labor leaders

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The Trades Unionist

Three thousand union supporters of striking Washington Post pressmen demonstrating their solidarity in December.



## China's Bloc with South Africa

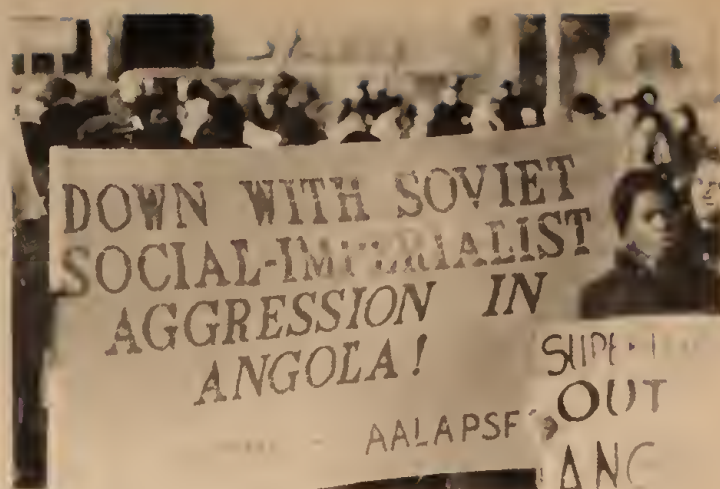
# Angola: Maoists Marching with Pretoria

JANUARY 10—Ever since Teng Hsiao-ping and Gerald Ford vowed last month in Peking to combat "Soviet social-imperialism" in Angola, the main trend in the Maoist world today has become "State Department Marxism-Leninism." After weeks of embarrassed silence or contorted stonewalling apologies on Angola the Maoists finally crawled out for a forum yesterday and a demonstration today in NYC, both staged by the New York African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) under the slogan, "Imperialism (United States, Russia, South Africa) Out of Angola." These self-proclaimed "anti-imperialists" are marching in step with the U.S. imperialists who also favor "superpowers out of Angola" as the only effective strategy for defeating the "number one enemy," Russia. Just today the *New York Times* "summed up" the Chinese line by calling upon the Organization of African Unity "to demand an end to all foreign

intervention—Soviet and Cuban as well as South African, Chinese and American," and calling for "a government of national unity" in Angola.

The ALSC-sponsored forum on Angola attracted over 200, including contingents from the October League (OL), the Congress of African People (CAP), the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (PRWO), the Revolutionary Workers League/Marxist Leninist (RWL/ML), the Central Organization of U.S. Marxist-Leninists (COUSML) and the pro-Moscow Communist Party (CP). Conspicuously absent was the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP, formerly Revolutionary Union). The main speaker presented the New York ALSC's position paper on Angola, which denounced the Soviet Union as "the most dangerous threat to causing new world war" and called for "superpowers out" and a "coalition government."

During the floor discussion on this



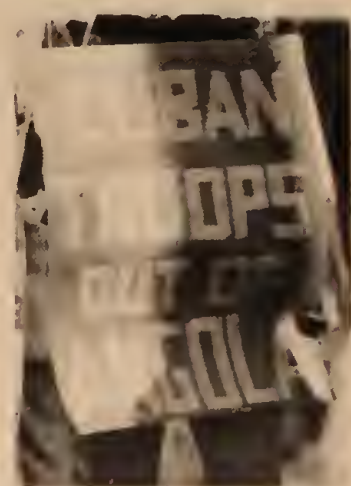
WV Photo

Maoists side with U.S./South Africa on Angola, NYC demonstration, 10 January.

application of "Marxism-Leninism-Henry-Kissinger-Thought," CP leader Tony Monteiro in an oh-so-comradely response defended the USSR and its unconditional political support for the strikebreaking petty-bourgeois Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Several other "independent Marxist-Leninists" also solidarized with the MPLA, arguing that the Luanda government was not a puppet of the "Soviet social-imperialists" and had already won the backing of the "progressive" African regimes.

Answering Monteiro's charge of a Mao/Kissinger bloc, the ALSC spokesman shouted, "Yes, we stand with Kissinger, but you stand with Brezhnev!" Thunderous applause followed. Then a Maoist from the floor sputtered that the Angolan people should fight with rocks and spears rather than accept weapons from the "Soviet social-imperialists," while another howled that

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WV Photo

Mao-thought of the day: "Cuban troops out of Angola!"

## The Guardian "Respectfully Differs" with U.S./South Africa/China Axis

In the international battle raging over Angola, "People's China" has lined up foursquare behind the U.S./South African axis. Not only have Chinese military advisors for several years trained a border army for the violently anti-communist, CIA-backed Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA); since Washington and Pretoria drastically escalated their intervention against the Soviet-allied Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) last fall, Peking has likewise stepped up its fulminations against... "Soviet social-imperialism"! A 28 December Hsinhua News Agency dispatch brazenly asserted that "the Soviet revisionists are the archcriminals who have stirred up and exacerbated the civil war in Angola and undermined African unity" (*New York Times*, 30 December).

Mao's scandalous de facto military bloc with U.S. imperialism in Angola has sent shock waves through Maoist circles worldwide. It was hard enough explaining why Nixon and Chou were sipping cocktails to the tune of "Home on the Range" while B-52 bombers pounded away at North Vietnamese cities. Now they have to justify Peking-trained troops killing their African brothers with U.S.-supplied weapons under the command of South African, Portuguese colonialist and U.S. mercenary officers. So far most of the

American Maoist groups have not publicly broken their lock step with the Peking bureaucracy over Angola, but there is plenty of embarrassed silence.

The one nominally Maoist organization in the U.S. to openly come out against the Chinese policy on this issue is the fanatically pro-Stalin Communist Labor Party (CLP), which in recent months had already shifted visibly closer to the Russian orbit (see "CLP Embraces Détente," *WV* No. 74, 1 August 1975). It calls the MPLA "the only liberation force in Angola" and trumpets "Long Live the [MPLA-led] People's Republic of Angola." However, so far the CLP has denounced only "the treachery by Vice Premier Teng of China" (*Western Worker*, 1 January 1976).

Within the American Maoist movement, the one serious attempt to justify a break with the Peking line on Angola has come from the widely read weekly *Guardian*. Announcing in a 26 November editorial that it "respects, but differs with, the position of People's China," the newspaper is now campaigning aggressively for the MPLA. Although it is organizationally independent (having been until recently the lap dog of the October League, notable for its absolute fidelity to Peking in all its betrayals, both big and small), the *Guardian's* dissidence is significant for it both reflects and influences the broad radical

milieu out of which the Maoist organizations recruit. Its break with the Chinese line on Angola is a step toward the isolation of the Peking-loyal Maoists and their transformation into justly despised sects.

### Is the War in Angola a National Liberation Struggle?

In his column "fan the flames" (24 December 1975), *Guardian* editor Irwin Silber seeks to give a general theoretical justification for support to the MPLA, despite its ties to "Soviet social-imperialism." Although brief, Silber's article is important and cogent, and could well become a basic document for "critical Maoism."

Silber begins by appealing to the orthodox Leninist position on national liberation struggles in the context of inter-imperialist rivalry. A genuine nationalist movement, by accepting aid from an imperialist power hostile to its direct oppressor, does not thereby necessarily become an instrument of that power. A war of national liberation does not become an inter-imperialist conflict simply because the nationalist forces receive support from "the enemy of their enemy." No genuine communist would reject these general principles.

Lenin supported the Irish national uprising during World War I although it received some material support from Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. Trotsky

supported China's resistance to conquest by Japan although Chiang Kai-shek's government was receiving aid from the Western powers including American military volunteers (Claire Chennault's Flying Tigers). The attempted Kurdish uprising against Iraq last winter, although decisively militarily dependent upon the Shah of Iran (who sacrificed it), was a genuine national struggle.

But is the situation in Angola comparable to the above examples? The *Guardian* would have us believe so. Silber justifies support to the MPLA in terms of "the achievement of Angolan independence under its most consistently patriotic force." Another article in the same issue approvingly quotes Samora Machel, president of Mozambique:

"In Angola, two forces are confronting each other: on the one hand, imperialism with its allies and puppets; on the other, the progressive popular forces which support MPLA. There is nothing else."

