

Bloody May Day

It may have been one of the bloodiest May Days ever in the history of this proletarian holiday. On Bloody May Day 1977 dozens of workers and leftists were shot to death in the streets of Istanbul, scores were clubbed and horsewhipped in Madrid and Barcelona while incendiary bombs sent flames leaping from left-wing offices in Naples. Similar incidents of police attack and right-wing terror swept Athens, Rome, Colombo and Manila as desperate reactionary provocateurs sought to demoralize and intimidate the workers.

The worst murderous onslaught came in Turkey, where 35 persons are reported dead, hundreds wounded and many hundreds more "detained" after police invaded Istanbul's huge Taksim Square with automatic weapons, water cannons and tear gas. The 150,000 marchers dropped their placards and dove to the ground or tried to scramble out of the square when the shooting began. Some were crushed in the panic while others died as armored cars rolled over their bodies.

Called by the left-wing trade-union federation (DISK), it was the second May Day celebration in Turkey's history and came at a time of increasing right-wing terror in anticipation of general elections scheduled this summer. The bourgeois press has widely reported Sunday's police attack in Istanbul as being caused by Maoist "snipers," with the cops merely stepping in to "restore law and order." The *New York Times* claimed that "ultraleftists" were "pitted against the police and trade unionists." The *Times* of London ran a front-page headline, "39 Die as Turk Maoists Fire on May Day Rally."

This classic piece of police "disinformation" was exposed, however, by a UPI dispatch (1 May) which reported: "Witnesses said the fighting was sparked by a burst of gunfire at a group of Maoist marchers" (our emphasis). A much more plausible account than the official version of the events in Taksim Square was offered by the London *Financial Times* (2 May), which notes that the Turkish police who have blamed the Maoists were unable to offer any concrete proof for their story.

"The Istanbul incident has been the culmination of violence which has been continuing since last Monday. The violence started when extreme right-wing people believed to belong to the Youth Branch of the Neo-Fascist Nationalist Action Party... violently attacked election rallies held for Mr. Bulent Ecevit [head of the Republican People's Party (RPP)]"

The Nationalist Action Party youth, known as "the grey wolves" and headed by Colonel Alparien Turkesh, have been



Spanish cops pursue May Day marchers through the streets of Madrid.

Wide World

the fangs of a reign of terror against the left since the end of the state of emergency (imposed during the 1971 Cyprus crisis) at the time of the 1973 elections. Until Sunday, most of the assassinations and gun battles have centered on the universities, claiming an estimated 180 lives in the last fourteen months (*Los Angeles Times*, 14 April). The universities, traditionally centers of the left-wing intelligentsia, have been subjected to an ongoing blood purge by the ruling right-center coalition of Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel.

The Turkish working class has been crippled in its efforts to defend itself against the fascist terrorists and reactionary government by the class-collaborationist Stalinist misleadership of DISK. Although the Communist Party has been outlawed since 1924, the pro-Moscow Labor Party hungers for a deal with the RPP, especially concerning "peaceful cooperation" across the Soviet-Turkish border. While the Stalinists have thrown their weight behind the Republicans in the hopes of returning to a "left-of-center government," the RPP has formed a coalition with the

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Crazy Terrorists Make Atom Bombs

Yes, it can happen, and it did. Fanatic international terrorists stole the materials to make their own private arsenal of nuclear weapons. It is just what the U.S. government has been warning could be the disastrous result of unrestricted trade in nuclear technology.

Hadn't Carter and Ford projected the picture of a bunch of dangerous terrorists armed with A-bombs or worse, threatening to blow up entire cities unless their demands were met? Hadn't the "responsible" press printed sketches of "comparatively easy" plans for a do-it-yourself nuclear warhead? Hadn't the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Ford Foundation, the MITRE Corporation warned about nuclear capacity falling into "the wrong hands?"

With high-sounding alarms of thermonuclear doom, the government and its paid and unpaid publicists have been screaming about the new potential for nuclear blackmail. The picture they paint is Black September with nuclear capacity. Or the Weather Underground trying to hook up a 100-megaton hydrogen bomb in a darkened Greenwich Village basement. Or a crazed engineering student fantasizing about blowing up half the world. Or a Hanafi

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British Troops Out of Northern Ireland!

Workers Must Crush Sectarian Terror...6



Lona O Connor/Free Press

NOW leadership gives salute at Detroit convention.

At Detroit NOW Convention

"Consistent Feminists" Redbait SWP

DETROIT—The Socialist Workers Party's reformist daydream of becoming the "best builders" of the bourgeois-liberal National Organization for Women (NOW) blew up in their faces at NOW's tenth national convention here over April 22-24. For months prior to the meeting the SWP's *Militant* was full of lengthy analyses, reports and motions for the convention, all of which boiled down to more "mass actions" and bringing more minority women into the largely white, middle-class organization. Many SWP rank and filers at the conference, completely disarmed by their leadership's timid reformism and idiotic appeals to sisterhood with the tough bourgeois politicians running the conference, were shattered and reduced to tears by the vicious redbaiting they got at the conference.

Although SWP interventions in NOW have been limited to the most minimal demands, the NOW leadership, busy professionalizing their image as a respectable bourgeois lobby, was not about to tolerate any hint of "communist influence." A national conference supplement, *NOW Times*, ran a special full-page article entitled "SWP: A Study in Political Parasitism," which accused the SWP of being a vanguard party dominated by white males, asserted that many feminist groups had been disrupted and destroyed by the SWP and even compared the latter's activities in NOW to FBI and CIA infiltration of the SWP!

SWP speakers were booed at the microphones, and in the final minutes of the conference, as most SWP supporters were out of the room at a Minority Women Workshop, a full-scale attack was launched. A black NOW member announced to the delegates, "I heard that an organization has called a meeting of the Minority Women's Caucus to declare that NOW is a racist organization. That group doesn't speak for me as a minority woman." She left the mike to thunderous applause and cheering, returning moments later to announce dramatically: "I have been asked to name the organization. That organization is the Socialist Workers Party." More applause. She went on, "...the SWP is using the issue of minority rights as a tool..." and the crowd burst out into chanting "NOW Lives! NOW Lives!"

Willie Mae Reid of the SWP tried to speak, after joining in the "NOW Lives!" chorus, and managed to get out only a few words about the need to "unite" and denouncing "tactics that divide women." The cheers became boos and hisses, and SWP defenders found their microphones cut off.



Willie Mae Reid

WV Photo

A motion was made and passed overwhelmingly amidst cheers condemning the SWP: "...that this conference protest attempts by the SWP to use NOW as a vehicle to place before the public the agenda of their organization and to exploit the feminist movement. We bitterly resent and will not tolerate any group's attempts to deflect us from pursuit of our feminist goals."

The shaken SWPers regrouped after the conference adjournment to assess what had gone wrong. Mary-Alice Waters angrily condemned the redbaiting and was furious at the implication that the SWP didn't belong in NOW "as if we had ideas that were in contradiction to NOW." Waters said she didn't care if a woman was a member of the Democratic Party: "...it is irrelevant.... What counts is what her ideas are and if they can move the struggle forward." Willie Mae Reid added that "I am outraged that we were used to destroy one of the best conferences NOW has ever had."

The SWP has learned absolutely nothing from this fiasco. Of course they are more used to dishing out the kind of bureaucratic witchhunting they received, as in 1971, when Spartacist League (SL) members were expelled from the Women's National Abortion Action Coalition (WONAAC) for protesting the presence of Democratic Party politician Bella Abzug. Despite the SWP's efforts to become respected members of NOW and thus earn the right to occasionally lend their own social-democratic politics to NOW's activities, the bourgeois feminists are not about to have it. While the SL condemns the redbaiting, we are not surprised when it comes from the likes of NOW. Unlike the SWP, Trotskyists know full well that feminism is a bourgeois ideology, necessarily hostile to communism. We say openly: the only road to women's liberation is the road of class struggle. For women's liberation through proletarian revolution! ■

500 Rally Against Nazi Terror in Chicago

CHICAGO In response to a threatened march by uniformed Nazi stormtroopers in the heavily Jewish suburb of Skokie, Illinois, the Survivors' Chapter of B'nai B'rith held a militant counter-demonstration April 30 on the steps of the village hall. Among the more than 500 supporters of left and Jewish organizations who participated were many survivors of the Nazi death camps. Their placards declared "Never Again—Treblinka, Dachau, Auschwitz and Buchenwald."

The demonstrators responded with derision and boos when the mayor of Skokie urged them "to let our law enforcement operate without interference" should the fascists evade a police detail and march. The Spartacist League carried militant anti-fascist slogans and picket signs—"For Workers' Defense Guards to Fight Fascist Terror," "No Platform for Fascists" and "An End to Provocation Against Blacks and Jews."

The tiny National Socialist Party of America had attempted to march despite a court injunction served against it two days earlier, but was stopped when Chicago police met the Nazis and served a second injunction April 30 at the expressway exit on the Chicago-Skokie border. However, the Nazis vow they will march on Skokie again on May 22. These home-grown Hitlerites have sworn to expand their hate campaign from terrorizing black people in Chicago's South Side to an attempt to foster anti-semitism in the North Shore suburbs. Frank Collin, the group's self-styled Führer boasts that "last summer in Marquette Park we had 10,000 people out wearing swastika T-shirts and

Defamation League warned against counter-demonstrations and stated its position of defense of the Nazis' "constitutional rights."

At a follow-up rally on May 1 at the parking lot of the Temple Judea, called officially by synagogue leaders, speakers congratulated the crowd for its restraint, assuring it that the Bill of Rights means "it can't happen here" and hailing the police "who came out to save and defend Jewish and human honor." (The speakers failed to note that the police—the uniformed agents of the bourgeois state—were among those racist thugs hurling rocks and bottles at civil rights marchers in Marquette Park last summer.)

Meanwhile, the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL) was holding its "own" anti-fascist, anti-apartheid demonstration on the empty steps of Skokie Village Hall. Chanting loudly to themselves, RSL members herded young anti-apartheid militants, wearing yellow and red hard hats, to the tune of pick-up-the-gun rhetoric such as, "What Are We For, Class War—How Is It Done, With a Gun." The arrival of six members of the Surrealist group carrying the anarchist black flag only completed the already bizarre spectacle of the mock bravado of this sect posturing to itself.

Rumors that the Jewish Defense League (JDL) would come out from New York to Saturday's Skokie rally did not materialize. But while the crowd was unconvinced by appeals to trust in capitalist law and order, the militant Zionism of many of the participants could lead them into the arms of such ultra-rightist thugs. In Israel the JDL is itself fascist, using the same terror



Anti-Nazi demonstration in Skokie, Illinois.

WV Photo

yelling 'six million more'" (*Chicago Jewish Post and Opinion*, April 1977).

The recent provocations here have come in the context of a general rightward shift in the American political climate, which has encouraged a variety of fascists grouplets to stick up their heads from the underbrush. As well as the threatened Skokie rally, a demonstration was called in downtown Los Angeles this weekend, and a Klan cross-burning has been threatened in New York City. In San Francisco the two-bit imitation Hitlerites had the gall to open a bookstore directly across the street from a synagogue, whereupon it was promptly trashed by irate community residents.

The militant rally on Saturday contrasted sharply with the pleas of many religious and community leaders to "ignore" the fascist provocations. When the Nazis announced last November their intention to move into heavily Jewish areas, the Midwest regional office of the B'nai B'rith Anti-

tactics against West Bank Arabs as the neo-Nazis direct against blacks and Jews in Chicago.

This is not only reactionary but suicidal, like Zionism in general. While the Nazis are a tiny bunch of Hitler-loving nuts, the Marquette Park demonstration took on serious proportions precisely because the Nazis were able to combine with native American fascists of the Ku Klux Klan and exploit white racism. No JDL or even the mass of the American Jewish population by itself will crush a serious fascist threat.

