

Rightist Reaction Pushes Anti-Homosexual Hysteria

Stop Anita Bryant!

More than a hundred thousand people demonstrated in San Francisco. They were protesting against the reactionary anti-homosexual crusade of Anita Bryant, the fanatic Bible-thumping bigot who has proclaimed herself the nemesis of democratic rights for homosexuals. Bryant's right-wing rampage is obscene and dangerous.

Outraged "gay rights" activists have taken to the streets in response. The San Francisco protest was by far the largest, but just about every major American city has witnessed mobilizations in defiance of the Bryant crusade. In fact, the "gay movement"—the last gasp of New Left lifestyle radicalism—is seemingly the most vociferous liberal/radical mobilization this side of the Vietnam war. Whether this wave of anti-bigotry protest will have any significant effect on the American social climate depends on whether the working class can be mobilized in a fight for democratic rights through a class-struggle program to fight social oppression.

The present wave of homosexual activism was precipitated by Bryant's June 7 "Save Our Children" victory in Dade County, Florida. Appealing to the most disgusting backwardness with scare tactics designed to conjure up images of sinister homosexuals lurking in school playgrounds, Bryant succeeded in repealing an ordinance prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals. The repeal is an outrage against elementary democratic rights, in effect declaring "open season" on homosexuals and encouraging employers, landlords, etc., to put their prejudices into practice.

Bryant has vowed that Dade County is only the beginning of her "divine mission" and that she will now take her vicious anti-homosexual crusade "wherever God sends me." She has already appeared at a Shriners' Flag Day celebration in Chicago, where local cops showed their support for her "cause" by brutally attacking and arresting some of the 3,000 people who had turned out to protest her appearance. Bryant's reactionary rampage must be stopped!

But many "gay liberation" spokesmen seem to consider Anita Bryant more of a joke than a threat; some have gone so far as to proclaim that she has done homosexuals a favor by publicizing their oppression and forcing them to "unite" against it. The Spartacist League (SL) and Red Flag Union (Bolshevik Tendency) (RFU-BT, formerly Lavender and Red Union) recognize that the Bryant campaign—which has rallied forces representing the aggressive hard core of virulent reaction in this country—is a grave threat not only to homosexuals but to all concerned with democratic rights. The drive to create a favorable climate of opinion for overt victimization of homosexuals reflects something far more sinister than narrow-mindedness on the part of individuals.

The oppression of homosexuals, like the oppression of women, has historically served as an index of more general social and political attitudes, for demo-



Paul Hesteros/New York Times

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators turned out across the country June 26 to voice their opposition to discrimination against homosexuals.

cratic rights are indivisible. Those who imagine that hostility toward homosexuals can be eradicated through favorable publicity and "progressive" education under capitalism ignore the ultimately genocidal logic of the reactionary bigotry which in the final analysis is wielded by the ruling class against the proletariat. Thus, along with communists, working-class militants, Jews and other "inferior races," homosexuals were rounded up for Nazi concentration camps, scapegoated for the crisis of German capitalism. The Protestant Church of Austria recently estimated that 220,000 alleged homosexuals perished in Hitler's "death mills." Similarly, during the first days after Pinochet's bloody rightist coup in Chile, troops marching through the streets of Santiago chanted "Death to the faggots!"; random killing of Chilean homosexuals was reported.

To struggle effectively against the persecution of homosexuals, "gay rights" activists must begin by understanding that bourgeois democracy is partial, fragile and reversible. Just as "black is beautiful" does not abolish the horror of white racism, so the affirmation of "gay pride" cannot effectively combat the Bryant campaign. The struggle fundamentally is not about sex but about all-sided democratic rights. The "Save Our Children" mobilization is presently the most visible component of a much broader rightist offensive aimed at rolling back real and token

gains of the last decade of liberalism. Recent targets include legal and safe abortions, especially for poor women; the Equal Rights Amendment; busing to combat school segregation; preferential minority-group college admissions. The "right-to-lifers" screaming for the death penalty grasp the logic of the Bryant crusade far better than do some of its opponents.

Reactionaries of every stripe have found Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" moralism a favorable climate in which to mount their mobilizations against homosexuals, minority groups, women and eventually the working class directly. Yet homosexual activists still look to the Democratic Party to lead the fight against the victimization of homosexuals! The impressive numbers at "gay rights" demonstrations have unfortunately been dominated by sub-reformist "lifestyle" politics, which like all New Left "constituency" politics collapses into mainstream pressure-group horse-trading and tokenism. If San Francisco mayor Moscone will fly the city's flags at half mast to commem-

orate the killing of a homosexual, can "gay liberation" be far behind? Yes indeed it can. The election of liberal Democrat Abzug would do "Gays for Bella" about as much good as black capitalist politicians in their dashikis have done the impoverished ghetto masses.

The homosexual movement has now become, in some areas of the country, a recognized constituency, and is thus sometimes catered to and everywhere abused. That is, a few "gay leaders" can now aspire to become part of the all-inclusive party of everybody's betrayal, the Democratic Party—i.e., to point Jimmy Carter's nuclear-missile submarines toward Russia so that Russian dissidents might be "saved" by an imperialism whose hypocrisy exceeds that of Nazi Germany while it competes in the "kill count" category. Manifestly, homosexual working people (like blacks, women, etc.) can only be left in the lurch, and ultimately grossly betrayed, by these ordinary operations of token cooption. "Welcome, homosexu-

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Letters

Dictatorship of the Proletariat: Leninism vs. De Leonism

June 22, 1977
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Dear Workers Vanguard:

As a DeLeonist and soon-to-be member of the Socialist Labor Party, I found Joseph Seymour's article on "Leninism and Workers Control" (*WV* [No. 162], 17 June) to be of great interest.