Machel to the contrary, Soviet bloc intervention is a decisive factor in the conflict. U.S. opposition to the MPLA is not because of its domestic economic policies, but because of its alliance with the Soviet bloc. Washington is determined to prevent Angola from becoming a Soviet-allied state, a base for the Russian navy and a conduit for the

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## The Story of Monroe, N.C.

# Black Self-Defense and the Civil Rights Movement

JANUARY 10—The upcoming trial of Robert F. Williams will focus national attention on this pioneer figure in the black civil rights struggle. Because he was the first black leader in recent decades to advocate and practice armed self-defense against racist terror, Williams was ruthlessly victimized by the ruling class and his case became one of the most celebrated of the 1950's and 1960's.

Returning to North Carolina for the first time since 1961, the former president of the Monroe NAACP told supporters at the Charlotte airport:

"I've been treated like a human being in all other countries. Only in my home am I considered a criminal. I have not committed any criminal act, and I'm not going to act like a criminal."

*The Afro-American* (Baltimore), 23-27 December 1975

The 100-man motorcade that escorted Williams from Charlotte through Ku Klux Klan territory to the Union County Courthouse in Monroe showed the determination of young militants, black and white, to protect him against racist forces.

The threat is indeed serious. Williams faces trial in a state which during the past three years has handed down savage sentences in a succession of frame-up trials of black political activists; the state with the largest number of death-row prisoners in the nation; the state with a unique 19th-century law permitting any citizen to shoot on sight any fugitive designated an "outlaw" by a local judge.

For years, racist officials from Senator Sam Ervin down to the local chief of police have ached to destroy an opponent whose unflinching courage in the face of Klan assaults on Monroe's black community made him a marked man. In a period when pacifist civil rights demonstrations and "freedom rides" were greeted with police clubs and cattle prods by the racist defenders of Jim Crow, Williams and his supporters organized a series of aggressive campaigns for equality and successfully defended themselves against night-riding vigilante attacks.

In 1958 they initiated a campaign to free the youthful defendants in the infamous "Monroe Kissing Case." The case arose when a young white girl told her mother that she had kissed one of her two black playmates, 7 and 9 years old. The two boys were sent to a reformatory for 14 years on a charge of rape. They were freed only after press coverage of this atrocity provoked international demonstrations.

In his book, *Negroes With Guns*, Williams notes the utter cowardice the national NAACP showed in this case: "The national office of the NAACP wouldn't have anything to do with the case because it was a 'sex case'." Only after international protests began did the national organization enter the case.

The susceptibility of the ultra-respectable NAACP to the slightest pressure from powerful liberals quickly led to even sharper conflicts with the Monroe branch, which Williams described as "unique in the whole NAACP because of working class composition and a leadership that was not middle class." This determined group of black workers, many of them veterans, wrote

a new chapter in the history of the civil rights movement in 1957. Seven years before the organization of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, nine years before the founding of the Black Panther Party, the Monroe chapter of the NAACP "shot it out" with Klansmen who attacked the home of a black leader, Dr. A.A. Perry, and drove the racist vermin back under their rocks.

In 1959 NAACP president Roy Wilkins suspended Williams for "advocating violence." Nevertheless, the Monroe chapter continued its militant policies, and the nervous national leadership responded with cold indifference. When Williams was arrested during a lunch-counter sit-in campaign, the national NAACP handled his legal defense only up to the state supreme court and then abruptly dropped the case from appeal without even informing the defendant.

Williams went to Cuba in the summer of 1960 and received a letter from the national office on his return. While Roy Wilkins and his cohorts had disdained to notice the struggles for integration and equal job opportunities in Monroe, they fretted that the leader of these struggles was becoming "just another pawn in the present unfortunate feud between Cuba and our country."

### Exile

Robert Williams' long journey to Havana, Peking and Dar es Salaam began in Monroe on the night of 27 August 1961. That day a mob of almost 5,000 racists had unmercifully beaten a group of pacifists who were picketing the courthouse. With the open support of the local police, they began indiscriminately attacking black people throughout the town. As the mob massed for an attack on the black area of Monroe, Williams and his supporters began organizing to fight back.

While the defense was being organized, cars full of whites were cruising through the black community, shouting threats and sometimes firing guns. About 6 p.m., a white couple, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Stegall, recognized as the racists who had driven through town the day before with a banner announcing "Open Season on Coons," were stopped at gunpoint by blacks as they were driving through the black section to reconnoiter. When Williams came out of his house, the Stegalls were in his yard, surrounded by a crowd of blacks furious at the racist provocations. Williams intervened to protect them from the crowd's wrath and then went back inside. Instead of leaving the area, as Williams asked them to do, the couple barged into his house.

Shortly after he had aided the Stegalls, whom he was later accused of kidnapping, Williams got a phone call from A.A. Mauney, the Monroe chief of police. Mauney, who remained in office until this past fall, told him, "Robert, you've caused a lot of race trouble in this town, but state troopers are coming. In thirty minutes you'll be hanging in the courthouse square."

To save himself and his family and "to tell the world of the brutal racist oppression in Monroe," Williams fled to New York. He soon learned, however,



Norris McNamara

Two youths on guard at Freedom House in Monroe, North Carolina.

that the FBI had issued tens of thousands of wanted posters accusing him of kidnapping and interstate flight, and describing him as "heavily armed," "extremely dangerous" and "schizophrenic." Thereupon Williams, realizing that lynch law was no respecter of state boundaries, went into exile in Cuba.

During his five years there, the CIA carried out a campaign of lies, slander and forged documents (e.g., a telegram reading, "Same time, same place, Friday night") to create suspicion and jeopardize his asylum. From Cuba he moved to China, where he embraced many of the Maoist concepts he still holds, and finally to Tanzania before voluntarily returning to the U.S.

### Liberalism, Pacifism and Self-Defense

The history of Robert Williams is the starkest exposure of the racist poison which infects the bourgeois state from the Monroe police station to the White House. Although this black militant has bravely fought the vipers who spread the poison, he has never fully come to grips with the question of the bourgeois state,

which enforces the racist status quo, nor resolved fundamental questions of revolutionary theory which are vital if the oppressive capitalist order is to be overthrown. His politics remain at the level of revulsion at the brutal oppression faced by black people in bourgeois society.

Williams' ideas on self-defense have undergone changes and reveal both his strengths and weaknesses. *Negroes With Guns*, first published in 1962, explains the organization of a black gun club in Monroe as the natural response of a black veteran whose people were under attack. He argues in the introduction that black self-defense will force the federal government "to enforce law and order" against Klan attacks. Yet the hook itself is a vivid documentary record of the conspiracy of local, state and federal police forces to smash the organization of black self-defense in Monroe.

Such contradictions seem to dominate Williams' politics. He has never viewed the organization of workers defense guards (seen in embryo in Monroe) for what it really is, an important stride in the struggle to



liberate the working class, black and white, from submission to its exploiters.

During his Cuban exile, Williams was much influenced by Che Guevara. Issues of his newsletter, the *Crusader*, deal with urban guerrilla warfare and "the potential of a minority revolution." These themes were repeated in the literature of the Revolutionary Action Movement (RAM), the black nationalist group with which he was associated in the mid-1960's. Although his enemies, both racists and black liberals, charged that Williams was a black racist who hated all white people, the exiled militant clearly distinguished in his writings and "Radio Free Dixie" broadcasts between racist whites and "John Brown-type white brothers and sisters."

Yet lacking the perspective of a unified vanguard proletarian party and a program to transform the trade unions into instruments of revolutionary struggle, Williams could only despair of white workers who he believed had a vested interest in the capitalist system. Unwilling to acquiesce in continued racial oppression but unable to conceptualize a racially united class struggle, he chose the suicidal path of black ghetto insurrections. While Che's tiny *foco* was being decimated in Bolivia, the *Crusader* was exhorting blacks to prepare for guerrilla combat in the U.S.