The working class can and must be mobilized in the fight against fascism. In the Chicago South Side area many black trade unionists were themselves subjected to threats and harassment at the time of the Marquette Park demonstrations and would respond eagerly to a call for workers' defense. Defense efforts led by the 100,000-man integrated steel workers union would quickly put the fascist scum in their place. ■

Bitter Philadelphia Transit Strike in Sixth Week

PHILADELPHIA—The bitter strike of 5,000 Philadelphia transit workers, members of Local 234 of the Transit Workers Union (TWU) against the Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) has entered its sixth week. In the face of a massive scare campaign by the bourgeois media to discredit the striking workers and drum up adverse public opinion, the determination of the subway, bus and trolley drivers and maintenance workers remains unbroken.

The official union demands are for a 60-cent increase the first year and a 40-cent increase the next, as well as more rapid implementation of pension and cost-of-living increases. SEPTA, however, is offering a piddling 60-cent wage increase spread over two years, far less than the \$1.10 the union won in its last strike in 1975 and wholly inadequate simply to keep up with inflation.

The determined resistance of the TWU ranks has been in spite of, not because of, its leadership. The strike began officially on March 24 only after the membership turned down the SEPTA offer by a vote of 2,500 to 1,700, despite vigorous efforts by Local president Ned LeDonne to win approval. LeDonne has come under widespread attack for his handling of the strike, even from generally more conservative older workers. There was never any organized picketing, and now even major terminals go unpicketed. Refusing to schedule any membership meetings, LeDonne is deliberately keeping the rank and file disorganized and in the dark about negotiations—a conscious attempt to breed demoralization.

When transit workers critical of LeDonne scheduled an unofficial demonstration April 25 to show their support for the strike, LeDonne suddenly appeared, seeking to refurbish his tarnished reputation with fake militant rhetoric about standing up to the city bosses. Hoping to upstage his critics, LeDonne also boasted that he would schedule a mass union rally later that week.

But only two days later, Mayor Rizzo called his bluff and the union hack quickly folded. In front of major news media at the Sheraton Hotel, where negotiations were taking place, Rizzo confronted LeDonne: "I heard you were putting the bum rap on me a couple of days ago and I don't like it. Everything's Frank Rizzo in this town. Nothing moves without him." When Rizzo

returned to the lobby a half hour later:

"LeDonne trotted after him and caught up with him on the sidewalk. Rizzo resumed his tongue lashing, saying 'Frank Rizzo is all you've got. I'm the only one who's done anything for you.' 'I ain't banged you since Monday.' LeDonne broke in, 'Just 'cause some guys in the rank and file are talking don't mean I'm talking.' LeDonne assured the mayor that today's demonstration had been postponed. LeDonne came back into the hotel lobby, grinning and sighing with relief, 'Jeez, if he gets mad at us the show's over.'"

Philadelphia Inquirer, 28 April

Ranks Resist Maneuvers

Even prior to the contract rejection it was clear that LeDonne and his clique would be facing strong opposition from the ranks. There is widespread support among the membership to force the rehiring of 180 union members still laid off after a series of transit cutbacks last spring.

At a union strike-vote meeting on March 6, attended by over half the Local 234 membership, LeDonne was confronted by shouting, foot-stomping workers. After several unsuccessful attempts to bureaucratically silence the questions and shouts which came pouring out of the audience, LeDonne finally screamed in exasperation, "You think I'm going to take 5,000 people out of work for the sake of 180 people? You're crazy!"

But the ranks would not allow LeDonne off the hook so easily. Finally, in an attempt to avoid being pinned down on contract demands, he cynically maneuvered a strike authorization vote and adjournment. A call for "solidarity" brought several hundred of the audience to their feet, as many to shout down the leadership as to applaud it. LeDonne then seized the microphone and called for a vote on his strike motion. Confusion reigned, and as some of the membership began to seat themselves while others rose, LeDonne declared the motion carried "by standing vote" and adjourned the meeting.

With this "endorsement" in his pocket, LeDonne negotiated the sellout deal later turned down by the membership. Not only was the wage offer pitiful, but LeDonne & Co. turned a cold shoulder on the felt desire of the membership to restore service cuts, rehire laid-off workers and halt the planned 10- to 15-cent fare increase.

Fearful of the inevitable reaction of his ranks to this sellout, LeDonne refused to disclose its terms. Instead, he simply called off the strike thirty minutes before its midnight, March 14 deadline! Rather than facing his membership, he at first refused to schedule a meeting to consider the contract, then scheduled a ratification vote two weeks later, when hopefully the ranks would have cooled down.

LeDonne's maneuver was not successful. Angered by this piece of treachery, well over 200 drivers protested the deal by closing down three major terminals on March 15. SEPTA management seized the opportunity to fire 15 workers. But instead of defending the victimized workers, LeDonne closed himself with the SEPTA management and reached an agreement that, in return for dropping any grievances they might file, the fired workers would be rehired...with a thirty-day unpaid suspension!

Even this shabby attempt to demoralize opposition to the sellout failed and the contract was rejected. But if LeDonne did not succeed in preventing a

walkout, his conduct of the strike is designed to insure its defeat: his stated willingness to compromise on the union's wage demands, kowtowing to Rizzo, failure to maintain picket lines, etc.

Potential for Broad Labor Support

In fact, transit workers are in a good position to win broad labor support. Shortly after Rizzo's re-election a massive budget deficit was suddenly "discovered." In its aftermath there have been cutbacks in social services and layoffs of city employees. Now a new round of layoffs of hundreds of public school teachers threatens. Disgruntlement with Rizzo is no longer confined largely to a small group of liberals and the city's racial minorities, but increasingly affects organized labor as well.

The cutbacks in transit service and the threatened fare hike have been particularly unpopular. Last October community groups protesting reduced service, blockaded SEPTA depots for brief periods. Drivers refused to cross their lines. While these actions did not achieve success, they clearly pointed to the fact that a TWU-led struggle for more transit jobs and halting cutbacks and fare increases would receive broad support from the city's working population.

But LeDonne has flatly refused to raise the demand of no fare hike and is not even fighting for the jobs of the 180 laid-off transit workers. Instead, he continually issues defeatist statements, such as: "...to get the public on our side at this point is really a lost cause" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 7 April).

LeDonne's woeful and widely discredited handling of the strike has isolated him from the rank and file. In the absence of any organizational outlet for the ranks' anger, more or less by default the role of opposition spokesman has fallen in part to Driving Force, a group in Local 234 supported by the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP). While Driving Force has publicized a number of LeDonne's betrayals, its strategy has been to tail-end the spontaneous militancy of the membership.

Driving Force helped initiate the Coalition for a Decent Contract. The coalition was active in organizing the contract rejection vote, but it has no strategy to win the strike. It has mainly provided a convenient forum for aspiring out-bureaucrats who, with local elections approaching next September, are not unhappy at being able to embarrass LeDonne over his conduct of the strike. Other than that, it exists largely as a pressure group on the bureaucracy, alternately criticizing it and calling on it to lead the fight. Thus its members have demonstrated outside negotiations with signs reading, "Give 'Em Hell, Ned" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*, 6 April).

What is crucially necessary—and what the coalition has never raised—is an elected strike committee. Only through such an instrument could leadership of the strike be wrested from the treacherous hands of LeDonne and be made to serve the interests of the membership.

While correctly opposing a fare hike, Driving Force calls for diverting \$300 million— earmarked for constructing a tunnel connecting two downtown commuter train terminals—to subsidize mass transit. This is a typical reformist

gimmick, which has been supported by a number of community groups. Cutbacks in social services are a result of a declining economic situation and cannot be whisked away by "reordering priorities," juggling finances, playing off construction workers against transit workers, etc. Only a united working-class response can reverse the layoffs

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WV Photo

Protest Conviction of Leonard Peltier

—reprinted from *Spartacist*
Canada No. 16, May 1977.

American Indian Movement (AIM) militant Leonard Peltier was convicted on April 18 of frame-up murder charges stemming from the 1975 shooting death of two FBI agents in South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Although the prosecution has waived the death penalty, Peltier faces possible life imprisonment.

The railroading of Peltier is part of an intensive FBI campaign against AIM, which began following the 1973 armed occupation of Wounded Knee. The vendetta continued into the Fargo, North Dakota, courtroom where, on the recommendation of the U.S. marshal's office, Peltier was denied the right to a public trial for "security reasons."

Peltier was extradited from Canada on the order of Justice Minister Ron Basford late last year following an intensive defense campaign. His conviction adds to the large number of AIM leaders and other Indian militants who have fallen victim to the concerted FBI attempt to destroy the militant Indian movement.

Peltier's lawyers have announced their intention to appeal his case before the courts. The left and labor movement must continue to mount a concerted protest to reverse the racist frame-up of Peltier and to stop the attacks on AIM. Leonard Peltier must go free!

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Weekly
of the Spartacist League of the U.S.

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Published weekly, except bi-weekly in August and December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 260 West Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10013 Telephone 966-6841 (Editorial), 925-5665 (Business) Address all correspondence to Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, N.Y. 10001 Domestic subscriptions \$5.00 per year Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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



Neal Boenzi/NYT

FBI agents on the steps of U.S. Court House in New York City applauded indicted agent, John Kearney.

Jail the FBI/CIA Criminals!

On April 17 some 300 FBI agents massed in NYC on the steps of Foley Square courthouse in a threatening attempt to halt the criminal proceedings against FBI former supervisor, John Kearney. When Kearney arrived by car at the courthouse, the grimly silent, business-suited agents broke into applause.

Patrick Conner, a special agent in the New York Office, spoke to Kearney and to the political point of this mobilization of the domestic political police: the FBI agents were demonstrating, he said, to "give testament to your just and moral leadership over a period of years in the fight against the enemies of our nation, namely—anarchy and terrorism" (*New York Times*, 15 April 1977). Thereupon the "just and moral" leader went inside the courthouse to plead "not guilty" to charges of conspiracy, illegal wiretapping and mail opening during the 1970-72 FBI search-and-destroy operations against the Weatherman organization.

Kearney supervised the 60-man "Squad 47" of the New York City field office, a special anti-"red" outfit which regularly burgled, wiretapped and opened so much mail that they talked about the "mail run." No doubt, Kearney's "just and moral leadership" of "Squad 47" involved more than just illegal wiretapping and illegally reading the mail, but it was for these crimes brought to the attention of a federal grand jury that Kearney got caught. He is the first FBI agent ever to be indicted on felony charges.

This trial comes in the wake of the Watergate exposures as the government attempts to posture as if it will clean up its criminal secret police agencies. Faced with these exposures it has been forced under public pressure to prosecute a few token criminals in its secret police force. The recent FBI mobilization and general propaganda counteroffensive by the "intelligence communities" and their friends is an effort to turn the tide of opinion, to offer the government a basis to drop the charges and stop the investigations of the murderous activities of the FBI/CIA.

Although none of the agents at the Foley Square mobilization would answer newsmen's questions about who had organized the action, this show of secret police strength was certainly orchestrated at the highest circles of government. In Washington, FBI director Clarence Kelley's statement gave official sanction to this move to take the heat off his agents and their criminal activities. Kelley said he was "deeply troubled" by the indictment of his agent.

When Kelley says, "I intend to use every means at my command to assure that his [Kearney's] predicament is resolved as soon as possible" (*New York Times*, 15 April), he is not only talking about sending his agents on demonstrations. His main chance is obviously with the prosecuting branches of government who also want to get the FBI off the hook. Kelley's statement explained that he was "working with Attorney General Griffin Bell" to "acquaint him with all the factors."

These "factors" are well known. The FBI is a snake pit of government-organized crime. The agents who mounted the steps of the Foley Square courthouse as well as the "deeply troubled" Kelley are worried about more than the fate of Kearney. They are worried about more FBI exposures and a pattern of token "clean-up" prosecutions. They are haunted by the prospect that more such prosecutions will be sought if the full truth were known about more than 100 illegal burglaries of the Socialist Workers Party offices that have already been admitted.

And what about the decades of provocation and disruption of the left, black and labor movements? If some FBI agents are placed in the dock there may be other more damning exposures, more public outrage and a momentum for more prosecutions at a time when the "intelligence community" is trying, in the words of ex-CIA director William Colby, to "swing the pendulum back again." So it is not for the public that the bonapartist FBI demonstration was staged, but for the government itself.