In my opinion, Seymour's article is flawed by his failure to distinguish between workers' control of production in two very different contexts: underdeveloped and developed capitalist nations. In the former, direct workers' control of production through mass, democratic workers' organizations (such as soviets) is materially impossible due to the limited development of the productive forces. In such situations, the SL's formula of control by a workers' government (presumably a Party-state) and a consultative role for the mass workers' organizations is, I believe, correct. I should add that the only legitimate functions of such a government would be the suppression of counterrevolution and the most rapid possible development of the economy—gradually surrendering its powers to the workers' own mass economic organizations.

In the context of a developed capitalist nation, this formula is totally inapplicable. In nations where a high level of development of the productive forces prevails, the workers are capable of administering production in a planned, democratic way—quite without a separate "workers' government." Of course, some central authority would be necessary, but it must be an authority which is derived from the workers' own mass economic organizations—their General Executive Board, or whatever it may be called.

Moreover, the workers' mass organizations would be quite capable of militarily suppressing counterrevolution. With the military elimination of counterrevolution, the mass economic organizations would cease functioning as a state—their functions as a state would "die out." Thenceforth, they would be concerned with the "conduct of the processes of production." In the developed capitalist countries, no political group could exercise authority apart from that of the workers' own mass economic organizations without becoming a parasitical formation—totally unnecessary and an impediment to the establishment of a classless, stateless, communist society.

In closing it should be noted that Seymour is led to uphold a misleading appraisal of history in the service of his statist conception of socialism: it is simply not true that, historically, "workers' control has emerged *after*, not before, the government was overthrown." His ambiguous use of the term, "the government," allows Seymour to conceal the fact that the emergence of workers' control has always, and must necessarily, precede the proletarian overthrow of any essentially bourgeois government. (Workers' control is not, however, a necessary precondition for the military defeat of a bourgeois government by a Party acting in the interests of the working class. But unless effective workers' control emerges after the seizure of power by the Party, the Party will have no alternative but to act as a new ruling class.)

In sum, the essence of socialism is social control of the productive forces.

Workers must manage all the industries and services—directly, democratically, and in a planned way—through *their own government*, based on economic constituencies.

Fraternally,
Steve Miles

WV replies: Our basic difference with De Leonism does not concern workers control (as this is generally understood), but rather the nature or, more precisely, existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transition from capitalism to socialism. Steve Miles believes that the overthrow of capitalism in an advanced country leads directly and immediately from the government of persons to the administration of things. As Marxists, we hold that this is not possible. Further, his absolute dichotomy between advanced and backward countries implies the prospect of socialism in one advanced country, like the U.S., amid poverty, starvation and barbarism for most of humanity. We reject such an anti-egalitarian, chauvinist concept.

Steve Miles' counterposition of De Leonism to Leninism is marred by self-contradictions and confusions concerning workers control of production. In the Leninist tradition, workers control is used in two different senses. One is that of dual power at the point of production during a revolutionary crisis. The other is that of an authoritative consultative role by factory committees in the context of centralized planning by a workers government.

What the author of the letter describes as workers control is actually centralized management by the economic organs of the laboring population. Daniel De Leon, so far as we know, never used the term workers control, and certainly did not use that term to describe the organization of the economy following the overthrow of capitalism. In his 1905 *Socialist Reconstruction of Society*, De Leon speaks of Industrial Unionism as the framework for "the governmental administration of the Republic of Labor." There are basic differences between the Leninist concept of a communist vanguard governing on the basis of soviet democracy and the De Leonist Industrial Union government, a syndicalist version of socialism. But these differences are only confused by identifying the latter with workers control.

The basic differences between the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism can be summarized as follows: The dictatorship of the proletariat requires a distinct administrative apparatus. Under socialism, all administrative functions are fulfilled through the rotation of the general population. The dictatorship of the proletariat requires an organized public force whose tasks are broader than simply suppressing counterrevolutionary conspiracies. Under socialism, organized violence will have disappeared from social life. During the transitional epoch, there exist significant divisions and conflicts of interest *within* the laboring population; these express themselves in separate political parties vying for governmental power through soviet democracy. Under socialist abundance and the cultural level associated with it, there is no reason to expect permanent divisions over economic and social policy; differences over such questions will be episodic.

Classes will not disappear overnight. Even after the smashing of the capitalist state apparatus and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, there will still be a working class, an urban petty bourgeoisie, in many countries a peasantry, and

atomized remnants of the exploiting classes. Consequently, class conflict will persist. Economic differentiation will continue to exist, as will uneven and inadequate cultural levels and reactionary ideological attitudes. For these reasons a workers government must have an organized apparatus of coercion. Because we seek to build upon the already existing cultural and economic levels, specialized professionals (statisticians, doctors, administrators) will be utilized to the maximum by the victorious workers government. However, police methods may sometimes be necessary to prevent and reverse bureaucratic abuses arising from this petty-bourgeois administrative stratum. Backward elements among the laboring population may resist the policies of the socialist majority through violence, political strikes and other forms of direct action. (A workers government would seek to deal differently with backward workers who engage in violence than with counterrevolutionary terrorists.)