During a telephone interview with *WV*, Williams was asked about a recent interview in the *Young Socialist* where he expressed agreement with the Socialist Workers Party's reformist demand for federal troops to protect black school children in Boston. Williams argued that it was necessary to call for federal troops to stop the racists in order "to attract the masses" and "to disillusion them." Such arguments demonstrate that Williams, like many militant trade unionists or civil rights fighters, had engaged in sharp confrontations with the bourgeois state without drawing the crucial conclusions from his struggles.

Williams told *WV* that "We didn't rely on the federal government because the federal government is an oppressive enemy." Yet he conciliated traditional illusions among black people concerning the supposed neutrality of federal authorities. Thus, the militants who armed themselves with guns were politically disarmed by their appeals for federal forces to march into Monroe. This is no abstract question. Just as North Carolina state troopers merely added to the racists' forces the night Williams was driven from Monroe, so federal troops would have restored "law and order" by suppressing efforts at self-defense by the black community just as they did in Little Rock in 1957 and Birmingham in 1963. To indicate the slightest confidence in the bourgeois armed forces is to deliver working people and oppressed minorities into the hands of their deadliest enemy.

But Williams' actual struggles, as opposed to his impressionistic political analysis of them, reveal a far different impulse than the legalism and pacifism of the Socialist Workers Party. The ex-Trotskyist SWP organizes black people simply to demand protection from federal troops; nowhere does it advocate black/labor defense against a resurgence of racist night-riders and lynch mobs. As Williams said in the interview, he'd be a dead man if he had followed such a course in Monroe. The militants who erroneously addressed their appeals to Washington were already armed and organized into a defense force. The Monroe NAACP faced down the KKK scum in the streets. In contrast the SWP has actually defended the rights of fascists to spread their genocidal filth in Houston, Chicago and other cities.

In refusing to grapple with the burning problems of revolutionary strategy, Williams equates all positions and tendencies within the left and the black movement as having equal validi-

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# Interview with Robert F. Williams

The following excerpts are from a telephone interview with Robert F. Williams conducted by a *WV* reporter on January 9:

*WV*: First, a very general question. What do you think is the significance of your case in the struggle for black people's democratic rights?

*Williams*: ... This case will be one of the most revealing to come out of this whole civil rights movement because of the fact that I lived in the South, I fought there. I was one of the first of the modern era to advocate a policy of armed self-defense, and aside from that I was one of the very

first ones to advocate that the black struggle is a part of the whole international struggle of the Third World.... So to the reactionary forces of the intelligence-gathering agencies it's a known fact that I was number one on their list because I started early and I was considered what they called an extremist....

*WV*: I've seen some issues of your newsletter, the *Crusader*, where you talked about what you believe to be CIA attempts to discredit you, cause trouble with Castro, for example....

*Williams*: ... On one side they told the

Cubans one thing about me, and on the other side they told me things about the Cubans. This was to drive a wedge between us. This also happened in the People's Republic of China and happened in Africa and happened wherever I went. And I had issues of my newsletter forged, with very vicious attacks on people like Lin Piao and other Chinese leaders....

When I started home I was arrested in England, and the British said I was arrested because the FBI had reported that I was carrying arms and ammunition into the United States.... The FBI put pressure on TWA... with the result that they wouldn't bring me, and they asked all the other airlines in the world not to fly me....

*WV*: In terms of all the various slanders that circulated about you, there was an article in the September 1970 *PL* magazine. It was a reprint of an article from the *Washington Free Press*, which suggested that there was a deal involved when you testified before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

*Williams*: It was written by a guy named Saul Friedman, with the Washington bureau of Knight Publications. And the same appeared in the *Detroit Free Press* and other papers throughout the country. But that was a planted story. I even went to the *Free Press* in Detroit with a statement that had been made by Sam Ervin, that was printed in the *Monroe Enquirer*, stating that not only did Sam Ervin not make any deals to help me from being arrested, but that he had on two occasions personally contacted the Justice Department and John Mitchell seeking my indictment! ...

It was sickening to me to come home and see people who were supposed to be freedom fighters, black nationalists, leftists and Marxist-Leninists who are supposed to be articulate enough to understand the enemy tactics, and they claimed they couldn't see through this. They went around, just like *PL* and some of the others, they took the same positions that the Knight publications took. And they slandered me.... This is why many of the people on the left even now can't come out and support me—because they've already pitched in with the CIA, and it's embarrassing for them to have to reverse their position.

Now the truth is out. If I had a deal, then why am I facing trial in North Carolina.... I went there [the Senate subcommittee] after getting three subpoenas... on grounds, well I didn't really have anything to hide. I didn't engage in any real subversive activities. I had the right of freedom of speech and freedom of press the same as everybody else.... The problem was they were not satisfied with my answers....

What they did was that they drafted up some materials they claimed was my testimony.... They had statements in there I had never heard, and then they asked me to sign this as a true copy of my transcripts of my hearing. I refused to sign it because it was not my work. So they said if I didn't sign it, I would be cited for contempt. They even got a vote in the Congress or the Senate.

I wrote a scorching letter and told them, "Why, hell, if you want to indict, go ahead and indict me." ... They're still unsigned, and they were supposed to be signed before they were published.... It wasn't my testimony: some of it was, some of it wasn't. So now, as a result of that, they just dropped it. I didn't hear any more from it, but they did release the publications with all of this included in it, just as if it might have been part of my hearing....

*WV*: There was an interview with you that was published in the September issue of *Young Socialist*, the YSA newspaper.... There's a question in

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## Defend Williams—Drop the Charges!



Robert F. Williams

UPI

JANUARY 9—For nearly 15 years, the authorities of North Carolina have been preparing a legal lynching of militant black leader Robert F. Williams. The state, assisted by the federal government, took up where racist mobs led by the Ku Klux Klan and local police had failed, fabricating charges of kidnapping and interstate flight. These charges are nothing but an attempt to silence Williams because of his struggle for the democratic rights of black people, in particular his courageous fight for their right to bear arms in self-defense against Klan terror.

During his exile in Cuba, China and Tanzania and since his return to the U.S. in 1969, Williams has fought tenaciously to stay out of the grip of the racist courts of North Carolina. Now that his long battle against extradition has been lost, he will stand trial on January 19, facing a maximum sentence of 30 years' imprisonment.

Williams fled from North Carolina in 1961 not because he was guilty of any crime but to save himself and his family from a frenzied white mob which had already savagely beaten non-violent civil rights demonstrators and, bolstered by state troopers, was preparing to lynch him in the course of an all-out assault on Monroe's black community. He traveled to New York with the intention of continuing the struggle from there, but was forced into exile when the FBI issued shoot-on-sight wanted posters. The alleged victims of the phony "kidnapping" charge were, in fact, a couple of known racists whom he had protected from angry blacks and allowed into his home for their safety.

Militants throughout the country must wage a campaign to smash the vicious government conspiracy to frame this victimized black leader. **Defend Robert Williams! Stop the Racist Frame-up! Drop all Charges!**

Telegrams demanding that the charges against Williams be dropped should be sent to: District Attorney Carol Lowder, Union County Courthouse, Monroe, North Carolina. For further information and to send contributions to Williams' defense, write: Robert F. Williams Defense Committee Fund, c/o Gwendolyn Hall, 201 Eastern Parkway, Apt. 5F, Brooklyn, NY 11238.



# Ulster...

(continued from page 1)

Long Kesh (Maze) prison in early December. Although the Labour government roundly denounces the barbaric torture conducted against one of its "subjects" by Chilean gorillas, it is silent about its own criminally inhumane treatment (including torture) of detainees in the Long Kesh concentration camp.

Detention without trial is ended (for now) and the Maze temporarily closed down, but the repressive Special Powers Act has by no means been shelved. Under this act, in addition to the internees, some 1,200 were charged with terrorist offenses in 1975 and 900 are still in jail. Reeves recently announced that by March these prisoners will be deprived of "special category" status—equivalent to political prisoners—and instead will be treated like ordinary criminals. And while internment without trial has been ended in Northern Ireland, with the "Prevention of Terrorism Act" it is now instituted in England!