Consider the case of the CIA, says Kelley. CIA agents were exposed not only for the crimes on which Kearney was indicted, but also for assassinations and attempted assassinations. Yet the CIA was not hauled into court. The Justice Department decided in its "wisdom" that justice and "national security" would best be served if they simply refused to prosecute. So the director of the FBI asks for the same treatment for his hired thugs, so they can continue to operate openly outside the law.

"I have asked the Attorney General to review the matter again—in the same light that was afforded the CIA. The thrust of the department's resolution of that matter was based on the principle that it is not possible to 'indict an era'."

Of course it is not at all a question of indicting an entire "era," but of indicting an entire secret police force. And this capitalism will never do. The entire FBI

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Muslim-communist National Salvation Party. With the labor movement thus tied to the class enemy and held back from a revolutionary offensive, the way has been laid open for an anti-communist offensive by the military and Turkish's "grey wolves."

Spain

Casualty figures from the police riot in Madrid have not reached the levels of the bloodbath in Istanbul, but the political consequences of Bloody May Day in Spain could send shock waves through Europe. While the government promotes an image of peaceful reform, the country has been tottering on the brink of a working-class explosion for months.

As in Turkey, it was Communist Party (PCE) appetites for a popular-front government which set up workers for a police riot. Instead of mobilizing a massive May Day demonstration, the reformist-controlled labor organizations left many isolated groups of demonstrators to be the victims of riot police horsewhips, truncheons and rubber bullets. (Last year the PCE did the same, abandoning the streets to the fascists and holding a picnic in a downtown park while cops attacked "far-leftists.")

The police rampage against gatherings in Madrid, Barcelona and Bilbao has left many hundreds injured, some quite seriously. After the tear gas, smoke grenades and bullets sent demonstrators fleeing through the streets, mounted police charged through the park, toppling tables in outdoor cafes, lacerating picnicking families with their foot-long whips and shooting indiscriminately at onlookers. Significantly, even foreign correspondents were subjected to vicious beatings, something hardly designed to improve the regime's image abroad. In the best Francoist tradition, the government which proclaims "Spanish democracy" ordered the media to remain silent about the cop assault.

The bloody May Day incidents reveal the bonapartist reality behind the reform image of the government of Adolfo Suárez. Having legalized the PCE and promised elections for June 15, the Francoist monarchy calculated it could permit die-hard Falangists and the trigger-happy special police forces to blow off steam by banning May Day demonstrations. During the attack, victims were often forced to give the fascist salute in order to stop the beatings. They were whipped until they would shout, "Up with Spain." UPI reported that in the downtown area cops were aided by the guns of "suspected right-wing extremists."

This is hardly the first time such incidents have occurred since Franco's death. In March 1976 riot police opened fire unprovoked on strikers meeting in a Catholic church in Vitoria, and shortly afterwards fascists ambushed a Carlist

gathering in the Basque country. In February, there was the brutal slaying of five lawyers associated with the PCE-dominated workers commissions at their office in Madrid's Atocha district. In every instance the reformists have sought to hold back the masses' outrage, always with the argument of the impending danger of a military coup by the ultra-rightist "bunker."

The workers commissions formally "defied" the ban on May Day demonstrations, although they clearly did not mobilize to achieve the protection of hundreds of thousands marching in the streets. Thus the PCE allows some workers and "ultra-leftists" to be sacrificed in order to demonstrate its "responsibility" (to the Francoist monarchy, which it recently hailed as "legitimate"). Only last month, Communist Party leader Santiago Carrillo called off a scheduled rally to celebrate legalization of the PCE in order to please Suárez and placate Falangist hard-liners.

Even now the Spanish workers are rising in protest against the murderous attack of the dictatorship's police run amok. Demanding release of the May Day prisoners, wildcat strikes have broken out at John Deere and Kelvina-tor factories in the Madrid area. But as was the case following the Atocha assassinations, the PCE can be counted on to sabotage and limit these protests instead of expanding them into a mammoth popular mobilization against the decrepit Francoist regime. After all, Carrillo will say, we don't want to disturb public tranquility with elections so close; it would only isolate the workers from their allies in the Coordinación Democrática.

But as May Day shows, the PCE's popular-front "moderation" is what really isolates the workers and disarms them politically before their most deadly foes. It is not a handful of Christian Democratic politicians who are the true allies of the most militant sectors of the proletariat, but the rest of the working people who have come out in support of one anti-government demonstration after another over the last year and a half. Once again the tragic lesson of the Spanish Civil War has been confirmed: the popular front means the blood of the workers will flow.

Bloody May Day 1977 has demon-

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strated the depth of the crisis of revolutionary leadership throughout the world. In the southern tier of Europe a combative proletariat finds its hands tied by Stalinist popular frontism. In Peking, Tien An Men Square is filled with Hua posters as May Day is manipulated by Stalinist personality cultism; the Kremlin rulers are so stupefied by their rhetoric of "peaceful co-existence" that they won't even show off their big guns on Red Square any more, for fear of damaging the moth-eaten fabric of détente. And in the U.S., with one of the potentially strongest battalions of the world working class? The AFL-CIO, as always, refuses to recognize the international workers' day; the government sponsors "Law Day" (in the midst of renewed controversy about illegal FBI break-ins), and 200,000 Zionists demonstrate against the Soviet Union in lower Manhattan.

The revolutionary future of the proletariat depends on the construction of an international Bolshevik, Trotskyist party whose unswerving struggle for socialism will avenge the martyrs of this tragic, bloody May Day. ■

Steel...

(continued from page 12)

Conference in Washington, which voted narrowly to approve the contract, the president of every basic steel local in the district except one, including even some McBride supporters, voted against the contract.

Were the Sadowski forces who run this district genuine class-struggle militants, they would immediately convene a district conference to dump the ENA and the contract. District 31, with well over 100,000 steel workers, has enormous impact on the union. Were such a district conference to prepare for strike action and appeal to the rest of the membership to go out in solidarity, ENA could be smashed.

But Sadowski has no desire to mount a real struggle against the contract. During the USWA elections Sadowski, and particularly his apologists on the left, claimed repeatedly that his Steelworkers Fight Back was not simply a vehicle for getting into office. Two months later, when Abel announced his sellout contract, Steelworkers Fight Back is nowhere to be seen. Not one mass rally, not even a nationally distributed leaflet to the membership. And certainly not a hint of a strike.

In fact, Sadowski would have nothing at all to propose to the membership save taking the contract to arbitration. As he stated during his campaign, Sadowski considers ENA binding as long as it is legally in effect (no matter how undemocratically it was rammed down the throats of steel workers). And Balanoff was reported on radio as having said that the membership would just have to live with the settlement.

To be sure, Sadowski did berate the agreement as expected, and Balanoff called it a "big zero." It's easy to criticize this patent sellout deal while doing nothing to mobilize the rank and file. But this cheap talk won't put a single dime in the pocket of a steel worker, provide a single job or eliminate one unsafe working condition in the mills.

The reformist groupings in the USWA have been uncritically enthusing over local union condemnations of the contract. A 19 April newsletter of the National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee (NSRFC), which is supported by the Communist Party (CP), hailed a resolution passed at Local 1557 (U.S. Steel's Clairton Coke Works outside Pittsburgh), which called for a special convention to establish membership ratification of the contract, but which said nothing about dumping ENA.

But even this minimal step was undercut by its call for reconvening of

the Basic Steel Industry Conference to revoke the contract. The NSRFC claims that Locals were not given voting rights in proportion to their size at the conference meeting in Washington. While it is undoubtedly true that the meeting in Washington was conducted undemocratically, the concern of militant steel workers should not be limited to such proprieties. Ratification rights do not belong with the 800-member Basic Steel Industry Conference, but with 350,000 basic steel workers.

However, the NSRFC commits a more fundamental betrayal. By refusing to call for smashing ENA it makes a farce out of any opposition to the contract. Under ENA, even were a contract to be rejected, it would go to compulsory arbitration—a major step backward.

The major concern of NSRFC, however, is not the interests of steel workers but the careers of the Sadowisks and the Balanoffs, whom it uncritically supported. Any call for strike action would expose these do-nothing opportunists. So the NSRFC is content to confine itself to pressure tactics designed to embarrass Abel, McBride & Co., but not to provide a program for victory to steel workers.

The smaller but equally reformist grouping around *The Steelworker*, which is supported by the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), called a demonstration April 22 outside USWA headquarters in Pittsburgh. Only about 120 people picketed, of whom perhaps half were steel workers. Like most events called by these slightly reconstructed New Leftists, this one had a gimmick: mock rejection ballots, solicited at plant gates and containing names and local union numbers of the signers, were handed over to the International. This was apparently designed to demonstrate to the bureaucracy that the membership was displeased with the contract. Of course, this entirely misses the point. Even the ossified bureaucrats in Pittsburgh know full well the disposition of the membership, without the assistance of the *Steelworker* grouping. Such gimmicky demonstrations serve only to let frustrated workers blow off steam, while completely failing to present them with a class-struggle strategy to turn back defeat. But *The Steelworker*, which also supported Sadowski, has no such strategy.

In at least one local union the reformist strategy of Sadowski and his supporters was challenged. At a Local 65 meeting April 13, a motion was put forward by local trustee Roberta Woods, an NSRFC supporter, to condemn the basic steel contract and to commend the local president, John Chico, for voting against it in Washington. A motion was then advanced which clearly counterposed a militant strategy to this mere protest tactic. The motion, which was printed in a leaflet distributed at a subsequent union meeting by its authors, called for rejecting the contract and convening a special union convention to reject ENA, institute rank-and-

file ratification and prepare for industry-wide strike action:

"Whereas, the recently settled steel contract, approved by less than a third of the members of the Basic Steel Industry Conference and negotiated behind the backs of the membership, represents a wretched betrayal of the interests of steelworkers, and

"Whereas, this settlement further exposes the total bankruptcy of the Experimental Negotiating Agreement and of the International's longstanding policy of denying its membership the right to ratify the contract,

"Therefore be it resolved that USWA Local Union No. 65 denies the legitimacy of the recent settlement and demands the reopening of the contract, and

"Be it further resolved that USWA Local Union No. 65 will concentrate its efforts and resources toward the convocation of a special convention for the purpose of:

- 1) Repudiating the recent settlement,
- 2) Rejecting the ENA and all compulsory arbitration schemes,
- 3) Securing an industry-wide vote on the settlement, and
- 4) Preparing for the eventuality of strike action against the steel industry."

According to the leaflet, this motion was subsequently voted down. Both the NSRFC supporters, who put out the "Local 65 Rank and File Voice," and the Breakout group, which is aligned with *The Steelworker*, refused to support this motion. Both abstained, preferring simply to vote against the agreement and to commend Chico.

While the reformists were lavishing praise on Chico, the Local bureaucrats were proving that they had learned a trick or two from the International. Local 65 officials returned with an abysmal local contract that had been signed in Pittsburgh before its terms had ever been revealed to the membership. This created a certain amount of furor in the Local, particularly inasmuch as Chico had run for office as a Sadowski supporter, supposedly committed to "union democracy."

Local 65 members who attended a special union meeting on April 25 told *WV* that a motion was put forward by a group of union officers and others, including supporters of the "Voice," which called for a vote on the local contract. Chico informed them that the right to vote was restricted to "unresolved issues." Since the contract had already been signed, it was not "unresolved."

However, Chico indicated that he would permit a straw vote to get a sense of the membership. This meaningless and cynical gesture, which provides that the contract would remain in force even if solidly rejected by the membership, was accepted without a murmur by the ostensible "champions of democracy" who had called for a vote. Of course, the "Voice" and most of its bloc partners had supported Chico, and did not want a confrontation with him.

Despite the deep resentment within the ranks of steel workers at the Abel/McBride contract, a struggle will not be waged against it by Sadowski, Balanoff, their local supporters and the reformist hangers-on. All of them simply wish to "make the record" as opponents of this unpopular agreement. They are all committed to accepting the no-strike ENA framework as long as it remains the "law," a position made amply clear during the elections and afterward.