For a concrete sense as to why a workers government may have to employ force against backward workers, look at the race question in the U.S. Certainly a socialist government would aggressively implement racial integration in housing, schools, etc. In sharp contrast to the liberal bourgeoisie, a workers government would not implement integrationist policies in ways that undermine or threaten the material interests of white working people. Of course, for there to be a proletarian revolution in the U.S. it will be necessary for the key sectors of the working class to have overcome racial divisions in order to wage a united struggle against capitalism. Nonetheless, it is entirely possible that residual pockets of white racists would still violently resist school integration, just as they have done in Boston these past few years. No genuine socialist could deny the need for a workers government to use force to defend black children and implement school integration in the face of violent racist reaction.

The race question in the U.S. is an example of the divisions and conflicts of interests that will exist in the immediate post-capitalist period. Conflicts arising from economic scarcity will be aggravated by reactionary ideological prejudices—racism, national chauvinism, religious fundamentalism (à la Anita Bryant)—ultimately reflecting the heritage of material deprivation and cultural obscurantism. The situation is further complicated by the fact that soviet democracy will not be restricted to the organized working class of the old bourgeois society, but will also embrace much of the petty bourgeoisie of the old society (e.g., low-level government officials, salesmen), as well as former lumpenproletarians newly drawn into the labor process.

The laboring population as it emerges from capitalist society will give rise to serious divisions and conflicts of interest over such questions as the structure of labor payment, the level and distribution of social services (e.g., housing), the rate of investment and the scale of aid to backward countries. A communist vanguard will be needed to oppose *politically*, not bureaucratically, those backward, parochial and short-sighted tendencies within the working class.

It is evident that Steve Miles identifies the Leninist concept of a workers government with the Stalinist "one-party" regimes of the Sino-Soviet degenerated and deformed workers states. Such an identification is wholly false. The Bolsheviks took power in 1917 after having attained a majority in

the soviets (workers councils). Lenin's party neither intended nor desired to eliminate the soviets and govern without the sanction of the working class as a whole. It was the social-democratic Mensheviks and petty-bourgeois populist Social Revolutionaries who rejected soviet constitutionalism and pursued policies which would have led to the victory of bourgeois counterrevolution. The atrophying of the soviets and elevation of the Bolshevik party to a monopoly of political organization was an unfortunate result of the civil war. Lenin did not regard the governmental situation in Russia as it emerged from the civil war in 1921 as a programmatic norm; we look forward to the fullest soviet democracy including all tendencies recognized by the laboring masses.

Furthermore, the Communist Parties of the Soviet bloc are not parties—voluntary associations based on a shared program—at all. They are organs of an uncontrolled state bureaucracy.

The basic statement of Trotskyism, the 1938 *Transitional Program*, asserts that the struggle against the Stalinist bureaucracy is the struggle for soviet democracy:

"It is necessary to return to the soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and kulaks were not permitted to enter the soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the soviets. In the soviets there is room only for the representatives of the workers, rank-and-file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men."

"Democratization of the soviets is impossible without legalization of soviet parties. The workers and peasants themselves by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognize as soviet parties." [emphasis in original]

The De Leonists' absolute dichotomy between advanced and backward countries implies the prospect for socialism in one country, like the U.S. Closing the gap between the most developed and the poorest countries is the responsibility of the international proletariat *as a whole*.

International socialist planning will strive to secure a *higher* rate of economic growth for backward than for advanced workers states. Backward elements in the advanced countries, imbued with national chauvinist attitudes, will undoubtedly want to limit the international redistribution of wealth to a minimum. They would also oppose increased immigration from poor nations. A communist vanguard will have to fight for a genuinely internationalist economic program. It is the internationalist component of socialism which, above all, requires a communist vanguard governing a workers state during the transitional epoch.

Workers Vanguard

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Uproar in London over Police Attack on Pickets

LONDON—A struggle for union recognition at a small film processing plant in northern London, now in its eleventh month, has suddenly become front-page news. The recent introduction of mass picketing at the struck plant and the violent police response have turned the dispute into a focal point of sharpening class polarisation in Britain. The Tories, siding with the employers, bewail the power of the unions and the closed shop. The Labour Party leaders, reluctantly forced to give verbal support to the strikers, defend the right of union recognition in the abstract while seeking to gain credibility for the state as a "neutral mediator." At the same time, as the government they bear responsibility for the actions of the police, who daily rough up picketers in the course of enforcing capitalist "law and order."

The dispute began last August when a worker at Grunwick Film Processing was sacked for "talking back" to a boss. Fifty workers walked out soon after, to be joined a week later by another 100. Mrs. Jayaben Desai, one of the first to walk out and now one of the most prominent members of the strike committee, suggested that they join a union. The strikers contacted Jack Dromey, a Tribune who is secretary of the Brent Trades Council. Dromey put them in touch with the Trades Union Congress (TUC). The TUC, in turn, referred the striking workers to the right-wing Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staff (APEX).

On 31 August 1976 APEX declared the strike official. By this time 137 workers, primarily Asian, were involved (91 full-time workers and 48 students). Two days later George Ward, managing director of Grunwick, told them they were fired. The workers took the dispute to an industrial tribunal, claiming unfair dismissal, but lost the case. The tribunal upheld Ward's contention that the workers were sacked for "breach of contract," not for joining a union.

After six weeks of fruitless picketing, APEX asked the government's Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) to recognize its right to represent the Grunwick workers. Set up under the 1975 Employment Protection Act, ACAS attempted to poll the Grunwick workers to see if they wanted a union to represent them. Ward, on the advice of the ultra right-wing National Association For Freedom (NAFF), has consistently refused to cooperate with ACAS and denied it access to his remaining 216 employees. On 9 March, ACAS, only able to ballot the striking workers (91 out of 93 for union representation), issued a report concluding that Grunwick should recognize APEX. Grunwick responded by taking the matter to the High Court, claiming that the ballot was carried out improperly since not all the workers had been polled (i.e., the 216 or so scabs).