London financiers tremble lest rising Scottish nationalism cut short their

parties and consequently came out for a return to pre-1969 Protestant/Orange supremacy.

The Labour government will inevitably reject the conclusions of the Ulster Convention it created when the debate on Northern Ireland opens in Parliament on January 12. The escalation of both Orange and Green terror in Armagh proves that the status quo of direct rule plus British military occupation will not work. But this is what Wilson will opt for.

## What Ceasefire?

The debate in Parliament will probably mark the end of an eleven-month ceasefire between the Provos and British troops. As has been made dramatically clear by recent events in County Armagh, this ceasefire has existed only for the armed forces of British imperialism. Not included were the innocent victims of sectarian murders who just happened to belong to the "wrong" religion. Despite the "ceasefire" there were 246 murders in 1975, 30 more than in 1974; and while in 1974 soldiers or police accounted for 50 of the victims, last year this figure fell to 30.

The year 1975 also saw an escalation of factionally motivated murders within the "Republican" movement. In December 1969 the IRA split into the "Officials" and the more right-wing and militarist "Provisionals." Since then there has been an intermittent state of civil war between these organizations



British soldiers on the streets of Crossmaglen, south Armagh.

which was escalated in late October-early November 1975 when the Provos attempted to organize a battle in the traditional Officials stronghold of the Markets area in Belfast. Provos raided the homes of Officials, leaving two men killed and 15 injured in a single raid.

Earlier in the year, the Officials launched a campaign of terror against a left Irish nationalist group including ex-Officials, the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), during which seven were killed and 70 injured. On 14 March 1975 the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG—Irish section of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International"), the League for a Workers Republic (Irish supporters of the "Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International") and the Socialist Workers Movement (which maintains fraternal ties with the International Socialists in England and the U.S.) issued a joint declaration, stating:

"Since the formation of the IRSP in December the Official IRA has carried out a policy of intimidation and harassment of IRSP members, culminating in the killing of Hugh Ferguson, which has been clearly designed to destroy the new party. In addition the Officials and the Republican Clubs have carried out a felon-setting slander campaign."

But on the more general question of sectarian terror these fake-Trotskyist organizations and their co-thinkers in England have, under the guise of opposing British imperialism, either maintained a "diplomatic" silence or openly rooted for the Provos. In the latter category fall the RMG and its British cognate, the International Marxist Group. The RMG, in its pamphlet *Irish Nationalism and British Imperialism*, claims that the "Protestant workers do constitute a Labour aristocracy." In its press—which has the bucolic-nationalist title, the *Plough*—the RMG simply writes off the Protestant workers with front-page headlines like, "Only United Action by Socialists and Republicans Can Lead Minority" (Vol. 2, No. 18).

The next issue of the *Plough* reports on an IRSP conference, stating:

"One motion which called for the organisation of mass self-defence for anti-imperialist working class areas was passed but the words 'anti-imperialist' were deleted. The I.R.S.P. surely doesn't believe that republican socialists should defend Loyalist areas or that these areas are in danger of attack? But if they don't mean this they should make quite clear what they do mean! For too long republican socialists have been slow to call for defence of the Catholic working class and for resistance to Loyalism lest they be denounced as 'sectarian'."

Here we have precisely the kind of Green sectarian rhetoric, packaged with a thin veneer of "socialism," which fans the flames of Orange Loyalism. The

gunning down of eleven Protestant textile workers is no anti-imperialist act, irrespective of the gunmen. County Armagh, which borders the "Republic" of Ireland, has a mixed population which is 47 percent Catholic and 53 percent Protestant. Does the RMG believe that more than half the population in this depressed rural area is a labor aristocracy?

The oppression of Catholics in Northern Ireland is in many ways comparable to the oppression of black people in the United States. It is not accidental that the Catholic struggle for equal rights in Ulster was modeled after the black civil rights movement in the U.S. But the claim that the entire American white working class is a bought-off labor aristocracy was long ago discredited as a New Left anti-Marxist position. It led to the Weathermen, on the one hand, or the Democratic Party on the other, where today one finds the likes of erstwhile radicals Bobby Seale and Tom Hayden.

In Northern Ireland such a position is no less anti-working-class and is even more incompatible with the actual social reality than in the U.S. The funeral for the five slain Catholic farmers was attended by their Protestant friends and the funeral of the ten Protestant textile workers was attended by Catholic co-workers, something that would be inconceivable following a racially motivated killing in the U.S. South. Even more indicative was the action of one of the Protestant workers riding in the minibus shortly before he was savagely murdered:

"When the terrorists stopped the bus, they asked whether any Catholics were inside. Thinking that the terrorists meant to kill Mr. Hughes [the Catholic driver], Walter Chapman grabbed his arm, and yelled at the terrorists through the window, 'Don't take him! Don't take him!'"

—*New York Times*, 8 January

South Armagh Protestant textile workers are not the labor aristocracy. They are certainly not the embodiment of British imperialism. In particular battles between the oppressed Catholic minority and the RUC, UDR and British Army, we might very well find ourselves on the side of the IRA. But on the night of January 5, a genuine workers militia would have defended the Protestant workers from the "Republican" gunmen, just as the night before it would have defended the Catholic farmers from Orange thugs.

Marxists must demand that the British Army get out of Northern Ireland, that the RUC and UDR be abolished and the Special Powers Act wiped off the books, and that anti-sectarian workers militias be organized to defend the Ulster working class from terror of both the Orange and the Green. ■



Tank destroyed by IRA.

fantasies of enormous North Sea oil profits, which some day might enable the British bourgeoisie to buy its way into OPEC, that exclusive club of sheiks and sultans. But at present British imperialism is the sick man of Europe, and Northern Ireland is the sick man of the British Isles. The net drain in policing and welfare costs is in no way compensated by the long-depressed shipbuilding and shirt-making industries.

British rulers want very much to end "direct rule" in Ulster, imposed in 1969 along with British troops. Some sections of the ruling class would no doubt like to wash their hands of Northern Ireland entirely. But their wigged jurists and Lords have found no constitutional mechanism for disuniting a piece of the United Kingdom, when the majority of the population in that piece opposes it, without creating a massive social crisis. In Northern Ireland, Protestants outnumber Catholics two-to-one, and prior to 1969 the "Orange establishment" used this majority—combined with gerrymandering, discrimination and terror—to create a "home rule" government which was actually "Orange rule," a reactionary regime which viciously repressed the Catholic minority.

Both recent Labour and Conservative governments have attempted to impose a form of "power-sharing" in Northern Ireland whereby ministerial portfolios are doled out according to a religious proportional representation formula. The mechanisms were reminiscent of Lebanon, and with about the same prospects for creating social peace. Last year the Wilson government orchestrated an "Ulster Convention" which it hoped would opt for some power-sharing scheme. But the convention was dominated by the intractable Unionist

## Post Strike...

(continued from page 4)

are openly displaying weakness which will only spur on the *Post's* union busting.

The *Washington Post* strike has attracted the attention of "socialist" groups like the Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party who, of course, refuse to criticize the labor bureaucrats. Ed Heisler, described as the "chief labor spokesperson" for the SWP's 1976 National Campaign Committee, passed out leaflets at the December 13 rally calling for a "campaign to get out the truth," "extending the boycott" and "for additional massive pickets and rallies." This opportunist conveniently omitted the one key slogan that is unacceptable to the labor bureaucrats—a city-wide general strike.

While covering itself with more radical rhetoric, the Workers League demonstrated its usual narrow economism by calling for "nationalization of the press under workers control." To support turning the press over to the bourgeois government, particularly one like the Nixon/Ford regime which justifiably has no credibility, is an insult to the intelligence of the newspaper workers. Even the limited independence of the bourgeois press must be protected from the state. Imagine what kind of Watergate story the *Post* would have published had Nixon or Ford been editors!