Steel workers are not about to wage a fight against this rotten contract only to see it turned over to compulsory arbitration. The needs of the USWA ranks can only be addressed through industry-wide strike action—for a shorter workweek at no cut in pay; for full plant-wide seniority to combat discrimination by the company; for union control of health and safety conditions, a big wage hike and full cost-of-living protection. This requires that ENA be smashed now! Unless such militant class-struggle policies are pursued, the legitimate anger of steel workers will only dissipate itself into frustration and demoralization. ■

Crazy Terrorists...

(continued from page 1)

Muslim outraged beyond reason, thirsting for revenge.

Last week American nuclear expert Paul Leventhal told the Conference for a Non-Nuclear Future in Salzburg, Austria about the dramatic disappearance of 400,000 pounds of uranium. He described how a German freighter left the port of Antwerp in 1968 with enough uranium to manufacture nearly a gross of nuclear warheads. The ship appeared to vanish on the high seas. Weeks later, it reappeared with a new name, a new flag, a new crew—but no uranium. To this day the uranium has never been officially accounted for.

Where did it end up? In some Provo IRA hovel in Derry alongside the sticks of gelignite and stacks of Armalite rifles? In Muammar Qaddafi's Libyan "Revolutionland"? In the hands of an airplane hijacker with death-wish delusions? Or maybe it was Idi Amin?

No, it appears that the mad bombers who made off with the 200 tons of uranium were the U.S.'s firmest ally in the Near East—the Zionist butchers of Israel. Various "sources," American and European intelligence officials and nuclear experts, told a *New York Times* reporter, that all signs point to Israel, which in 1968 was one of the few countries in possession of the heavy-water reactor capable of processing uranium ore and plutonium necessary for the manufacture of atomic weapons. The *Times* article (29 April) quoted a former U.S. intelligence expert who said he had seen reports that Israel had obtained uranium in the U.S. "by surreptitious and illegal means."

Israel of course stonewalls on the question of whether it has produced nuclear weapons. Its standing assertion is the discomfiting: "Israel will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East." But why should anyone believe them? The Zionist butchers have more than once demonstrated their boundless capacity for state terror, their impulse to genocide. The scare campaign about atomic Weathermen pales beside the image of the savage saturation bombers of Palestinian refugee camps in south Lebanon armed with nuclear weapons. For the state-of-siege fanatics in Tel Aviv—who have already slaughtered entire village populations in "retaliation," who shot down a Libyan passenger airliner—the firing of nuclear death into Cairo, Damascus or Baghdad would be a simple extension of their claim to the god-given "right" of apocalypse.

Leventhal's Salzburg speech was intended to embarrass the U.S.'s allies into acquiescing to American supervision of processing and resale of nuclear fuels. The U.S. is the major international supplier of uranium and has sold nuclear reactors to favored "free world" allies: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Brazil, Spain and Pakistan. Now the American imperialists piously blather about stopping "nuclear proliferation," stalling plutonium deals and curtailing uranium sales, tightening security at U.S. nuclear facilities, and so forth.

The spectre of atomic-armed terrorists reflects the American bourgeoisie's desire to limit the ability of contentious imperialist and sub-imperialist powers to challenge U.S. nuclear blackmail. In the name of "responsibility," U.S. imperialism—the mad bombers of Dresden, the mass murderers of Hiroshima, the terror bombers of Vietnam—take it upon themselves to decide when mankind will be incinerated. ■

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British Troops Out of Northern Ireland!

Workers Must Crush Sectarian Terror

by David Strachan

We print below the edited text of a talk by Comrade Strachan of the London Spartacist Group, delivered at a Spartacist League forum in New York on March 14.

Our topic tonight is "Leninism, the National Question and Ireland." Why Ireland? It's a fairly small place, only about four million people. The death rate is very low—much, much lower than Lebanon or Cyprus recently. In fact the murder rate in Glasgow presently is much higher than in Northern Ireland, and I imagine it's much higher still in New York. So why Ireland?

Well, first of all, the fact that things are very quiet there at the moment does not indicate relative social peace. There are between 15,000 and 20,000 British troops in Northern Ireland. It is a very fragile social peace imposed by the brute force of the British army. And if the British army were removed immediately, the prospect would be one of massive bloodshed.

There is a more important reason which we've had to deal with in London, and that is the impact in Britain. The question of Ireland is a crucial test of the revolutionary integrity of the British left-wing groups, and the ability to analyze Ireland is a touchstone for self-proclaimed Marxists everywhere. Currently the question of Ireland provides a crucial test, and I believe a confirmation, of the unique position of the international Spartacist tendency in upholding Leninism on the national question.

For internationalist communists who reject the simple, ultimately genocidal logic of the nationalists, the complex situation in Ireland may seem to be utterly intractable. There have been 800 years of English oppression in Ireland and we have a situation there today which combines features which have been classically associated with a variety of types of colonial and imperial oppression. The situation in Northern Ireland resembles in some ways the classic colonial situation, in which a colonial administration administers, oppresses and exploits the native population. But it also resembles the situation where you have a colonial settler people who wipe out or expel the original native population. And, as well, it resembles the features which are classically associated with the multinational empires in eastern Europe.

However, tonight, rather than giving a run-down of the history of Ireland and an up-to-date account of the current events there, I want to concentrate on the programmatic questions.

British Troops Out!

Toward the middle of last year the eminent British historian A. J. P. Taylor was interviewed on the BBC. He had a number of things to say that considerably disturbed bourgeois opinion in Britain. He said quite simply and bluntly that the British should get the hell out of Ireland. He said that the presence of the British army fundamentally oppresses the Catholic Irish people and that nothing progressive can come

through the presence of the British army. So I want to start by asserting that an essential plank for any revolutionary analysis and program for Ireland must be the demand for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army.

That should be obvious to revolutionists, but unfortunately it isn't very widely held. In the British Labour Party, with all its "lefts," who are forever willing to sign this and that petition and to take up this and that socialist cause which is as remote as possible from their immediate interests, there is not one MP [Member of Parliament], no matter how left he claims to be, who is clearly for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the British army. The Communist Party of Great Britain [CPGB] has a position that the British army should

left of the United Secretariat, is currently moving more and more rightward. At the time of the Bloody Sunday commemoration marches last year it had a position not for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal but for "End British Involvement," a nice vague plank. They hoped through this to attract some sympathy from the Communist Party. They didn't, but their willingness to take up some vague slogan like this in order to get a little bit closer to the Communist Party is indicative not only of their opportunism but of their inability to confront and stand up against British imperialism.

It should also be obvious that the "Troops Out" demand by itself will not solve the problem. The historian Taylor recognizes this to his credit. He says that, of course, there will be some sort of settlement reached after the troops get

go fine is tied to their understanding of the applicability of the demand for self-determination in Ireland.

I want to take as an example the International Marxist Group again. It says in one of the IMG newspapers, "The right of Ireland to national freedom is merely the basic democratic right of all oppressed peoples to determine their own destiny, free from all outside interference and control. It means the right to control their own economy, decide on their own political system in relation with other countries and the right to develop their own national culture."

That is not the Leninist position on self-determination. Leninists are opposed to all forms of national oppression and to all national privileges. The right of self-determination means simply the right to establish your own political state. It does not say anything about economic independence, or about some conception of utopian freedom from outside interference.

In the general sense the demand for self-determination is unconditional. That is, we do not when we raise it place conditions with regard to the question of the class nature of the state that emerges or of the leadership. However, the demand is not a categorical imperative to be raised everywhere and at all times, even for oppressed nations. It is a subordinate part of the whole revolutionary program. It is one of a range of bourgeois-democratic demands which must be a part, but only a part, of the revolutionary program.

So we can recognize the right of self-determination for a nation and then argue against its exercise. For instance, that is the position of the international Spartacist tendency at this time with regard to Quebec. The demand must be subordinate to the overall considerations of the class struggle.

No to Sectarian Slaughter!

I wanted to make these points to establish that the demand for self-determination is not something that must always be raised. It has to be evaluated in terms of the general considerations of the class struggle. And, in particular, where the exercise of self-determination for one people means that they will, in fact, deny that right to another people, then it ceases to be a democratic demand. This arises with interpenetrated peoples, where two peoples are living intermingled on the same territory.

I want to argue that this is the case in Ireland, that if you simply demand self-determination (a demand which does not transcend the bounds of capitalism), you are condemning the working masses to further rounds of communal bloodshed, massive population transfers and genocide. Those who want to argue that in Ireland the crucial demand is "self-determination for the Irish nation" must face the implications of what they are saying. That is, they are for the forcible reunification of the island under a bourgeois regime, irre-



P. Michael O'Sullivan

Bloody Sunday, January, 1972—British troops opened fire on demonstrators protesting against internment.

withdraw to the barracks. The "Official" wing of the IRA has a position that the British army should withdraw from working-class areas; and a number of other organizations, including the "Provisional" IRA, have a position that the British army should set a date for its withdrawal.

Even among the organizations of the far left, the ostensibly Trotskyist organizations, there is a readiness to abandon this essential plank. For example the International Marxist Group [IMG], the fraternal organization of the American Socialist Workers Party [SWP], which was formerly on the extreme

out; but then he was asked if he thought there would be unity of the people on the island. His answer was that this is a matter of relative strength. He acknowledges that the solution may be imposed by one party or another. He acknowledges that civil wars and bloodshed can solve these questions.

Now almost all the British groups of the far left present the "Troops Out" demand either as having some inherently revolutionary connotations or else as an application of the demand for self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. The assumption that if you just demand "Troops Out" everything will

spective of the wishes of the Protestants.

Many of the British left-wing groups don't want to face up to this, so they argue that there's some transcendental dynamic that will make everything work out fine. Sixty percent of the population of Northern Ireland—a quarter of the population of the whole island—will just give up or get caught up in this revolutionary dynamic and, as the IMG claims, "The working class will have the opportunity to unite for socialism and peace." Just like that!

It ought to be obvious to everyone but the most myopic and the most nationalist that getting the troops out will not by itself solve things. There are more than 100,000 registered guns in Ulster. The vast majority of them are in the hands of the Protestants who are well-trained, well-organized and quite determined. As the "Unionist" slogan goes, "Ulster will fight. Ulster will be right." And they very well might win, certainly against the IRA and even against the Irish regular army.

The reality of the situation is that a number of possibilities are posed if the British troops get out. There can be the consolidation of a Protestant "Zionist" state, accompanied by forcible population transfers, genocide, etc. There could be a reversal of the terms of oppression. That is, the Irish Catholic state consolidated on the whole island, with the Protestants becoming the new Palestinians. There could be a situation like Cyprus, a new boundary change.

We should also keep in mind what happened in Lebanon, where the most "progressive" Arab state, Syria, the supposed best friends of the Palestinian liberation movement, intervened and blocked with the Christians to smash the Moslem forces. No doubt it will turn around and smash the Christian forces as well. The Irish Catholic state might act in the very same way: intervene in Northern Ireland (with, of course, the support of British imperialism), smash the radical Irish nationalists and then turn on the Protestants. After all, the Irish bourgeoisie has already fought a civil war with the more radical nationalists, so why shouldn't that happen?

Now I don't want to speculate on what is the most likely possibility. All these possibilities pose the likelihood of massive communal bloodshed. So I want to stress that the "Troops Out" demand must be linked to a revolutionary, communist program that can set the basis for working-class unity.

Britain Playing the Orange Card?

In association with the call for "Troops Out" and the false assumption that this will lead to the collapse of Protestant opposition, there is an argument that maintenance of the artificial Orange statelet, the six counties of Ulster, is absolutely essential to the interests of British imperialism in Ireland. So I want to look briefly at the motivations of (and tensions within) British imperialism. It's clear, at this point, that the Northern Ireland statelet is not necessarily part of the British strategy in Ireland. They have used the Orange card in the past but it's a nuisance today.