Back in November, the strike committee had requested blacking [hot cargoing] of supplies to Grunwick. The Cricklewood Post Office workers complied by refusing to deliver mail to the plant. Using the NAFF solicitors, Ward applied to the High Court to order the resumption of deliveries, and the Postal Workers union backed down. Since June 17, however, the Cricklewood workers have continued the blacking

unofficially, and despite threats of suspension, 64 bags of Grunwick's mail have piled up.

Frustrated by the ineffectiveness of the strike in mid-May, Dromey and the strike committee, with the cooperation of the Brent Trades Council and APEX, issued a call for mass pickets. (In response to this call, Ward began busing in scab workers.) At this point, Dromey envisioned about 200 pickets at each of the four gates. The first day of the picketing was 13 June. The police reacted with violent assaults, arresting over 70 people that day. Arrests now total over 250.

The picket lines, fluctuating from 200 to 2,000 daily, have attracted trade-union militants, the entire left-of-Labour spectrum, Labour MP's and prominent union bureaucrats. Arthur Scargill, leader of the Yorkshire miners, and Mrs. Audrey Wise, MP, a Labour "left" even managed to get themselves arrested. Meanwhile, two senior Tory MP's began to ride with the scabs in the buses, and the National Association For Freedom placed advertisements throughout the bourgeois press asking for monetary support for Ward.

The police were reinforced with the hated Special Branch and the Special Patrol Group (specialising in "crowd control"). At times there were almost as many cops as pickets. They unleashed daily attacks, and injured several pickets. As a whole, the bourgeois press has played down police brutality while pillorying the workers for defending themselves. In particular, it played up an incident when a policeman hit his head on a flying bottle. The Tories have commended the police for their "restraint" as has Labour Party Home Secretary Merlyn Rees.

The response of the Labour Party "moderates" has been continued support of APEX, but condemnation of the violence, which they attribute to the "far left" groups. The secretary of state for employment, Albert Booth, "suggested" in Commons debate: "I have every reason to believe that the general secretary of Apex will seek to cooperate fully with the police in every way he can to avoid any further violence or disturbances outside the plant" (*Times* [London], 1 July).

Booth has set up a Court of Inquiry, headed by Sir Leslie Scarman, the High Court judge who oversaw the official whitewash of the 1974 police murder of a young leftist during an anti-fascist demonstration in London's Red Lion Square. It also includes one employers' "representative" and one union official, to provide a veneer of neutrality. The Court itself has no legal power: Ward repeatedly states that he will not be bound by it if the decision is against him, and he has been backed by the NAFF in this.

This hard-fought and protracted strike is an important test of strength for the trade-union movement. It is also an opportunity for mobilising the union ranks around a popular, militant struggle of the sort which the anti-working-class "Social Contract" is intended to avoid. Because it involves a marginal group of workers, a number of union leaders have been coming to the Grunwick's picket lines, something they



Police open way for scabs at struck Grunwick factory in North London.

Tribune

would never have done during strikes by Leyland car workers earlier this year. There the Social Contract was directly threatened. But even in this small strike, national publicity and mass picketing could let it get "out of hand," and this explains the reluctance of Labour and TUC tops to give the strike more than grudging support. Instead they are seeking to use the conflict at Grunwick's to bolster the authority of their discredited mediation machinery, hoping to defuse the class struggle. In an article in the 3 July *Observer*, TUC general secretary Len Murray wrote:

"ACAS is industry's peacemaker.... "All those in all the parties and all the organisations who gave their blessing to its formation and functions ought now to be outspoken and persuasive in supporting its efforts to bring peace to Grunwick's factories. "That does not mean taking sides in the dispute (although I see the best of reasons for taking the side of APEX); it means lining up on the side of conciliation, not confrontation."

If James Callaghan's government at Westminster, Labour bigwigs at Transport House and the TUC brass view the Grunwick's strike as a troublesome nuisance which must be channelled into a more manageable framework, the left groups who join the lines daily see it as the focus of the class struggle in Britain. The geriatric fake-Trotskyists of the *Militant* group ran a lead article in their 24 June issue headlined: "Grunwick—The Acid Test." Similarly, the reformist-syndicalist Socialist Workers Party (formerly International Socialists) maintains that, "The battle of Grunwick is a battle for trade union organisation itself" (*Socialist Worker*, 25 June).

This assumes that this "self-made" small entrepreneur stands in the forefront of a generalised ruling-class offensive against the whole union movement. But, in fact, even the conservative *Economist* (25 June) refers to Ward as a "maverick," and offers free advice on salvaging the mediation machinery. The rights of immigrant workers in marginal industries are certainly at stake in the Grunwick struggle, and must be defended at all costs. But a small strike at a single shop must not be allowed to become a means of diverting attention from the main issue facing the union movement in Britain today: the Social Contract.

This "voluntary" ceiling on wage increases has subjected the working class to a steady hemorrhaging in its living standards in the three years since Labour came to power. Now the bulk of the union ranks are fed up as they face unrelenting inflation despite their "restraint." Already the engineers (AUEW—metal workers) have turned down Stage Three of the government's incomes policy, and annual conferences are scheduled soon for the miners (NUM) and transport workers (T&GWU) where opposition is massive. Revolutionaries must fight to turn this rejection of the labour fakers' class-collaborationist scheme into a wave of industrial action to break through the Social Contract. Labour "lefts" like Wise and "militant" union leaders like Scargill must not be allowed to get off

the hook by a few gestures at Grunwick.