Under capitalism, there can be no genuine "freedom of the press," because the ability to propagate ideas depends on one's financial resources. A workers state would nationalize the printing presses and stocks of newsprint, making them available to all viewpoints which did not seek its military overthrow. In the period before degeneration of the Russian Revolution, space was allotted in the Soviet press to political parties proportional to their strength in the governing workers councils. (Non-party opinions also had the right to be published if they had sufficient support.) But only a workers government that is genuinely democratic—and certainly not the corrupt and imperialist government of Kennedy, Nixon and Ford—can be entrusted with this task. ■



# Guardian Differs...

(continued from page 5)

Kremlin's maneuvering in Africa. Kissinger has recently made it absolutely clear that he is willing to accept a Neto government if it moves away from the USSR in the manner of Anwar Sadat's Egypt:

"We are not opposed to the MPLA as such. We make a distinction between the factions in Angola and the outside intervention. We can live with any of the factions in Angola and we would never have given assistance to any other faction if other great powers had stayed out of this.... We accepted in Mozambique without any difficulty a pro-Marxist faction that came to power by indigenous means, or perhaps with some minimum outside support, in Frelimo... the issue is whether the Soviet Union, backed by a Cuban expeditionary force, can impose on two-thirds of the population its own brand of government."

—New York Times, 24 December 1975

Kissinger's stated attitude toward the MPLA is not that of an imperialist power toward a national liberation movement it is determined to crush. The British in 1916 did not state they would accept a Pearse/Connolly government in Ireland if only the latter stopped conspiring with the Germans. Japan in 1937 did not offer to withdraw from China if Chiang changed his foreign policy. Ba'athist Iraq made no pretense at agreeing to an independent Kurdistan on condition that it be unaligned with Iran.

Kissinger is offering to accept an MPLA government if it breaks its alliance with the Soviet Union, and that is a fundamental difference. That is why the present war in Angola is not a

national liberation struggle against U.S. imperialism. Rather, as the London *Economist* accurately described it, "Angola has become a proxy battlefield between the major powers."

## Angola is Not Puerto Rico

Silber's article deals with only two concrete situations—Angola and Puerto Rico—and draws a certain parallel between them. Silber lashes the October League (OL) for moving away from unconditional support to Puerto Rican independence. The December issue of the OL's *Call* contains the incredible assertion that "In the past period, Puerto Rico has become one of the Latin American areas in sharpest contention between the superpowers, the U.S. and USSR." The *Call* goes on to state, "the USSR has attempted to exercise its dominance through control of the independence movement." Incredibly, the OL is Kremlin-agent-hating the Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP).

Whatever the degree of Brezhnevite influence in the PSP, Silber is certainly correct to dismiss out-of-hand Soviet involvement in the Puerto Rican national question. At the present time, the Puerto Rican question is a straightforward conflict between American colonialism and not very strong indigenous nationalist forces, with Russian involvement less than minimal.

But this is certainly not the case in Angola. There the Portuguese colonial army has left and the three-cornered civil war between the competing nationalist movements has been superseded by a conflict between the U.S. and the USSR through the intermediary of their local allies. Should the MPLA defeat the U.S./South Africa-led bloc arrayed against it, Neto's Angola would undoubtedly be, in the next period (which does not exclude subsequent shifts), an ally and client of Moscow in the manner of Iraq or Somalia.

American intervention is aimed precisely at preventing this development. Kissinger's policy is to oppose the MPLA because it is allied to the Russians, or to pressure it to break that alliance. The MPLA is not receiving aid from the Soviet bloc in order to liberate Angola from American neo-colonialism; rather it is under attack by

U.S. imperialism because it is allied to the Soviet bloc.

Abstracted from their slanderous characterization of the USSR as capitalist imperialist, the mainstream Maoists' assertion that the present war in Angola is one of "superpower" contention is empirically correct. Those "critical Maoists" who support the MPLA, as well as the "third-camp" Shachtmanite International Socialists and Revolutionary Socialist League who do the same, must distort reality to justify their position.

Basing ourselves on the internationalist and proletarian principles of Marxism, the Spartacist League has called for

## Black Self-Defense...

(continued from page 7)

ty, a conclusion that once again contradicts the actual unfolding of the struggle in Monroe. After recounting one act of treachery after another by the Wilkins NAACP leadership, the author of *Negroes With Guns* wrote: "I don't want to leave the impression that I am against the NAACP; on the contrary I think it's an important weapon in the freedom struggle and I want to strengthen it."

In his interview with the *Young Socialist*, he says of Martin Luther King:

"The one thing that I was most critical of him about was that I don't believe in being dogmatic and excluding other points of view. You see, I didn't criticize his tactics. I took the position that I would do anything that would be successful, but Dr. King didn't feel that way. He said that it was morally wrong to use violence even in self-defense."

Williams maintains that, while he was personally not non-violent, it was "all right" for other people. This "do-your-own-thing" liberalism is simply an abdication of political responsibility. As his book eloquently demonstrates, every small gain made by the pacifist civil rights movement was accompanied by the gratuitous bloodshed of non-resisting black demonstrators. Their philosophy of moral persuasion was a dramatic failure in the face of rabid mobs of racists.

All roads do not lead to Rome; all paths do not lead to victory. Black and leftist militants must unconditionally defend all victims of bourgeois repression. But this must not lead us to excuse confused and conciliationist views which could pave the road to disaster. Solidarity against the class enemy must not be empty unity mongering. Only the sharp clash of counterposed lines in open political debate can galvanize a truly revolutionary, Trotskyist, workers party capable of guiding the working class and oppressed minorities forward to final victory against their capitalist oppressors. ■

## Williams Interview...

(continued from page 7)

there that relates to a big political debate within the left, which is whether it is consistent with a policy of organized self-defense to also call on the federal government to provide protection for black people....

Williams: In the South, before we started to organize self-defense and even after, we always appealed to the federal government for enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment.... This carried great weight with people who were leaning a little bit toward the pacifist movement but were not pacifists. People like to find, especially petty-bourgeois people, like to believe that they have exhausted every remedy possible.... The only way that you can bring them around to this is by constantly appealing to the federal government...but in the meantime you're preparing to defend yourselves.

WV: I don't agree with you. Let me approach the question from a different angle. What would have happened if you had only appealed to the federal government and had not organized in your own defense?

Williams: Oh, I'd be dead now. I'd have been dead. We wouldn't have lasted any time. We would have been completely devoured by racist elements. ■

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military support to *all* the Angolan nationalist groups in the anti-colonial struggle, and refused to back *any* of them in the three-way power fight which lasted from the 1974 ceasefire with the Portuguese until last autumn. But the departure of the colonial troops and administrators in November effectively dissolved Angola as a state, while the assumption of command by imperialist forces over the FNLA/UNITA military coalition (South African-led armored column in the south and Portuguese colonialist direction of the FNLA army in the north, coupled with massive U.S. military aid), together with the introduction of Soviet military advisors and Cuban troops, decisively internationalized the conflict.

The fighting in Angola is no longer a domestic civil war, but a "war by proxy" between the U.S. and the USSR. As Trotskyists we do not give one iota of political support to the treacherous petty-bourgeois nationalists or Kremlin bureaucrats, both of whom seek a deal with the imperialists and are bitterly opposed to international socialist revolution. Yet, even though the social conquests of the October Revolution are not directly threatened by the battle over Angola, in this simple contest ("war by proxy") between American imperialism and the Russian degenerated workers state, communists must *take sides*. That is why the Spartacist League calls for military victory of the Soviet-backed MPLA against the imperialist coalition.

## Not Critical Maoism, But Trotskyism

The false argumentation the *Guardian* employs to defend its pro-MPLA stance is not a scholastic issue, but directly impinges on whether the present crisis of world Maoism will be resolved in favor of revolutionary Marxism (Trotskyism) or Stalinoid eclecticism. As China's alliance with Gerald Ford's America becomes ever more open and all-sided, from Oman to Berlin to Luanda, "critical Maoism" will tend to displace the Peking-loyal variety. The important Italian Maoist/syndicalist group Lotta Continua has recently openly criticized China's foreign policy. Hardline Peking loyalists will undoubtedly degenerate into despised sects (as the PCP-ML already is in Portugal today), incapable of recruiting youth newly drawn to revolutionary politics.