British imperialism's approach to Ireland has always been much more complicated than the simplistic analyses that are often put forward. Up to 1912 the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie was aiming for a near-colonial "independent" state. This was stopped and opposed by a block of the Protestants, the officer corps of the British army and the landed aristocracy. Nowadays the border is anachronistic to the general intentions of British imperialism. It gets in the way of business: the desire to invest in the south and the fact that the industry in the north is decaying, run down.

They have a problem. If they try to hand over Northern Ireland to the southern Republic they are going to run into a civil war, because the Irish

Catholic bourgeoisie is not strong enough to control the situation. And given the hostility of the Protestants there will be one. So what British imperialism is trying to do is continue business as usual, invest as much as possible and try and keep the lid on things.

They made a big attempt last year at power-sharing, to get the moderate Catholics and the moderate Protestants together, that failed due to opposition from the Protestant hard-liners. So they are now trying a mixture of economic pressure, increasing the power of the police forces and agencies in Northern Ireland (for instance, rearming the Royal Ulster Constabulary) and calculated use of the British Army. The result is that Ian Paisley, the most prominent mass leader of the Ulster Unionists, currently accuses the British government of conducting psychological warfare against the Protestants. Just to give

you an idea of the discrepancy between the interests of British imperialism and the Ulster Protestants, if you look at the figures of March last year for political prisoners in Northern Ireland, there were 900 Roman Catholics and 600 Protestants. It indicates that there's not exactly agreement between the militant Ulstermen and British imperialism at this time.

What Are the Protestants?

The key question is what are the Protestants. There are a number of ways to avoid this question, and you will find that they have all been tried by various left-wing organizations. One way is to say that the Protestants are just backward workers, and then follow this up with lots of "unite and fight" talk and vague rhetoric about how the dynamic of the class struggle will solve everything. That is, you don't address the

communal and national divisions at all. Another way is to adopt the real position of the extreme Irish nationalists and to say, in effect, they are just agents of British imperialism, so drive them into the sea. Or if you're a little bit shamefaced about it you say something along the lines of, "I can't tell the Irish people what to do."

There's a variety of other excuses put forward for plumping for the Catholic nationalists, the Republicans, and I would like to run through them briefly. There's the argument, for example, that only oppressed people have the right to self-determination. Now that is not so at all. For Marxists all nations have the right to self-determination. But the problem with raising the demand for self-determination in Ireland is that it doesn't resolve the Catholic-Protestant conflict in a democratic manner. Obviously, when India was fighting to separate from Britain, British self-determination wasn't in question. In that situation it would be a reactionary slogan, just as it would be if the Germans and the British each argued that they were fighting WWII on the basis of their right of self-determination.

But in the case of interpenetrated peoples, where one or the other is likely to be immediately either the oppressed nation or else the privileged nation under imperialism, it's a lot more complicated. There are two peoples here and whatever way you work it, if the oppressed gets its self-determination under capitalism, then it will simply become the new oppressor. There's no equitable solution within that framework. And if you want to say that only the oppressed people have the right to self-determination, then you're really saying that what happens to the Protestants after self-determination in Ireland doesn't matter at all, because after all right now the Irish nationalists are progressive and the Protestants are reactionary and that's the end of it. Too bad, Protestants!

There's another argument, to the effect that Loyalism (which is the common term to describe the Protestant communalist ideology) is simply an imperialist ideology. That is, it's just really British chauvinism given a little slightly different tinge in order to attract a mass following amongst a certain misled section of the Irish workers.

I don't think any of these arguments I just dealt with deserve serious attention from Marxists. But there are some other arguments which attempt to present a more sophisticated Marxist type of analysis. The one that's most frequently heard is that the Protestants are a labor aristocracy. This theory is essentially the same one as the New Left guilt theories about the American white working class being bought off because of "white skin privilege."

To begin with it ignores the fact that, with or without the Catholic population, in Northern Ireland you have one of the highest unemployment rates in Britain, and the fact that housing for the whole of the working-class population in Northern Ireland is the worst in Britain and amongst the worst in Europe. It also grievously distorts Marxism. The term "labor aristocracy" was used by Lenin in a very precise way, to indicate a layer of the working class, largely trade-union bureaucrats, that had sold out. To describe the whole of the Protestant working class, including the large percentage unemployed, as a labor aristocracy is obviously not just an extension but a gross distortion of the meaning of that Marxist term.

Thirdly, it suggests that the Protestants are nothing else but a stratum of one class, ignoring the fact that the Protestants are a trans-class grouping. With that methodology you would have to look at the tsarist empire before the Russian Revolution and argue that the Great Russians and the Poles were labor aristocracies. After all they enjoyed

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Wounded child is carried to safety after attack by British troops.



IRA check point in the Bogside in Londonberry, 1972.

Sectarian Terror...

(continued from page 7)

relative privileges if you want to put it that way. They were better off—they were more advanced sections of the society. You'd have to say on those grounds that, because the Poles were amongst the most advanced and had privileges compared to so many other peoples in the tsarist Empire, they didn't have a right to self-determination! But of course, the people who have such arguments like to avoid these little problems.

New Left Moralism

In association with these attempts to explain why we don't have to worry about the fate of the Protestants, there are two other things I want to look at. One is the argument that the Ulster state is an artificial imperialist creation, that its borders were designed to ensure a Protestant majority. Now that's true, and prior to the partition, revolutionists in Ireland would have fought for a unified independent Ireland and to transcend the sectional differences that existed at the time.

But with the partition and the communal bloodshed that accompanied it, with the establishment of a bourgeois Irish republic and the state boundaries, to argue for unification after that point is to ignore what had clearly become consolidated communal differences. This argument often goes with the position that not only was it an imperialist partition but, as well, the Protestants are a colonial-settler people. You know, they threw out the native people, they don't really have a right to be there. So, the American people don't have a right to be here now; you've all got to go home. The Australian people don't have a right to be there; they've all got to go home, too.

But if the colonial settlers have no rights, then you've got to argue that the Vietnamese people have no rights. Do you know what the Vietnamese did in the nineteenth century? There're only two villages left now in Vietnam of the Champa kingdom. The Vietnamese were slaughtering them in the nineteenth century; they were throwing out the Cambodians. The Cambodians' national existence was saved by the arrival of French imperialism. So why not give back most of South Vietnam to the Cambodians, too? The point is that almost every modern nation has been consolidated on the basis of slaughtering and wiping out and throwing out other communities and peoples. If you want to argue in these terms, it's simply a form of nationalism, liberal moralism, and leads straight into the typical irredentist arguments about our "holy" land which we've got to save or get back.

Now while I'm on the subject of the New Left and New Left moralism, there's another argument, which is presented as anti-economism. That is, the Protestants are so bound up in their reactionary ideas that they can never be part of a proletarian revolutionary mobilization. There is a small British group, called the Revolutionary Communist Group [RCG], which puts forward this argument and prides itself on having a Marxist understanding. It recently split, largely because, while it claimed to have a Marxist understanding, it never had any programmatic conclusions. The RCG says:

"It is the height of naïveté to expect the two sections of the northern working

class to unite on economic issues, when it is precisely these that divide them. As the crisis begins to bite, the Protestant workers will pursue the traditional way out—the expulsion of Catholics from employment. Only later, when the Unionist regime is visibly unable to preserve the position of the Protestant workers, will the possibility exist of breaking the Protestant workers from loyalism and drawing them around the programme which emphasises economic issues."

Now that ought to be absurd for Marxists.

That's full of back-handed support to Irish Catholic nationalism, because what you're saying is that the workers can never transcend their sectional interests; they'll always be narrow and selfish and they'll always want to throw their non-communal class brothers out of employment. So rather than attempting to transcend that type of attitude with a system of transitional demands, you come up with a position which says: narrow trade-union consciousness plus nationalism is revolutionary consciousness. And what that leads to inevitably is a two-stage Stalinist theory of revolution. Because in order for the workers to have revolutionary consciousness, first of all, as a precondition, they must fight for national liberation.

Protestant Communalism and the Union Jack

The Protestants have their origins as a settler colonization. They've generally fought for the British connection with one important historic exception: the 1798 United Irishmen uprising, which was led by Protestant Presbyterians—in particular clergymen and merchants—and was defeated by mobilization of the peasantry by the Catholic priests and the growth of the Orange Order stimulated by the landed aristocracy and British interests. That was effectively the opportunity for the establishment of a united nation in Ireland and it failed. Since that time, there have been these deep communal divisions.

I want to make the point that Unionism and Loyalism—i.e., Protestant communalism—should be understood as a means and not an end. That is, the Protestants are acting in what they perceive as their own interests; they're not just agents of British imperialism. This can be graphically shown by looking at quite a number of examples. I only want to give one—Sir Edward Carson who was the first prominent leader of the Protestants in this century. He was actually a representative—to be more precise—of the old landed aristocracy, and he differs significantly from later people like Craig and Paisley in terms of his origins. But he, as a leader of the Protestant interest in Ireland, was willing to threaten British imperialism and to say that he would seek German aid. So he saw the connection in a way that wasn't just acting on British imperialism's behalf.

And you can see a series of other things happening, which I've mentioned already—the 1912 opposition to British plans for Irish home rule, the Ulster Protestant workers' strike in 1974, the number of Protestant political prisoners—which all indicate that Protestant communalism in Northern Ireland is not identical with support for British imperialism.

So the Protestants have a separate identity. It's defined largely negatively, as against the Irish Catholic nation. Religion plays an important part; you've noticed I've been using the term Irish Catholic nation to make the distinction. It's not so much that everyone goes to different churches, but the religious question provides an ideological form for the dispute between the communities. And it's deeply involved in the cultures and the nationalism of both communities.

Let me make one thing clear: the Protestant bigotry (and its religious qualities) necessarily exceeds the worst excesses of Green nationalism, of Irish Catholic nationalism. Take Rev. Ian



G. Peress/Magnum

Victim of British troops on Bloody Sunday.

Paisley—this is from one of his speeches:

"Watch the Jews, Israel is on the way back to favour. Watch the papist Rome rising to a grand crescendo with the Communists. The Reds are on the march; they are heading for an alliance against the return of Lord Jesus Christ."

And these are headings from his paper: "The Love Affairs of the Vatican," "Priestly Murders Exposed!" "Children Tortured, Monks Turned Out as Sadists!"

Now Paisley is not some sort of fringe crackpot religious fanatic. He's a mass leader of the Protestants. He expresses and is a manifestation of the attitudes amongst the Protestants.

The Protestants have a self-image of themselves as being hardy and self-reliant while the Catholics they see as being dirty, indisciplined, lazy and breeding like rabbits. The Orange Order, which is a sort of Masonic formation amongst the Protestants, is the epitome of the Ulster Protestant culture. It was created as an instrument of counterrevolution around the time of the United Irishmen's uprising and has been used ever since as such. Its rituals, its exclusion of women, its marches represent a way of life and a social focus for the Protestants.

No to Forced Reunification!

At the same time we look at the Republic and we find a reactionary, clericalist regime. You don't need to go very far to notice that. Take the best of the bourgeois papers in Ireland—and none of them are very good—the *Irish Times*. You find that on every single issue, no matter how insignificant, the thing that is absolutely necessary is the opinion of a priest. The Protestants see themselves as getting nothing from a unified bourgeois Ireland. And they make a great deal about the clerical nature of the state.

There's a whole series of things that are not very attractive about the

southern Irish bourgeois state: the prohibition on divorce and contraception, the role of the Catholic church in education, its influence in the higher circles of government. Its influence is not limited solely to the most reactionary circles, but is found in the more plebeian organizations as well. For example, in 1969 during the height of the civil rights movement, when there were some layers of Protestants willing to support it at that time, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association refused to dissociate itself from the Irish Republic's constitution, which contains provisions guaranteeing rights to the Catholic church, and from Irish government policies vis-a-vis the church and contraception.

Leaving aside the empirical facts of the nature of the Irish Republic, apologists for unification argue that presently and in general the Protestants have been treated better in the South than the Irish Catholics in the North. Now in the quantitative sense this is certainly true. Presently, the Irish Catholic state is obviously much more reasonable and liberal than the Protestants in Northern Ireland.