The strike has already elicited significant labour solidarity. Print workers at the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Observer* carried out job actions to force their newspapers to run pro-union replies to particularly noxious attacks on the embattled Grunwick workers. Civil Service Union members, who drive the police coaches, were reportedly refusing to continue ferrying these uniformed thugs to the plant. Protests by members of the college teachers union led to the police Special Patrol Group being thrown out of facilities it was using at Willeston Technical College. Camden Direct Workers Department staged a one-day strike on 17 June in support of the Grunwick workers.

Manifestly, a hundred workers cannot win this strike while production is carried on by scabs. Blacking must be continued, and particularly in the case of the post office, all deliveries to and from the plant must be shut off. Mass picketing must bring in thousands to close the entrances—then the police will not be able to escort busloads of scabs through the lines. A plant occupation is also clearly called for. An area-wide sympathy strike could bring tremendous pressure on the recalcitrant employer, and turning the scheduled demonstration of 11 July into a one-day national solidarity work stoppage would serve notice that Britain's workers are determined to win this struggle.

The demands of such a work stoppage and mass demonstration should not be limited to the Grunwick strike, however. They must become a stepping stone to a militant battle for massive wage increases, for a sliding scale of wages and hours to put an end to depression-level unemployment and salvage the working class from economic ruin. Not by tailing Labour "lefts" and "militant" union bureaucrats can such a struggle be won, but only through building a Trotskyist vanguard party that can unleash the power of the British working class, by breaking the grip of Labourite reformism. Victory to the Grunwick's strike! Smash the Social Contract! ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

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Varga Commission Finishes Work

OCI Slanders, But Varga Still Dubious Figure

The following article is slightly adapted from the introduction to a bulletin of documents concerning the Commission of Inquiry into the "Varga affair," to be published shortly by the *Ligue Trotskyste de France*, sympathizing section of the international Spartacist tendency. The French-language bulletin will contain documentation of the iSt's battle for an impartial commission of inquiry as well as selections from testimony to the Commission and documents made available to it. The bulletin can be ordered from Pascal Alessandri, B.P. 336, 75011 Paris, France, or from Spartacist Publishing, Box 1377, GPO, New York, NY 10001.

The documents reproduced in this bulletin testify to the struggle by the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) to construct, and then to carry through to a conclusion, the work of a commission of inquiry to investigate the "Varga affair." They document efforts by the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) and the Vargaite group (LIRQI, which now styles itself the "Fourth International") first to block even the existence of an impartial commission in the tradition of the Dewey commission of inquiry into the Moscow Trials, and then to create obstacles to the Commission's work. And they reveal the equivocations of the other organizations—the *Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire* (LCR), *Lutte Ouvrière* (LO) and the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—which participated in the Commission.

Origins of the Commission

Although increasingly sharp political differences separated the OCI and Varga since at least September 1972, it was not until the end of June 1973, after the "discovery" of Varga's archives around May 1973, that the OCI publicly accused Varga—falsely, as the Commission established—of being an agent of the Stalinist secret police (*Informations Ouvrières*, 27 June 1973) and, later, of the CIA as well. It subsequently took more than six months for the OCI to state that working-class organizations could examine these archives, and it was not until March 1974 that a pamphlet announced in the first *IO* article finally appeared.

The "Varga affair" went hand in hand with a very rapid right turn of the OCI, expressed above all by its capitulation before the popular front in the 1973 and 1974 elections, as well as its rapprochement, beginning in early 1973, with the reformist SWP. In a centrist organization such as the OCI, the formation of a left tendency opposing the leadership's right turn might have been expected. And in fact wobbles showed up in *IO* which looked like the stirrings of left oppositionists in the OCI. But the "Varga affair" cut short any potential crystallization of a serious left tendency in the OCI. Just as the Vargaite cynically sought to take up positions to the left of the OCI, so too the OCI took advantage of its accusations against Varga to seal off anything resembling an opposition. It was obvious that at the outset the OCI was counting on the disinterest of the ostensibly Trotskyist



Michel Varga

organizations in France and elsewhere to mask its right turn.

But the OCI did not reckon with the iSt. After seven months of repeated requests, the OCI released a part (20 percent, by its own account) of the "Varga archives" in August 1974. Seven months to xerox 200 pages!

Meanwhile, Varga was pursuing his mendicant methods. In the late 1950's he had sought funds from the U.S. State Department. Now his organization was running after the iSt, not in order to engage in political discussion but simply cynically in the naive hope of getting financing for its own "international conference."

In February 1975 the Spartacist tendency took the step of publishing a long article entitled "A Workers Commission Must Try Varga." The article's main positions on Varga and the OCI's baseless accusations were eventually confirmed by the deliberations of the Commission of Inquiry; our stand might have been drawn directly from the Commission's conclusions. We wrote:

"Unfortunately, the irresponsible criminal conduct of the OCI, which refused to present its case against Varga honestly before the workers movement, is surpassed only by the astonishingly light-minded response of the Varga group to accusations which, if they are founded on fact, would define this tendency as a sinister clique."

—Spartacist [édition française], February 1975

While denouncing the OCI's Stalinist methods as "foreign to the methodology and morality of Bolshevism," we established that in his letters Varga "showed himself to be anti-Semitic, racist and utterly cynical... a basically dishonest individual [acting] in bad faith."

From February until November 1975 the iSt, represented by its French sympathizing section, the *Ligue Trotskyste de France* (LTF), led the battle for an impartial commission, without the participation of the accused LIRQI. The record of this fight is detailed in our "Declaration to the Commission of Inquiry on the Varga Affair" of 3 November 1975. During this entire period the SWP held itself aloof, no

doubt hoping the Commission would never see the light of day. Since at least the end of 1974 the SWP had been maneuvering with the OCI to facilitate the latter's entry into the USec, and it was obvious that a condemnation of the OCI's lies by an impartial and authoritative commission of inquiry would damage these maneuvers.