Revolutionary politics are impossible without a correct position on the "Russian question," and the most important lesson to be drawn from Angola is the counterrevolutionary conclusions inherent in the doctrine of "Soviet imperialism." This treacherous policy sooner or later leads its advocates straight into the arms of the CIA. It already did so in the 1940's and 1950's with the Shachtmanites, who fled from revolutionary Trotskyism into the bosom of "State Department socialism." Today it leads the Peking-loyal Maoists into the camp of Kissinger and Vorster. ■

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# French Army...

(continued from page 12)

Ferrand and Cherbourg. Alain Krivine of the LCR was detained for several hours.

The extent of the police terror is indicated by an incident reported in *Le Monde* (18 December). On December 4, cops raided the house of the secretary of the CFDT in Seine-St. Denis. They took the unionist's 38-year-old wife to the station and interrogated her for three hours in order to "verify her identity"! Four days later, she committed suicide.

## PCF, PS Side with Government

The Communist and Socialist Parties were quick to dissociate themselves from those arrested. The day following the first wave of searches French Communist Party (PCF) head Georges Marchais announced that the PCF

"has nothing to do with these leaflet-provocations distributed by ultra-left groups against whom we have fought continuously for years and years and which we were alone in fighting for a long time."

—*Le Monde*, 7-8 December

The PCF has for the last three years sought to revive the popular-front experience of the late 1930's and 1940's. Creating the popular-front Union of the Left, which includes the reformist Socialist Party and the bourgeois Left Radicals, the PCF endowed it with a "Common Program" that goes to great lengths to assure the ruling class of the bloc's harmless intentions, even promising not to withdraw from the anti-Soviet NATO military pact. Now the PCF goes

even further in disavowing the communist tradition of anti-militarism:

"We will never defend those who are working for the disintegration of the army and who advise men to turn their guns against their officers."

*Le Monde*, 10 December

Thus the PCF placed itself unambiguously in the camp of those social patriots who rallied against the revolutionary defeatist propaganda of Liebknecht, Luxemburg and Lenin during World War I. It was only logical, therefore, that the PCF refused to support a demonstration on December 5 in solidarity with the imprisoned soldiers and CFDT unionists.

As for the CGT, it obediently followed in the footsteps of its ideological mentors by boycotting the demonstration. H. Krasucki, editor of the CGT weekly *Vie Ouvrière*, editorialized:

"It is no mystery that ultra-left elements occupy responsible positions in a certain number of CFDT organizations. That is the CFDT's business. But CGT organizations need to know whom they are dealing with, whether it is really with the CFDT or something else."

—*Rouge*, 19 December

CGT head Séguéy echoed this sentiment: "we are not unconditional supporters of inter-union solidarity" (*Le Monde*, 11 December).

But as the arrests continued, pressure mounted upon the PCF/CGT to make at least a gesture toward defending the victimized militants. Despite the leadership's evident willingness to let soldiers and unionists rot in jail (the minimum sentence is five years!), more than 40 CGT locals and area councils have endorsed motions demanding the release of the imprisoned militants and the

cessation of all arrests and prosecutions. The PCF/CGT were finally obliged to participate in a united-front demonstration of over 50,000 in Paris on December 18, but not before making their position clear in the negotiations leading to the protest. The CGT National Bureau wrote to the CFDT:

"Any unity of action on this question supposes a categorical and explicit condemnation of the irresponsible anti-militarist activities of ultra-left groups and their exclusion from any action."

—*Rouge*, 19 December

During the "defense" demonstration itself, the PCF/CGT refused to demand the freedom of those in jail, instead limiting themselves to pushing the Common Program.

An even more sharply defined differentiation between the sellout leadership and the solidarist impulses of the ranks took place in the case of the Socialist Party (PS) and CFDT. PS head François Mitterrand pontificated:

"No one has the right to question the Socialist Party's patriotism...the fatherland belongs to everyone...[The PS] condemns the anti-militarist theses of minority groups, especially soldiers unions."

—*Le Monde*, 9 December

When LCR leader Krivine was detained the PS publicly announced it would not defend him.

But it was not so easy for the PS-dominated union federation, the CFDT, to get out from under. The bulk of the government's fierce repression has been aimed at its members and local leaders, and the indignation of the union's ranks was enormous. Moreover, the CFDT's verbal leftism had gotten it in trouble. The federation had repeatedly called for the "full exercise of all the constitutional rights of citizens, in particular trade-union rights" in the army (CFDT National Bureau declaration, 13 January 1975). CFDT members reputedly active in supporting the soldiers' organizing efforts were no doubt under the impression that they were following a well-defined policy of their union.

A popular CFDT leader in Besançon, Gerard Jussiaux, was arrested in the first series of raids. Four other CFDT officials were rounded up in Seine-St. Denis, a Paris suburb which is traditionally a PCF stronghold. Even the CFDT police union of the Seine-St. Denis département felt compelled to issue a communiqué on December 5 which

"vehemently protests the intimidation and repressive operation being carried out against union militants in the form of interrogations and searches both at their homes and in union offices... The departmental union and the departmental section of the CFDT police express their total solidarity with the militants who are victims of repression, whether they are unionists or soldiers, and demand that prosecution of them be dropped and they be immediately freed."

Meanwhile, the national CGT and CFDT bureaucracies were rushing to assure the bourgeoisie of their servility with flag-waving declarations. The Executive Committee of the CFDT issued a statement pointing out that the CFDT

"had always come out for national defense in the service of national independence and the independence of the entire people and for a profoundly democratic army—democratic in its organizational form, its functioning, its objectives. There is not the slightest trace of anti-militarism in any form...."

How true!

The crass and explicit rejection of elementary proletarian solidarity by the labor lieutenants of capital provides authentic revolutionists with a promising opportunity to couple the fight to defend the victimized militants with the struggle to expose and oust the treacherous PCF/CGT and PS/CFDT leaderships from the organizations of the working class. The bureaucrats' slavish capitulation in the face of savage ruling-class assault has rendered them vulnerable before the ranks of labor. But the centrist French "far left" organizations

have refused to link their defense efforts with the revolutionary program which provides the only real alternative to these sellouts. No defense of democratic rights in the armed forces is possible without addressing the central question of the class nature of the state.

## "Far Left" Fronts for Reformism

The "anti-militarism" of the ostensibly Trotskyist organizations in France has always been more verbal than real—and now even that has collapsed at the first serious sign of government repression. Previously, the LCR had tailed after the democratic illusions of the "Call of the 100." Just before the recent arrests began, the LCR undertook a polemic with the *Révolution*! group. While giving lip-service to "the strategic perspective of destroying the bourgeois army" and the need for "developing revolutionary propaganda without any concessions," the LCR proposed "to wage a unitary political battle for concrete objectives corresponding to the preoccupations of the large mass of soldiers and not just a revolutionary minority" (*Rouge*, 29 November).

This "unitary political battle" means nothing if not "unity" with the super-patriotic reformists around a minimum program which buries the explicitly anti-militarist fight. This rationale has for years characterized the methodology of the Pabloist revisionists: reformist demands supposedly engender a "revolutionary dynamic" and "objective historical processes" will see to the rest. The LCR's current formulations—that

## IST STATEMENT

# Defend Victimized French Anti-Militarists!

Comité national pour la libération des soldats et des militants emprisonnés

Dear Comrades,

After months of preparation, the French government unleashed a carefully orchestrated wave of repression and intimidation against soldiers and militants who were attempting to assert elementary democratic rights within the army, in particular by organizing Soldiers Committees and trade-union sections.

The international Spartacist tendency, and its French sympathizing section, the Ligue Trotskyiste de France, stand firmly on the side of the intended victims of this repression. We demand that all indictments be dropped and all prosecution halted: for the immediate liberation of the jailed soldiers and militants.