However, there's a more basic point involved here. It's not a matter of looking at the present relative reaction of each nationalism, but seeing that religion is a core component of the nationalism of both groups, and understanding an elementary Marxist principle: that all nationalism is reactionary. To suggest that the Irish Catholic bourgeoisie will treat the Protestants well is to argue that somehow this particular nationalism is progressive, because it's going to be good to people who are not of the Irish Catholic nation. There're no historical examples of nationalist regimes doing that, so why should the Irish be the exception?

The Protestant communalists are not any better, and in the Northern state there is systematic discrimination in

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housing, hiring and education. That's all well-known. The majority of the sectarian murders that have taken place in Northern Ireland in the recent period have been carried out by Protestant gangs. Let me give you one example of the bigotry in this situation. A gang kicked in the door of a house, lined up a family and shot them—kids and parents alike. Before they shot the woman, one of them raped her. This particular man was subsequently arrested by the British Army and was sentenced to a long jail sentence. When he arrived in jail, he was viciously beaten up by his own comrades and almost killed. The reason he was beaten up was not that he'd shot the Catholics, but because he'd had sexual contact with a Catholic.

So there is obviously a series of urgent democratic demands with regard to the Catholics in the Northern Ireland statelet. In particular I want to mention housing and employment, because just by arguing that it should be more equitably shared, you say to the Protestant workers: you should suffer some more. That's obviously not going to solve the problem, so even in terms of immediate urgent democratic tasks, these will have to be linked to demands that have been classically associated with the Trotskyist Transitional Program. For example, for a sliding scale of hours and work-sharing on full pay.

There's a problem of distinct communities. We recognize that there are distinctions, and we don't want to just ignore them but seek to transcend them, and to offer some way out of the vicious communal cycle. The one million Protestants can be defined largely negatively, as against the Irish Catholic nation, as being not part of the English and Scottish nations any more, and not in a strict sense being a nation either. But they do have a separate identity, and the concerns of this community must be taken into account.

The definite resolution of what the Protestants are exactly is most likely to occur at the time that the British Army gets out, and will depend on the circumstances accompanying that. That is, there could be the consolidation of a real Protestant nation, based on a sectarian, communalist bloodbath in the Irish Catholic community; or they could be wiped out; or else they could, in the context of a revolutionary working-class mobilization, transcend these divisions.

We want to oppose the forcible reunification of the island and reject the call for the "self-determination of the Irish nation," demands which give preference to the claims of one of the interpenetrated peoples. We call instead for an Irish workers republic within a socialist federation of the British Isles, which at this point leaves open exactly where the Protestants will fail.

We counterpose the algebraic formulation of an Irish workers republic to the common left-nationalist slogan (e.g., of the IRA officials) of a "united socialist Ireland." We do not insist that the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland must be part of an all-Ireland workers state. Furthermore, the slogan of a "united socialist Ireland" has become a left cover for Green nationalism implying forced reunification under bourgeois rule and a two-stage revolution—first unity, then socialism.

For Anti-Sectarian Workers Militias!

There's another important plank in our program which I want to emphasize, and that is the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia to combat indiscriminate terror, both Green and Orange. Now this has to be seen in its proper context. There's a group in Britain called the Militant group—a deeply opportunist organization inside the Labour Party which has a call for a trade-union militia. Unfortunately, our slogan is sometimes confused with this. Their slogan is coupled with the demand

for withdrawal of British troops, but they say that until there's a trade-union militia the British Army should stay. And they see this trade-union militia as growing out of some sort of organic unity of the working class based on trade-union economism.

If you take a look at the Armagh shootings last year, where you had five Catholics shot in one night and, I think, two nights later ten Protestant workers shot up in a mini-bus, you can see a problem. Suppose the Protestant workers had been an armed self-defense group. What you would have had was simply a sectarian shoot-out between Catholics and Protestants. So obviously in each defense squad you must have at least one member of both communities.

But the question of an anti-sectarian workers militia is also very much tied in with the rest of your program. It's not just a matter of disliking the killings: what about the British Army, what about indiscriminate terror? It has to be linked to the revolutionary mobilization because otherwise the trade-union militias would simply become the armed adjunct of the peace movement, which doesn't have a position on the key question of whether the British Army should stay. Effectively the Militant group's demand ends up supporting the status quo—that is, the British Army stays, and capitalist law and order is maintained.

There are objections to the demand for an anti-sectarian workers militia. One is that it's not practical. I think the comrades are probably all familiar with this type of reasoning—I believe it's one of the props of the Socialist Workers Party's position on troops to Boston, that is, labor/black defense is not practical. Really it is a form of reformist methodology used to justify capitulating.

The other argument is that it is wrong to equate the terror of the oppressed and the oppressor. That's true, but what it leads these people into doing is justifying any act by an oppressed group. That is, as long as you say you are fighting against imperialism, it doesn't matter what you do, we give you a blank check. That means you have to justify Grivas in Cyprus, who was a neo-fascist, not only when he fought British imperialism, but when he went out and slaughtered Turks. And you'd have to defend the Stern gang, not only its actions when it fought British imperialism, but when it slaughtered Palestinians. And, of course, in Ireland this means taking the side of the IRA, not only when they are fighting the British Army or the Royal Ulster Constabulary, but also when they blow up Protestant pubs.

The two sides are obviously different in Northern Ireland: the Catholic minority is oppressed and you can't ignore this. It's also true that the question of

Irish self-determination was not fully resolved by the establishment of the Irish Republic. We defend the IRA against the British Army, but we need to distinguish between terrorism directed against the imperialist oppressor and what is purely indiscriminate, indefensible terrorism. We would not want to defend the perpetrators of such barbarous acts. An anti-sectarian workers militia would be interested in stopping pub bombings which just slaughter workers, the tube—subway—bombings and the Armagh shootings.

It's obvious that the analysis of terrorism is crucial to the ability of that anti-sectarian workers militia to act in a way that is supportable by Marxists. So that any anti-sectarian workers militia is not only going to have to attract at least one member from each community into each such formation, but it must also have a strong component of cadre from the revolutionary party.

Opportunities for Class Unity

I touched several times on the argument that it's not practical to mobilize Protestants. There's a difference between on the one hand recognizing the complexity of the situation and the fact that mass consciousness has been poisoned, and on the other hand a view of profound historical pessimism which says that the working class doesn't have the potentiality as a force for revolutionary change.

If you look at the history of Ireland you can see a number of contradictory phenomena. In 1907 there was a series of strikes led by Jim Larkin which managed to keep significant unity of Protestant and Catholic workers. In 1919 there was a Belfast engineers' (metal workers) strike. The bourgeoisie managed to smash it, and in the sequel 12,000 Roman Catholics lost their jobs. But that wasn't all that happened: 3,000 Protestant socialists and militants lost their jobs, too. In 1933 there was massive unemployment, and for a brief period you had joint mass unemployed marches in which it is reported the Green and Orange flags flew together. This fleeting unity was preceded by massive sectarian violence and followed by massive sectarian upsurge, which destroyed the unity.

Things are not going to get better automatically. We made the point in *Workers Vanguard* that in Cyprus there was one period of 48 hours—at the time of the attempted reactionary coup inspired by the Greek colonels' junta—when the question of nationalism was flatly counterposed to democratic issues, and there was a potentiality of uniting the Turkish and Cypriot workers. It was only one short period where the class struggle asserted itself and subordinated these massive communal

tensions, but it was an opportunity.

The same is true in Ireland. In the absence of a revolutionary party we might get some transitory unity on pacifist or reformist grounds. The sequel to the Armagh shootings is that there were joint marches of Protestant and Catholic workers, but they were marching on a quite unsupportable plank: they were demanding strengthening of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, which we want to see smashed!

In the absence of a revolutionary party the prospects are bleak. But an organization which for many years may remain isolated, generally hated and impotent can seize such opportunities in the class struggle as I've outlined. That means defending a Leninist perspective. It means refusal to capitulate to British chauvinism, to Orange Loyalism and to Irish nationalism. If we have that, then we can expect that when the opportunities do come, when the class struggle reasserts itself in some form, such upsurges will not be immediately drowned in communal bloodshed. Nor will the workers have a transitory unity on the basis of waving Green and Orange flags together—there will be an opportunity for revolutionary cadre to see that the flags they're waving are red flags. Such opportunities are a part of the mobilization toward the only progressive solution for the bloody sectarian/communalist conflict in Northern Ireland—proletarian revolution!

Supplemental Remarks by Reuben Samuels

SAMUELS: I just gave a forum on colonial-settler states and the permanent revolution, which I would like to relate to the Irish question. An interesting point about the colonial-settler question in South Africa is that the "great treks" of the Boers and, just a little later, by the Zulus in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wiped out a great many peoples whose economic livelihood was at a lower level of development than either the Zulus or the Boers, such as the Hottentots and Bushmen who were almost exterminated.

In fact, this has been the entire course of human progress over the last ten thousand years. The history of class society has been one of the subjugation or extermination of less advanced peoples by a more advanced people—those people who had the bigger hatchet, the longer ax, the ones who developed gunpowder and so on. As Engels said, human progress is indeed a cruel chariot that rides over mountains of corpses.

There are a lot of petty-bourgeois vicarious nationalists, very often at a great distance from the struggle they claim to support, who have picked up the ideology of the "wretched of the earth" from Bakunin to Fanon, and who would like to reverse the chariot of human progress. They dream that the less advanced societies will rise up against the more advanced societies and create another mountain of corpses, but at least the chariot will go downhill this time.

Their politics are basically moralism, so for them what makes the Protestants an oppressor people—or for that matter the Israeli Hebrews, or the South African whites—is their higher standard of living. In the case of the Protestant workers in Northern Ireland, this is not much greater than that of the Irish Catholics, and it's significantly less than the standard of living of anyone in this room.

Let me point out that the average standard of living in Northern Ireland is 25 percent below the standard of living for all of Great Britain, and I assure you

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British troops round up "suspected IRA members" in Northern Ireland.

Sectarian Terror...

(continued from page 9)

that this is a very low standard indeed for northern Europe. Furthermore, if you compare Protestant to Catholic on the basis of income differentials (which tends to exaggerate the difference), the Protestants have a differential of about 15 percent over the Catholics. Of course, there are percentage-wise more poor Catholics in Northern Ireland, but in absolute numbers there are more poor Protestants than poor Catholics.

There is a book by Geoffrey Bell, published by the International Socialists in Great Britain, which claims that the Protestants are a labor aristocracy. He uses the following reasoning: if you look at the labor aristocracy, it's predominantly Protestant; therefore all Protestant workers constitute a labor aristocracy, or are part of the labor aristocracy. If you look at the labor aristocracy in the United States, by comparison, it's predominantly white, therefore supposedly all white workers are part of a labor aristocracy, as the New Leftist Noel Ignatin told us some years ago. This kind of logic, which I call Geoffrey Bell logic, has superseded both Aristotelian and Hegelian logic. It runs as follows: most or all donkeys are animals, therefore all animals are donkeys.

These are the arguments of people who have despaired of a proletarian solution, that is a solution other than the mounds upon mounds of corpses that the chariot of history has gone up or come down in the past. This solution, which has only been opened up in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is counterposed to the way in which the national question has been resolved historically, namely through genocide, forced population transfers and subjugation of the oppressed peoples.

And if you don't think the terms of oppression can be reversed, just look at Cyprus. Two thousand years ago Cyprus was colonized by the Greeks; five hundred years ago it was colonized by the Turks, who became an oppressor people under the Ottoman Empire. The British imperialists cultivated both peoples at one time or another. So who were the oppressor people after the British left? The Greeks. And who are the oppressor people in Cyprus today? The Turks. The terms of oppression can definitely be reversed.

This is not the Leninist solution to the national question. This is the Bakuninist-Fanonian solution: to reverse the terms of oppression, to call for a unified, necessarily Catholic-dominated Ireland without a proletarian revolution.

The 1973 Ulster general strike, a 14-day general strike that totally shut down Northern Ireland, demonstrated that the social power and the social weight of the proletariat is there, even if in this particular case it was used for reactionary ends. It was also an entirely anti-British strike. The British had set up the

Council of Ireland, which was a scheme for a peaceful, if forcible (through economic pressure) reunifying of Ireland and dumping Northern Ireland, which has become a liability for British imperialism.