As for the LCR and LO, they never objected in principle to participating in a commission which included the LIRQI. LO went so far as to say that it was prepared to accept the OCI into a commission alongside the LIRQI! The iSt "Declaration" of 3 November was drawn up after a meeting on 30 October 1975 during which the LCR and LO had agreed to participate in a commission on the bases proposed by the LIRQI—i.e., condemning in advance the OCI's accusations. At the meeting where our declaration was read, however, the LCR and LO pulled back from the LIRQI "commission"—not for reasons of principle, but solely for reasons of "efficiency" and "credibility."

Thus the Vargaite were in a position to accuse the LCR and LO of capitulating to the iSt. This accusation was not totally unfounded, as the LCR's and LO's hesitations are to be explained above all by their factionally motivated desire to condemn the OCI. Any means would have sufficed, including the LIRQI's "commission." If these organizations surrendered to the principled arguments of the representative of the LTF—a tiny organization compared to the LCR and LO—it is no doubt because they believed that a condemnation of the OCI by a commission which did not include the LIRQI would have greater authority. The recognized authority of the iSt regarding the "Varga affair" also stemmed from the fact that we were the only organization to check the OCI's translations of Varga's materials.

When its maneuver blew up in its face, the LIRQI set up its own "commission of inquiry," of which it was in fact the only component. Not content with accusing the LCR and LO of capitulat-

ing to the iSt, an enraged LIRQI accused the iSt of being agents of the OCI because of our principled refusal to participate in the captive LIRQI commissions. As we said in our "Declaration" (*WV* No. 85, 14 Nov. 1975):

"We cannot take part in a cynical operation totally devoid of the most minimal democratic principles, whose only aim appears to be to whitewash Varga in the hope of factional advantage against the OCI. We are equally against whitewashes and frame-ups."

The Commission Meets

On LO's initiative, a real commission of inquiry was formed in March 1976. From April until December 1976, the Commission gathered testimony, documents, whatever was relevant to the "Varga affair."

At the beginning, the OCI took a very aggressive attitude toward the Commission. It repeatedly stated that the Commission should confine itself to "authenticating" the documents from Varga's archives, and congratulated itself that the members of the Commission "admitted" the documents' authenticity. The OCI suggested over and over in *IO* (in June 1976 and again in October) that the iSt shared its accusations against Varga. To make this amalgam, the OCI quoted our criticisms of Varga (passing over in silence our criticisms of the OCI) in a way calculated to suggest that we shared its characterization of Varga. It was only after the iSt addressed a letter of protest to *IO* that the OCI ceased to put forth this kind of amalgam.

In throwing up this smokescreen, the OCI hoped to obscure the fact that the real question was whether or not the documents confirmed the OCI's accusations. It is now established that they do not confirm the charges, which are therefore revealed as slanders. All the more so since the OCI representatives systematically refused to present other elements which might have aided in "proving" the accusations; it must be concluded that "other" proofs do not exist.

The OCI's attitude toward the Commission came out in its refusal (despite its protestations to the contrary) to make the entire archives available to the Commission or to groups which had requested them. Testifying before the Commission on 22 April 1976, Claude Chisserey of the OCI leadership claimed that the 80 percent of the archives which the OCI kept to itself consisted of bulletins and documents internal to the OCI and thus he "saw no point" in turning them over to the Commission—which, said Chisserey, alluding disingenuously to the exchange of internal bulletins between the OCI and SWP, the Commission was certainly familiar with already. But the SWP representative later stated that the SWP had never received any such bulletins.

Later, the OCI refused to allow Pierre Broué and Jean-Jacques Marie (who had collaborated with Varga on the journal of his Institute) or Roger Monnier (with whom Varga had left his archives) to testify before the Commission.

Toward the end of the Commission's deliberations, the OCI found itself

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Conclusions of the Committee of Inquiry into the Varga Affair

Michel Varga (the political pseudonym used by Balasz Nagy) is today the main leader of the Ligue Internationale de Reconstruction de la Quatrième Internationale (International League Reconstructing the Fourth International—LIRQI), which now simply proclaims itself the "Fourth International." After the 1956 uprising in Hungary he emigrated to West Europe and, in the late 1950's, became a founder of the "Imre Nagy Institute of Political Science" and of its journal, *Études*. The purpose of this institute, as Varga presented it in 1958, was to analyze problems of socialism, particularly the problems of Hungary from 1948 to 1956. For these projects Varga entered

into contact with various groups and individuals in the workers movement.

In 1961 Michel Varga broke with the Institute and the journal. In 1962 he joined the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI). Toward the end of 1972 a split occurred between a group led by Varga and the OCI. The group founded by Varga first took the name OCI-LIRQI Faction.

In 1973 the OCI published material (translated from Hungarian) excerpted from Varga's archives which it had obtained. This material dealt with the period of 1957-1960, and the excerpts published by the OCI are mostly parts of Varga's correspondence. On the basis of these excerpts, the OCI accused Varga

of being an agent of the CIA and the KGB.