At the same time, we condemn the fact that Union Ouvrière (some of whose supporters had been arrested) was not allowed to speak in its own name at the 15 December meeting at the Mutualité in Paris. All participants in the Committee must be allowed to speak in their own names and present their own programs and differences. Political censorship, even when some centrists take the initiative in liquidating their independent political presence and program into such a Committee, serves only to weaken the defense and would mean that principled revolutionists could not participate in the Committee.

international Spartacist tendency  
Ligue Trotskyiste de France

# Popular-Front Betrayals—Then and Now



Keystone

In 1936, leaders of popular-front government after smashing general strike. From left: Socialist premier Blum, PCF leader Thorez, Interior minister Salengro.



New York Times

Last fall Union of the Left parties refused to defend arrested anti-militarist militants. From left: Radical Fabre, Socialist Mitterrand, Communist Marchais.





Soldiers sit in at Draguignan last year.

Paris Maich

"the permanently unsafe...conditions constitute, more than any supposed plot, a serious attack against the morale of the army"—are not just caution in the face of repression; they unmistakably imply that the LCR favors improving the morale of the bourgeois army.

The Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), continuing its rightward plunge, has simply abstained from any positive position. Until recently it virtually ignored the question of the army, except when raising the most minimal reform demands (such as the reduction of military service from a year to six months), implicitly presenting conscription as a "step"... "towards workers militias" (*La Vérité*, January 1975). Nowhere does it (or the LCR) call for opposition to the draft (conscription), the means by which the capitalist army extorts the corvée labor and cannon fodder for its imperialist adventures.

The OCI has formally come out for the release of the arrested militants. But in specific actions, such as the united-front demonstration on December 18, it not only failed (as did the fake "Trotskyists") to raise its own slogans, but even failed to mobilize its members to participate.

The OCI has trotted out its universal panacea, the "workers united front," to obtain a release of the jailed militants. In fact, at the present time a common front does exist among the mass workers organizations: the CP, SP and trade union bureaucracies are unanimous in condemning any consistent opposition to the bourgeois army. As the OCI hastens to underline, the empty call for "unity" in the face of explicit capitulation by the existing leadership of the working class is nothing but a cover for programmatic *laissez-faire* toward the bodies of armed men which exist to protect the bourgeois state:

"All working-class organizations, all workers parties, have their own conceptions of the army and the role of the army. But that is not the question today..."

—*Informations Ouvrières*, 18-24 December

Indeed, what is the question? It is correct and necessary to demand that the treacherous, pro-army misleaders of French labor undertake action to free the imprisoned anti-militarist militants, but this must not be used as an excuse to drop the struggle against the capitalist war machine.

In the abstract, Lutte Ouvrière (LO) has a formally correct position, calling for the destruction of the bourgeois army and opposition to the draft. But formally correct slogans are tested only in reality, and LO has miserably failed this test. LO explicitly forswears the fight for revolutionary policies toward the army on the grounds that it is not a mass revolutionary party. Until then, LO is content to support reformist politics and even to propagate them:

"In fact, at the present time, revolutionary socialists can do no more than

support the demands and the struggle of the conscript army and can do nothing to change the limited scope of the former. This is because they do not have firm enough roots in the factories and thus cannot really link the soldiers' struggles to the workers' struggles."

—*Lutte de Classe/Class Struggle*, February 1975

While the French centrist organizations have generally moved steadily to the right in repeated capitulation to the popular front during the past several years, there has lately been increased activity among several small "ultra-left" groups. Unlike the LCR, OCI and LO, during the present crisis these groupings did attempt to maintain a principled anti-militarist position. Accordingly the government has arrested members, not only of the most

"The prisons, the guns, stand ever ready to smash GI dissent as long as this arsenal of repression is controlled by the brass. While every split, contradiction and weakness in the ruling class should be exploited to the utmost, unless defense work is coupled with political and class demands that the arsenal of repression be removed from the hands of the brass, the illusion that the Army is reformable is fostered. These illusions will shatter as soon as GI dissent deepens and intensifies, as soon as it constitutes a threat."

—*GI Voice* No. 2-3, May 1969

*GI Voice* was an anti-Vietnam War soldiers' newsletter politically supported by the Spartacist League.

prominent left groups, but also of the minuscule Bordigists and others, on the flimsiest of excuses.

For the centrists, the division between minimum and maximum demands is nothing but a cover for gross abdication. The ultra-lefts' new-found willingness to raise "minimum" and even "democratic" demands—such as the creation of soldiers' organizations and the liberation of the jailed militants (Bordigists), or the linking of "down with the army of capital" with "freedom for the imprisoned soldiers" (Combat Communiste, another split-off from LO)—may indicate an effort to intersect a real movement of the advanced workers and soldier militants. Such healthy impulses must be generalized into the recognition that there is indeed a revolutionary program which can actively intervene into the class struggle without liquidating the fundamental strategic aims of communists: the transitional program of Trotsky.

#### Down with the Bourgeois Army!

In the face of the government's savage repression, the fight to defend the jailed soldiers, unionists and leftists is a crucial responsibility of the workers movement. Stop the prosecutions! Freedom for all

the victimized militants!

The absence of such a united defense campaign is a glaring danger to the working class, exposing its unions and parties to the continued frenzy of the class enemy. Such a defense can be mounted only by fighting within the mass organizations of the working class to expose and drive out the capitulationist leaders who cravenly refuse to wield the power of the workers movement in defense of the repression's first targets.

Solidarist sentiment among the ranks has been overwhelming. But instead of using this manifest dissatisfaction to launch a campaign within the unions, the spurious "Trotskyists" have simply liquidated themselves into a "National Committee for the Liberation of Jailed Soldiers and Militants."

The current debates over the form that an organization in the army should take serve only to mask the fundamental question: revolutionists interest themselves in the fight for soldiers' democratic rights in order to agitate against the bourgeois army as an institution, but never to make the army more effective as a tool of the bourgeoisie. The PCF's demand for "clubs" containing both draftees and officers is an obvious example of naked class collaboration.

#### For further articles on the military question and the French army, see:

- "Proletarian Military Policy," *RCY Newsletter* No. 13, August-September 1972.
- "Lessons of the French Student Struggles—Down with the Bourgeois Army!" *RCY Newsletter* No. 18, July-August 1973.
- "French Pseudo-Trotskyists Campaign to Reform Army," *Young Spartacus* No. 29, February 1975.

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But the LCR's demand for a soldiers union—organized around demands restricted to working conditions and democratic rights, and "link[ed] to the trade unions"—amounts to the same thing. To raise demands which if realized would mean a better-fed, more democratic, straighter-shooting imperialist army with higher morale is worse than reformism. To call for "soldiers trade unions"—and to link them to the labor movement without posing the programmatic basis for a clear struggle against the pro-capitalist bureaucracies—means abandoning the soldiers to the flag-waving reformists, and therefore to the bourgeoisie.

The right of soldiers to organize politically and to form a unitary organization, counterposed to the command hierarchy and the officer corps, in which political tendencies could struggle for their positions is an elementary democratic demand which must be supported. Where such soviet-type soldiers councils appear, as began to occur in Portugal last fall, they represent the emergence of *dual power* in the capitalist army. The first principle of revolutionaries' propaganda and agitation directed toward the heart of bourgeois state power—the armed forces—must be the resolute call for the destruction of the bourgeois army. ■

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## Marching with Pretoria...

(continued from page 5)

the Cuban soldiers were "the same" as the South African troops! When a Spartacist League spokesman intervened, cutting through the deceitful "non-partisan" posture of the Peking Stalinists and characterizing the USSR as a degenerated workers state, the audience of bickering Stalinists and vicarious "third world" nationalists finally found their "point of unity," stomping their feet to a chant of "No Trots!"

At the demonstration today, which drew about 150 from the same Maoist groups, slogans abounded condemning Red Imperialism and Cuban troops. A leaflet distributed by the Workers Viewpoint group denounced the Cubans for "objectively acting as mercenaries," then compared Angola with "free Europe" on the eve of World War II, warning that "the U.S. Congress' cutting off of the large scale covert operation in Angola...resembles the infamous Munich Pact"!!! Following the Chinese line, which criticizes the U.S. for conciliating the "fascist" USSR, the Workers Viewpoint condemns the U.S. imperialists for "giving" Angola to Brezhnev just as Anglo-French imperialism offered Czechoslovakia to Hitler.