The strike was entirely reactionary, but that was a demonstration of real social power, social power that can be welded to the chariot of human progress, which in this epoch can only be drawn by the proletariat as an international class. And those people who have posed the proletarian solution as opposed to the nationalist solution have gotten a hearing in spite of the communal hatreds. We stand in their tradition, in the tradition of Jim Larkin and the Palestinian Trotskyism.

Supplemental Remarks by James Robertson

ROBERTSON: Life is complicated, comrades. In the past generation, in the attempt to defend the just struggles of oppressed peoples, there's been a tendency to lose the context in which, for proletarian revolutionary Marxists, that struggle must be undertaken. What we are seeking to do is to defend the core of revolutionary Marxism, the proletarian solution, against those who would simply embrace the "good" nation against the "bad" nation.

I believe that there's very little that can be added to Comrade David's talk in the particular framework of Ireland. I'd like to underline one thing: he spoke of the metal workers' strike in 1919, in which 12,000 Catholics and 3,000 socialist, class-struggle-oriented Protestants were fired, driven out of the industry. Ireland is a very small country, so that is probably more than half of the metal workers. Driven out!

What then do you have? We thought we had a bad purge in the late 1940's in the United States where 10,000 communist elements were driven out. But that's 1/100th of one percent, not over 50 percent. So those who think that the Irish are simply locked into endless sectarian killing should examine the historical record. The metal workers could have been and were trying to be the leadership of the proletariat on the island, but over 50 percent of them were socially annihilated. That's a defeat in a struggle, not the organic chauvinism of the priest ridden and the arrogant!

That's where the function of the revolutionary party comes in. Every generation there recurs the opportunity and the loopholes where an international Leninist formation that is alert can intervene. You must not take what is at present as the inevitable product of history which cannot be changed, ever. It's necessary to fight, not to be passive.

And in the case of Ireland, it's particularly easy. On the island of Cyprus, a Greek is a Greek and a Turk is a Turk. How many of you have had the same experience that I have had, of working with young militants, either Ulstermen or from the Republic of Ireland? As soon as they're broken from the nationalist ideologies, and you encounter them and work with them as comrades outside that poor island, they are simply components of the English-speaking nation. That's the truth. It is only when locked into this poverty and oppression that they're thrown at each others' throats. They may become separate nations; in the defeat of the proletarian goal. But not yet.

Last point when I talked here last time, some young woman, who I'm sure was entirely well-meaning, said, "Does any people who oppresses others have a right to exist?" That's the only thing that I took away from the discussion that I'd been brooding about. And then I thought, if one wants to be idiosyncratic and make trouble, what's the most chauvinist people on earth, who absolutely have the right to exist? I think it's probably the Chinese. In 2,000 years

they developed no other term for foreigners except, "the barbarians." Do you understand the conception behind that? But they have the right to exist. They were just a very powerful people, used to suppressing those on their borders and never running into anybody from a culturally higher standpoint, even if they were occasionally conquered by "barbarians." It's the nature of the world in the framework of a class-divided society.

I have two observations to end with. For many minorities that are powerful—the young woman put it the wrong way around—it is seen as *necessary to oppress in order to exist*. That's one of the lessons of life that we have to shatter, but it does give some insight into the question. Finally, what should be very obvious, something that precedes Marxism but was encompassed within it: we do not believe that any baby horn into an ethnic, religious or national group thereby deserves or merits a death sentence. That's the answer to that young woman. ■

ILWU Convention...

(continued from page 12)

longshore locals were now on record for the shorter workshift (Local 10 having voted to strike for it last summer), and argued for the strike action necessary to win the demand.

This position was in sharp contrast to delegate Joe Figueiredo, a supporter of the Communist Party (CP), who pushed the reformist strategy of gaining "30 for 40" by legislative action. Noting the wide array of bureaucratic forces opposing the Seattle motion, Mandel urged delegates to vote for it after his attempt to add a pro-strike amendment was ruled out of order.

The bureaucratic counterattack against the Seattle "six-for-eight" motion was flagging (the main contenders in the upcoming elections being reluctant to openly oppose it) when Bridges finally stepped into the fray. Brushing aside the CP's legislative daydreaming with a wave of his hand, he took on the question of strike action directly. Drawing on the 1934 strike, Bridges argued that even with the Bay Area labor movement mobilized in support, the longshoremen had been able to win a reduced workday only with a reduction in pay. It is certainly the most defeatist logic to maintain that what was won 40 years ago, when the union was fighting to win a hiring hall, is the limit of what can be fought for today! But most of the delegates were unwilling to buck Bridges and dutifully killed the motion.

The alternative to taking on the capitalists directly in a fight for jobs is pitting worker against worker in a scramble for the dwindling amount of available work. The ILWU has already engaged in despicable raiding against other maritime unions. This fratricidal warfare is now beginning to erupt within the union.

The Longshore Caucus, which followed the week-long convention, was reportedly dominated by maneuvers to prevent the transfer of San Francisco longshoremen into other ports. The S.F. port has been by far the hardest hit by the employers' job-robbing offensive. Man-hours worked have dropped by over a third in just the last four years. Though the treatment meted out to Local 10 shows the future being prepared for the other longshore locals, delegates at the Caucus reportedly sought to put off the problem, hoping that with Bridges' retirement things will change. But stalling will not eliminate the mounting pressures on the union members' jobs.

The leadership of Local 10, which has a high proportion of black members, reportedly used the Caucus to accuse the

other locals of racial discrimination and made thinly veiled threats to force them to accept transfers. The desperate Local 10 officials have been pushing to declare San Francisco a "low work opportunity port" early (it is automatically imposed by the sellout contract when available work dips below a certain level) and reportedly even implied the use of court suits against the other locals.

The preliminary round of this ugly battle had been fought out earlier on the convention floor. Local 10 delegates, with the aid of the CP, tried to ram through a motion calling for "affirmative action" in the union. Warning that this would set the union up for government legal action, Bridges skillfully forced the motion's authors to drop "affirmative action" and reduced the motion to a simple statement against discrimination instead of the intended accusation of racist job-trusting.

Cleophus Williams, the black president of Local 10, will undoubtedly try to use the defeat of the "affirmative action" motion to whip up support in S.F. for forcing transfers on the other longshore locals. Both he and Bridges, unwilling to junk the "unemployment contract" are responsible for the threat of increasing racial polarization which could open the door to ILWU members fighting each other along color lines for jobs.

Hawaiian Jobs Threatened

Mushrooming unemployment is a threat throughout the union. In warehouse, 15 percent of the membership is currently unemployed. And in Hawaii, with over 20,000 of the union's 55,000 members, the union faces the closure of large sugar and pineapple plantations. Estimates are that unemployment could be jacked up to 20 percent on the islands, with 50 percent of key ILWU locals being laid off.

The threat stems from moves by plantation owners, mainly the less profitable ones who have not invested heavily in modern refinery equipment, to low-wage areas in the Philippines and Taiwan. The union leadership's response has been to plead to the federal government for protective legislation in the form of a renewed sugar act holding up prices and subsidizing the bosses.

The contract was already extended by the union for six months when the employers demanded that an existing contract clause prohibiting the liquidation of plantations during the life of the agreement be scrapped. The extension through the peak harvest season was the focus of a back-biting dispute between Bridges and Goldblatt, who have been feuding for the past few years.

In an hours-long closed-door session, Bridges reportedly blasted the Goldblatt-engineered extension and the stated willingness of the sugar negotiating team to work without a contract as a sellout, advocating an island-wide strike to hold all industry hostage against sugar plantation runaways. But the dispute is, in reality, a minor one. All

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Militant Caucus Protests Exclusion of Soviet Delegation

The following resolution was submitted to the 22nd convention of the ILWU by the Militant Caucus of Local 6

The exclusion of the Soviet delegation by the Carter administration, spearheaded by the reactionary Meany leadership of the AFL-CIO, is a calculated blow against international labor solidarity and in the service of the government's perpetual anti-Soviet, anti-communist campaign. The government's refusal to grant visas to these trade unionists exposes the hypocrisy of Carter's campaign for "human rights" for Soviet dissidents and lays bare the fraudulent nature of the Helsinki accords.

The ILWU demands that visas be granted immediately to these official representatives of the Soviet trade unions. Denial of the visas represents an attack on the Soviet Union, which despite the repression of the working class, still embodies the economic forms and historic achievements resulting from the expropriation of capitalism by the Soviet working class, a gain for all workers.

The union will send a delegation to the Peace Arch at the Canadian-American border to demonstrate for the admission of the Soviet delegation and calls on the British Columbia Federation of Labour to escort the Soviets to the border and to join the demonstration.

Bridges wants is the same deal he foisted on the longshoremen: an unemployment fund like the PGP in exchange for the loss of jobs!

The Militant Caucus has called for the fields to be expropriated without compensation and for agricultural workers committees to take over the plantations to save their jobs. Recent struggles in Hawaii already point in this direction. Among the Hawaiian delegates were several who participated in a recent battle by agricultural workers, supported by students, against the conversion of fields into condominium housing on Oahu. The workers won such massive support that the state government reportedly decided to buy the land and maintain agricultural production.

Regional Squabbling and a Vacuum at the Top

Bridges' probable successors have no comparable recognition or authority. Local 34 president Jimmy Herman, candidate for president, and his campaign partners are united in nothing more than a marriage of convenience based on vote-juggling regional considerations. Herman and Rudy Rubio, candidate for vice-president and past head of the Los Angeles longshore local, represent the two largest ports. Curtis McClain, candidate for secretary-treasurer, is from the warehouse division, while the incumbent George Martin has the Hawaii vote.

G. Johnny Parks and Fred Huntsinger, from the smaller and politically more conservative Northwest ports, are also running for president and secretary-treasurer. Theirs is also essentially an appeal to a regional base.

Though these candidacies are not counterposed on the issues, the jockeying for position is intense. A proposal from the Bridges camp to cut the number of International officers from four to three almost precipitated a fist fight on the fourth day of the convention. The motion was intended to split McClain and Rubio by forcing them to run against each other and brought nearly a dozen local officers running to the microphone. But, reflecting the erosion of Bridges' position, the proposal lost.

With the dominating figure of Bridges gone, the regional antagonisms fueled by scarce work threaten to pull the union apart. Fearful of simply being swallowed up by bigger unions, the new officers will probably continue to resist the proposal Bridges has been pushing: merger with either the East- and Gulf-Coast based International Longshoremen's Association or the Teamsters. There also continues to be massive resistance in the ranks of the union to subordination to the reactionary Gleason and Fitzsimmons bureaucracies.

The convention did mandate continued negotiations for re-affiliation with the AFL-CIO. But the federation's proposed terms, which include turning over shops organized in the last year to AFL-CIO unions (e.g., can

manufacturing plants to the Steelworkers), will be a stumbling block there, too.

It was evident at this convention that the only sharp challenge to the pattern of bureaucratically engineered defeat is the program of the Militant Caucus. The reformist CP, which has long had a fond relationship with Bridges and the mantle of the "left wing" in the union, has lost a lot of ground. It has been the waterboy for the ILWU bureaucracy for so long that any other role is virtually inconceivable on both sides.

The major function of Communist Party supporters at the convention was to act as hatchmen against the Militant Caucus. The CP's West Coast newspaper, *People's World*, ran three consecutive convention-related articles specifically attacking the caucus and Bob Mandel. Early on in the convention proceedings, CP supporter Joe Figueiredo and various bureaucrats began hailing the Caucus as "paid company agents." But several delegates, including Los Angeles Local 13 president Art Almeida, took to the convention floor to protest and put an end to this time-worn Stalinist slander.

On the third day of the convention, CP supporters issued a slanderous leaflet denouncing the Militant Caucus for alleged racism. This was in response to Mandel's opposition to a motion calling for an open-ended longshore boycott of all South African and Rhodesian cargo, which would be implemented *only* if the employers Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) agreed to allow it in the next contract!