On 27 March 1976 the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, Lutte Ouvrière, Socialist Workers Party USA, the international Spartacist tendency and the Workers Socialist League (Great Britain) decided to form a Commission of Inquiry on the basis of the following declaration:

"Some time ago, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) put forth certain accusations, asserting that Balasz Nagy, known as Michel Varga, was an 'agent paid by the CIA' and 'a GPU provocateur.' The leaders of the LIRQI, the organization of which Michel Varga is a member, have called for a 'workers commission of inquiry' to take a position on 'the campaign of unfounded accusations launched by the OCI leadership' as well as on 'the extension of these accusations to the International League [LIRQI] as such, going as far as repeated physical attacks upon militants of the OCI-LIRQI faction [the French LIRQI group], in particular during the joint demonstrations against Francoism and the leafletting outside the meeting to free Soviet mathematician Leonid Plyushch.'"

"We consider that such accusations against a militant or an organization are sufficiently serious that it is incumbent upon the entire revolutionary movement to determine whether or not they are justified. That is why we have decided to constitute ourselves as a Commission of Inquiry for the purpose of inviting the OCI leadership to present all evidence it claims to possess, and in order to request all those who could furnish evidence concerning this matter to come and testify."

"The Commission's goal is a scrupulous verification of the facts and documents, which it will make public. In order for this verification to take place with the greatest possible authority, it invites all organizations claiming adherence to the revolutionary workers movement to participate actively in its deliberations."

—signed by representatives of:

Lutte Ouvrière
Ligue Communiste
Révolutionnaire
Socialist Workers Party—
international Spartacist tendency
Workers Socialist League

After a year of proceedings, the Commission of Inquiry now feels that it has come to its end. It has recorded testimony and sought to verify it to the degree possible.

For practical reasons, the representative of the Workers Socialist League was unable to participate regularly in the Commission's work. Five persons participated regularly: André Frys (LO), André Roussel (LO), Gus Horowitz (SWP), Georges Marion (LCR) and Jean Lesueur (iSt). This report is made by the following three participants in the Commission of Inquiry: Gus Horowitz (SWP), Jean Lesueur (iSt), Georges Marion (LCR).

I Preliminary Conclusions

The members of the Commission of Inquiry, at the end of their proceedings, wish to formulate the following preliminary observations dealing with the ongoing development of the inquiry itself.

1) On two occasions members of the OCI—first Claude Chisserey and Gérard Bloch, then Pierre Lambert—agreed to answer the Commission's questions. But numerous letters and requests by the Commission of Inquiry for testimony from other members of the OCI remain unanswered by the OCI. Pierre Lambert, for one, stated concerning this matter: "We will not allow the Commission of Inquiry to investigate inside the OCI. The goal of your Commission is to state whether the documents produced by the OCI are authentic or not." Concerning the use of violence by members of the OCI against the LIRQI, subsequently the LOR

[Revolutionary Workers League] (name adopted by the French section of the LIRQI), the OCI representatives denied this, or refused to reply.

2) It was at the request of the LIRQI that the organizations making up the Commission of Inquiry decided to form it. But the LIRQI demanded that the Commission of Inquiry be formed on the basis of an a priori recognition that the OCI's accusations were slanders. Seeing that the organizations in question did not share its point of view, the LIRQI then formed its own commission of inquiry, the "Commission of Inquiry against the Slanders about Michel Varga," of which it is in fact the only member. Subsequently, on one occasion, LIRQI members agreed to testify before the Commission on the question of the [OCI's] use of violence. Rejecting the Commission in advance as a "maneuver," Michel Varga explicitly refused any collaboration with the Commission.

II Basic Conclusions

Despite the attitude of the OCI and the LOR toward the Commission of Inquiry, the undersigned members of it have arrived at the following conclusions, which they share in common:

1) Was Varga a KGB agent?

The OCI has not furnished any evidence proving that Michel Varga had relations with the KGB or the Soviet government. According to the words of the OCI leaders themselves, this accusation is based solely on "political reasoning."

According to the Commission, this accusation is therefore unproved.

2) Was Varga a CIA agent?

In order to assert this, the OCI bases itself mainly on the "Varga archives" relating to the period 1957-1960.

These archives show that during this period, after leaving Hungary and before joining the OCI, Michel Varga sought financial support from many sources, including sources close to the American government, the [U.S.] State Department or the Free Europe Committee, in order to finance the Imre Nagy Institute. The archives show that he actively sought this money, knowing full well what he was doing and attempting to hide the source of the money.

But these archives do not prove that at this time Varga was a CIA agent. They do not prove that Varga was a CIA agent after he joined the ranks of the OCI in 1962, nor that he had contact with the CIA during this period.

According to the Commission, the accusation that he belonged to the CIA is therefore unproved.

3) Did the OCI know of Varga's past before accepting him in its ranks?

There are no documents which make it possible to answer this question.

• In the LIRQI's publications, Michel Varga has asserted that the OCI was fully informed about his past before he joined its ranks. But Michel Varga refused to give his testimony to the Commission.

• As for the OCI, it has reassured that it did not know of Varga's past as it appears in light of the archives. Pierre Lambert repeated this in his testimony before the Commission of Inquiry.

• The Commission also heard the testimony of Albi and Kaldy, two Hungarian militants presently members of the LCR and LO respectively, who worked with Varga after 1962 in his Hungarian Trotskyist organization, the LRSB [Revolutionary League of Hungarian Socialists]. According to their

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Draft Conclusions on the Varga Affair Submitted by the iSt

The Commission of Inquiry was formed by Lutte Ouvrière, the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire, the Socialist Workers Party and the international Spartacist tendency, with the sole aim of arriving at conclusions about the "Varga affair." Although composed of organizations otherwise having serious political differences among themselves, the Commission is united in its determination to safeguard the workers movement against the alien practices of violence and slander and to denounce such practices whenever they may occur, thereby rejecting any attempt to turn it into the tool of any political alliance or regroupment.