Likewise, the PRRWO leaflet aims its fire at the "slimy new tsars of Moscow" and the "Cuban mercenary troops," calling for the Angolan forces to "wipe these monsters off the face of Angola." These Maoists rant and rave against the USSR and Cuba, but pass over the South African invasion in just one sentence! The OL dismissed South Africa as the "number three enemy," to be defeated only after the Cubans are driven into the sea:

"While the presence of all foreign powers must be opposed, only a united Angolan people will be able to repulse the South African racists. Such unity can only come about when the super-powers stop their meddling."

While the OL justifies a bloc with the South Africans against the Cubans and MPLA, COUSML attacks "naked aggression" by Cuba but mentions *not one word* about South Africa in its leaflet! Moreover, COUSML declares, "UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, is leading the national liberation struggle of the Angolan people." In fact, UNITA forces are fighting under the command of the South African military, and Savimbi is a stooge for the white supremacist regime, whose newspapers have lauded him as the "hope of the whites" and "man of the hour."

War is a continuation of politics by other means. In Angola today the Maoist line that "Soviet social-imperialism" represents the "most dangerous" enemy means: kill the Cubans. The Stalinist "syphilis of the working class," to use Trotsky's phrase, has so blinded and mentally enfeebled the Maoists that they openly side with the imperialist Dr. Strangeloves and the consummately racist South African regime against the Russian degenerated workers state. ■

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## Soldiers Committees Spread Like Wildfire in French Army

When the soldiers committee of the French army's 19th Regiment, located in the town of Besançon, transformed itself into a section of the CFDT trade-union federation last November 4, the government of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing responded by reactivating a special State Security Court, issuing "John Doe" warrants and instituting blanket arrests for "participation in efforts to demoralize the army." In the next two months soldiers committees sprouted up in scores of army units, and close to 50 people (both soldiers and civilians) were detained on charges of anti-militarist activities.

This wave of agitation in the French armed forces has roots that go back several years. The crucial question of the army as a central institution of class rule was already sharply focused by the massive general strike of May-June 1968. When the resistance of the French working class to General de Gaulle's decade-long efforts to rationalize French capitalism at the workers' expense boiled over in 1968, it was unclear whether the overwhelmingly conscript French army could be counted on to obey orders to smash the general strike. Only after de Gaulle received assurances of allegiance from élite paratroop units in Germany was he able to move to decisively defeat the strike of ten million workers.

The implicit challenge to bourgeois rule posed by the pre-revolutionary situation of 1968 was betrayed by the misleaders of the French working class, the Stalinist and social-democratic lackeys of capital who head the mass reformist workers' parties and trade-union federations. Nonetheless, the French proletariat has retained a generally high level of militancy in the face of repeated ruling-class attempts to take back gains won by the workers in 1968.

Today the bourgeoisie is seeking to "end the depression" at the workers' expense. The combination of stubborn labor struggles to defend the proletariat's living standards and expectations aroused by the political upheaval in Portugal and the predictable turmoil in Spain has produced a potentially explosive situation. The army's responsiveness to the needs of the bourgeois state power could again become a crucial question at any moment, especially given the government's proclivity for using the army to break strikes (postal strike in 1974, Paris garbage strike in 1975).

### From the Debré Law to the Call of the 100

For years the army hierarchy has responded to any perceived threat by brutal repression within "normal" army channels and by prosecution. In 1970, for example, three soldiers were tried for possessing "anti-militarist leaflets" and one received a year in prison.

But over the past few years, open expression of discontent within the

army has been gaining momentum. In the spring of 1973 a broad movement of high-school students arose in response to the "Debré law," an attempt to establish conditions propitious to intensified regimentation in the army by lowering the average age of army induction and thereby increasing the already strong class bias in the social composition of university students (see *RCY Newsletter* No. 18, July-August 1973).

Prior to the 1974 presidential elections, the publication of a "Call of the 100" launched a campaign for democratic rights in the army. Based on a lowest-common-denominator program which gave backhanded support to the idea of bourgeois "national defense," the "Call" took exception to the stationing of French troops in Germany because "there exist established peaceful relations with this country" (*Rouge*, 16 May 1974). Concomitant with the campaign for signatures to the "Call" (it eventually received about 6,000), various "soldiers committees" began forming.

September 1974 marked a new phase in agitation, with a public demonstration in the streets of Draguignan by about 200 soldiers. The government's attempt to use the show trial of the "Draguignan Three" to intimidate militants within the army was unsuccessful; one soldier was released and two others were given only token sentences (see *Young Spartacus* No. 29, February 1975).

In the last year and a half, soldiers committees have spread rapidly throughout the armed forces. Contrary to the claims of both the government and the "far left," these groupings are actually based almost entirely on the issue of democratic rights. Despite ferocious efforts at repression (army officials claim to have destroyed some 20 committees), by December 1975 over 60 committees in France and in the French army in Germany were publishing their own newspapers (*Dossier "La Caserne"* [December 1975]).

After the embarrassment of the Draguignan trial, the government evidently undertook long-range preparations for the current massive repression. *Le Monde* (27 December 1975) reports that French civilian and military police agencies had spent four to five months gathering the dossiers upon which the recent arrests have been based.

From the government's point of view, the committees are particularly dangerous because of their substantial popularity and their links with the civilian trade unions. French military authorities in Germany claim that "only" one to two percent of the troops stationed there are "sympathetic" to the committees; if true, this would represent 500-900 soldiers! Many of the soldiers' papers are reportedly produced with the material support of local trade unions—in particular the CFDT, but in at least ten



Paris Match

French soldiers at press conference announcing formation of army trade union.

cases the CGT—thus raising the spectre of direct links between the soldiers movement and the trade unions which could seriously undermine the bourgeoisie's ability to rely on the army as its primary pool of strikebreakers.

### Wave of Repression

The State Security Court, recently resuscitated to try the anti-militarist militants, was created by de Gaulle in 1963, in the wake of the Algerian war. According to the provisions which regulate this "permanent exceptional jurisdiction," cases are tried by a government-appointed court of five (of which two or three are high-ranking military officers). Searches and arrests can be carried out at any time and suspects may be held incommunicado for ten days (as opposed to 24 hours under civilian law). Prosecution is upon simple request of the government and convictions cannot be appealed (except on the basis of procedural errors or new evidence). The virtually unlimited scope of the State Security Court's powers has become shockingly clear during the current witchhunt, as civilians have been arrested simply for possessing "anti-militarist" literature.

In the month following Prime Minister Jacques Chirac's November 26 speech launching the repressive campaign, the government arrested 47 people (12 of these were still in jail as of January 8), mainly civilians. At the same time it initiated an extensive (but much less highly publicized) wave of repression within the army. The military high command moved brutally to break up the soldiers committees (60 days in the brig and even, in some cases, in

solitary), instigating large-scale transfers of those "suspected" of participating in or even being sympathetic to the soldiers committees. Similar measures greeted soldiers arrested after their release from civilian jails (*Le Monde*, 2 January 1976).

The repression has elicited considerable liberal outrage due both to its blatantly arbitrary and authoritarian character and to the effrontery of the government's attack on the alleged civilian support apparatus of the soldiers committees—i.e., the direct confrontation with the French trade-union movement. Amnesty International has protested the arbitrary procedures of the State Security Court, as have the League for the Rights of Man (French equivalent of the ACLU) and the unions of judges and lawyers (*Le Monde*, 28-29 December and 31 December 1975).

The first wave of raids and arrests, on December 4, was aimed primarily at the CFDT: locals in Besançon, Bordeaux and Chaumont were raided and union officials and organizers were arrested there as well as in Strasbourg and elsewhere. Subsequent raids across the country extended to the Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU) and groups on the "far left" (i.e., to the left of the Communist Party): the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), Révolution!, the Bordigist Programme Communiste and Union Ouvrière (an ultra-left split from Lutte Ouvrière). A second major wave of arrests occurred on December 15, when offices of the LCR, the PSU, Révolution! and the CFDT were raided in Paris, Bordeaux, Lyon, Amiens, Besançon, Montpellier, Clermont-

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