The utter hypocrisy of the CP knows no bounds. Speaking on the floor against the hypocritical motion, Mandel pointed out that it is these fakery who have sabotaged every concrete proposal and action in solidarity with the South African black masses. Last July, during the student and worker uprisings, CP supporters opposed a motion by Stan Gow to immediately implement an already adopted Local 10 motion to boycott South African and Rhodesian goods, on the cowardly grounds that such action might endanger PGP payments! Again in August, on the very eve of the Johannesburg general strike, CP ally Leo Robinson moved to put off any action indefinitely and kick the matter to the International for more "study"!

In October, the CP-supported Local 10 leaders ordered longshoremen to cross a Spartacist League-initiated picket line at S.F. Pier 27 protesting the South African ship *Nedlloyd Kimberly*. And in January of this year, when the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) called for a one-week boycott of all South African goods to protest the repression of trade unionists, it was again the *Longshore Militant* which fought for compliance. The CP-led official Local 10 South Africa Liberation Support Committee sat on its hands.

At every point, it has been the supporters of the Militant Caucus who have called for concrete actions to aid the South African masses, not just paper

resolutions which "promise" action if only the bosses will allow it. In debate on the boycott motion, Mandel counterposed a strategy of specific solidarity actions. Such action would actually



Bob Mandel at Seattle convention.

support the black students and workers, while an on-going boycott of everything South African, if successfully implemented, would in fact lead to more unemployment of the black working class, thus dampening its ability to struggle.

Even more revealing of the Stalinists' cowardly policy was their complete silence on the State Department's exclusion of a delegation of three Soviet trade-union officials invited to the convention. Reportedly acting at the behest of the raving anti-communist George Meany, the U.S. government refused to grant visas to the Soviet officials, leaving them stranded across the border in nearby Vancouver. When Mandel rose to put a motion before the convention calling for action in defense of the Soviet delegation (see box) instead of token telegrams beseeching Meany to change his ways, the CPers cowered in their seats. It was the

FBI Criminals...

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will not be arrested on felony charges although the agency is surely the most felonious outfit in the country.

Capitalism needs its secret police and everybody knows it. Marxists least of all have illusions that the capitalist state will arrest and jail its most needed secret weapon in the war against the working class and its allies. It is absurd to imagine that one hand of the bourgeois state will do anything beyond the slightest slap to the other. The idea that the Justice Department will come busting across Pennsylvania Avenue to assail the J. Edgar Hoover fortress is a liberal utopian fantasy. Only the victorious proletarian revolution will bring justice to the FBI/CIA.

But Marxists do say "put the criminals in jail." Kearney is certainly guilty. Although he is a "little fish" while large sharks swim nearby in warmer FBI waters, that is no reason for a criminal like Kearney to get off. Furthermore we approve of the additional exposures that may be involved in court prosecutions of Kearney. It is not simply a propaganda slogan when FBI big-guns complain that "morale is shot." It is a good thing that agents, given their assignments to burgle offices, steal mail, forge letters and much worse, must wonder if they too may become objects of token "clean-up" prosecutions.

Most dangerous, however, is the general counteroffensive of the so-called "intelligence community". The FBI neanderthals don't even bother to clean up their image. For them it is the style of "the late director": jingoism, moralism and a naked attempt to assert the power of the secret police on the steps of the federal court. While it is clear that jailing Kearney or a few other FBI agents will make no great difference in the functioning of this outlaw state terror organization, it is nevertheless vitally important that such bonapartist tactics are not victorious.

Jail the FBI criminals! ■

Militant Caucus, not the craven Stalinists, which while denouncing bureaucratic repression in the USSR forthrightly called for the defense of the Soviet workers' expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

The press coverage given to the Militant Caucus reflects the increasing recognition both inside and outside the union that these militants represent the real class-struggle opposition to the ILWU bureaucrats. The *Seattle Post Intelligencer* (20 April) wrote:

"It's ironic that this labor leader [Bridges], who once had to battle in the courts to avoid deportation as a communist finds himself at this last convention heckled by a small 'Militant Caucus' of his union that accuses him of having gone over to management and proclaims 'The struggle against class collaboration poses the need for a new leadership that is pledged to the independent struggle of the working class and a complete break with the capitalists, their government and their political parties'."

As the ILWU confronts a deepening jobs crisis with a sellout leadership that lacks even the eroded authority that Bridges had, the union ranks face critical choices. The ILWU may be further ground down by employer attack and leadership betrayal. It may be broken up and absorbed into other unions which will prove no better. Or, it can adopt the program advocated by the Militant Caucus. The latter is the only way the union's membership can both fight to defend their livelihoods and, by virtue of the ILWU's strategic importance, lead all of West Coast labor on the road of class struggle. ■

Transit Strike...

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and wage freezes inflicted on municipal workers and restore the cuts in services suffered by the city's workers and poor.

Spread the Strike!

Two years ago Ned LeDonne was elected Local 234 president as a "trade union militant." But neither his discredited militancy nor the parochialism of Driving Force can provide a winning strategy for transit workers. Unless a sharp change in the relationship of forces is recorded, the war of attrition between the city bosses and the union will increasingly favor Rizzo & Co.

Despite the subway, bus and trolley strike thousands of commuters pour into the city by public transportation every day. The two suburban divisions of the SEPTA system, Frontier and Red Arrow, continue to operate without a peep being heard from LeDonne. Red Arrow workers have been without a contract since April 1.

In addition, the city's Yellow cab drivers, working without a contract since March 30, have authorized their union executive board to call a strike. And on April 2, members of four Conrail craft unions, incensed at the layoff of 1,200 union members, obeyed a court order and dropped plans for a strike that would have shut down commuter lines in the area. The potential power of a joint Philadelphia-area transportation strike by all these unions is tremendous. Such a joint strike would not only turn the tide in the bitter transit strike, opening the door to victory instead of slow defeat through dissipation of the transit workers' militancy; it would also be instrumental in securing the demands of the Conrail workers, taxi drivers and employees of SEPTA's suburban divisions. A victory by transit workers, achieved by this massive labor response, could be the opening blow in a counteroffensive of the city's unions and poor to the austerity program of Boss Rizzo and his Democratic and Republican party allies.

All of SEPTA must be shut down, along with local suburban rail lines and taxi! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

The Issue at ILWU Convention

Fight for Jobs!

SEATTLE, April 30 The 22nd biennial convention and Longshore Caucus of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) ended today after two weeks of often bitter debate. The major question facing the union how to stop the employers' deep-going job-slashing offensive was left unanswered by the incumbent ILWU bureaucracy, both the retiring International officers and the front-running replacement slate.

The convention was not simply a gala sendoff for ILWU founder and president Harry Bridges and International secretary-treasurer Lou Goldblatt, and an arena for rival slates of bureaucrats jockeying for the vacated top positions. The economic disintegration of two of the union's three divisions including longshore, which has historically been the backbone of the ILWU greatly concerned most delegates. The drastic extent of job losses in San Francisco longshore, which are already spreading throughout the union, was brought home to delegates from all the ports. Even the most apathetic were forced to recognize that the union's continued existence over the next few years is at stake.

Despite the massive problems facing the membership, the ILWU still is a reservoir of the most militant traditions of the American working class. There is determination among the membership not to surrender their hard-won gains without a fight. Debate at the convention was generally serious, and the



Harry Bridges, outgoing ILWU president, addresses convention.

Luis Carballar

proposals of class-struggle oppositionists were widely discussed. If the delegates were not willing to accept them, it was acknowledged by the union bureaucrats, Stalinists and the bourgeois press alike that the positions advocated by these unionists were becoming the visible oppositional pole.

Bridges is leaving office after 40 years as ILWU chief. He built a militant reputation based on the 1934 San Francisco general strike which established the union, his long fight against

deportation on charges of being a "communist" and his liberal use of radical verbiage. But Bridges departs with the heart-felt praise of management officials who value the labor peace he imposed on the West Coast waterfront. Bridges' notorious "M & M" (mechanization and modernization) contracts allowed the elimination of over half of all West Coast longshoremen's jobs, in exchange for a Pay Guarantee Plan (PGP) that now is also being slashed. Even more massive

unemployment threatens the ILWU in Hawaii, where sugar and pineapple firms are moving to low-wage areas in southeast Asia.

The crippling class collaboration of Bridges and his would-be successors did not go unopposed at the convention. Though the bourgeois media focused on Bridges' retirement, it was forced to take note of a class-struggle opposition led by Bob Mandel, delegate from warehouse Local 6 and a spokesman for the Militant Caucus (MC), and fraternal delegates Stan Gow and Howard Keylor, co-editors of the "Longshore Militant" in Local 10. The *New York Times* (24 April) reported:

"In its challenges to majority policy statements, a small but vocal group of union members served notice that the waterfront still harbored workers as radical as Mr. Bridges was when he led the historic three-day general strike in San Francisco in 1934 that established his leadership and the union's basic strength."

Strike for Jobs!

Minority reports by Mandel were a blistering attack on the policies of the ILWU leadership. Though shortened by bureaucratic harassment, the reports put forward a fighting program to restore the strength of the ILWU, forcing many delegates to respond to these demands in the continuing debates over the union's strategy. Mandel's minority report on longshore called centrally for dumping the present contract and bringing the entire ILWU, along with other maritime unions, out on a Coast-wide strike to win a shorter workshift at no loss in pay. Mandel also attacked the maneuvering by Bridges and the S.F. Local 10 leadership to declare San Francisco a "low work opportunity port," which would open the door to forced transfers of longshoremen to other ports. And he hit the "steadyman" clause which has undercut the union's dispatching of jobs from the hiring hall.

In his warehouse report Mandel denounced the wretched betrayal of the continuing Handyman strike (now in its ninth month). Even though a striker was run down and killed by a scab truck crashing the picket line last August, the ILWU tops called neither sympathy strikes nor mass picket lines, instead ordering union members in other warehouses to continue to handle scab Handyman goods. Mandel's attack on the leadership's no-win policies caused Local 6 president Curtis McClain to answer that the union was too weak to take on the parent company of the small Stockton outfit!

In a convention dominated by bureaucrats and local officials, the minority report on longshore nevertheless got about 30 votes from the 451 delegates.

The fight for jobs was also sharply posed when the Seattle longshore local's proposal for a six-hour day at eight-hours pay came before the convention. Stan Gow pointed out that two major

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Sadlowski Refuses to Call For Strike Action

Steel Ranks Against Abel's Contract

There is a bitter taste in the mouths of American steel workers in the wake of the sellout agreement for basic steel signed by retiring United Steelworkers of America (USWA) chief I. W. Abel. USWA members are almost universally disgruntled by a minimal wage increase of 80 cents over three years; extension of the no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) through the next contract period as well; commitment to extend the productivity agreements; and maintenance of the Consent Decree, which insures both a discriminatory seniority system and government intervention in union affairs. The empty package was capped by a fraudulent "job security" clause which provides (under certain conditions!) an extra year of supplementary unemployment benefits

to workers with 20 years seniority, who are very rarely laid off.

Not surprisingly, this contract has provoked cries of anguish from the USWA ranks. Although the membership does not have the right to ratify hargaining agreements, numerous locals have passed motions condemning the contract. Unfortunately, however, the most pervasive attitude among steel workers is, "The contract stinks, but what can you do about it?" Even at those union meetings where the contract was overwhelmingly rejected, attendance was fairly light. At Lorain, Ohio, only 250 members out of 7,000 showed up to condemn the contract. At South Works in Chicago the attendance was little more than 100.

The attitude of resignation among

most steel workers is not hard to understand. They are without leaders. It is relatively easy to find local union officials who are willing to publicly denounce the contract, but finding leaders who are prepared to do something about it is quite another matter. None of the local resolutions which condemned the contract called for strike action to overturn it.

District 31 of the USWA, which encompasses Chicago-Gary, is a case in point. This is the base of the Sadlowski movement, Ed Sadlowski having been the outgoing district director. The new district director is Jim Balanoff, a strong supporter of the defeated challenger to Abel's handpicked successor, Lloyd McBride. At the Basic Steel Industry

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