On the basis of testimony and documents presented to it, the Commission of Inquiry has arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The Commission notes that, although representatives of the OCI twice appeared before it, the OCI in fact refused to collaborate with the Commission of Inquiry, above all by not turning over to it the entire documentation at its disposal; and by refusing to allow testimony from its members who, based on their own experience, could have answered the Commission's questions—on the pretext that the Commission should limit itself to stating whether or not the documents presented by the OCI were authentic or not.

2. The Commission also denounces the attitude of the LIRQI and its organizations toward the Commission. With the failure of the LIRQI's attempts to prevent the creation of an independent Commission of Inquiry in the best traditions of the workers movement—in particular that represented by the Dewey Commission—the LIRQI set up a so-called "impartial" commission composed overwhelmingly of its own organizations! The LIRQI's slanders of the Commission, which it terms "Lambertist agents," merely show its impotent fury following the refusal by the organizations which formed the Commission to cover for its maneuvers.

3. The OCI did not present any sufficient proof to demonstrate the correctness of its accusations against Balasz Nagy, known as Michel Varga; namely that Michel Varga was supposedly a paid agent of the CIA and KGB. Moreover, the OCI dishonestly manipulated the quotations it extracted from Varga's letters. The testimony, documents and information gathered by the Commission lead to the conclusion that these accusations can only be consid-

ered false, and therefore lying and slanderous.

4. It goes without saying that the Commission of Inquiry condemns the OCI's procedures, which are of a Stalinist nature. The OCI may have been familiar with the "Varga archives." It is quite probable that it at least knew of their existence. The OCI therefore had a special responsibility to try to examine these archives, given the central importance of a complete and unambiguous break with imperialism on the part of those who claim to have broken with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Thus the OCI chose to launch a slanderous campaign, whose sole aim was to intimidate and discredit Varga, only after his political differences with the OCI appeared.

5. The Commission condemns the scandalous lightmindedness of Michel Varga, who refused to appear before it or to make any deposition. He has thereby refused to clarify his present position vis-à-vis his past activities. Consequently, the Commission can only note the fact that between 1957 and 1960-61 Varga consciously solicited funds from sources functioning as agents of American imperialism, and even from the U.S. State Department. And although Varga himself publicly admitted having undertaken consciously anti-communist activities in order to "combat Marxism," he has never explained—nor has he explicitly renounced—certain formulations to be found in his letters at that time, which enable us to characterize his attitudes as anti-Semitic and racist. Varga therefore appears as a highly dubious figure.

6. According to depositions taken by the Commission of Inquiry, the OCI has for a long time practiced violence against competing organizations in the workers movement. The OCI simply used its unfounded accusations against Varga as a pretext—following the emergence of political differences—to physically attack members of organizations which included Varga. The Commission vigorously condemns the OCI for its slanders and its violence of a purely Stalinist sort, alien to the best practices of the workers movement.

In addition, the fact that the LIRQI invoked bourgeois justice against members of the OCI demonstrates that despite its protestations, it does not fundamentally differ from the OCI on the question of workers democracy.

[Paris, December 1976]

Heroic Soviet Spies

PART 1 OF 2

On 21 June 1941 more than 150 divisions of Hitler's Wehrmacht invaded the USSR in what was intended as the classic *Blitzkrieg* of all time, "Operation Barbarossa." Launching a surprise attack along a front extending from the Baltic to the Black Sea, German army Panzers quickly drove hundreds of kilometers deep into Soviet territory. The Russian border troops, completely unprepared, fell back in a total rout. Within five days the White Russian capital of Minsk was taken and in the north Finnish troops stood at the gates of Leningrad. "The greater part of the Russian air force was wiped out in

A review of: *The Great Game*, by Leopold Trepper; *The Red Orchestra*, by Gilles Perrault; *Our Own People*, by Elisabeth Poretsky; *Codename Dora: Memoirs of a Russian Spy*, by Sandor Rado.

the first few days; the Russians lost thousands of tanks; hundreds of thousands, perhaps as many as a million Russian soldiers were taken prisoner in a series of spectacular encirclements during the first fortnight" (Alexander Werth, *Russia at War, 1941-1944*).

Just a few hours before the Nazi attack began, the Soviet army air force attaché to the Pétain government in Vichy, France—then in Moscow for briefings—was called into the office of Marshal Golikov, director of the Fourth Department (military intelligence) of the Red Army. A message was to be taken to a key Soviet intelligence officer operating from Paris. "You can tell Otto," Golikov had told the attaché, "that I have passed on the information on the imminence of the German attack to the big boss [Stalin]. The big boss is amazed that a man like Otto, an old militant and an intelligence man, has allowed himself to be intoxicated by English propaganda. You can tell him again that the big boss is completely convinced that the war with Germany will not start before 1944!"

"Otto" was the code name of Leopold Trepper, the head of the Soviet spy network operating in Nazi-occupied western Europe which was to become famous as the "Red Orchestra," the name assigned to it by German army counterintelligence. With sources at the highest level of the Wehrmacht command in Berlin, the "Red Orchestra" had for months been supplying Moscow with detailed information about the impending attack, including the proposed plan of battle. Nor was it alone. Another Soviet spy, Richard Sorge in Tokyo, had obtained the exact date of the invasion and the precise number of divisions involved. But these reports were routinely stamped "double agent" or "British source." Stalin placed his trust instead in the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact which had been signed with Nazi Germany in 1939. The entire Soviet people paid dearly, at a cost of millions of lives, for this criminal negligence of the defense of the USSR. This was the price for the Kremlin's reliance on deals with the imperialists instead of mobilizing the world proletariat to overthrow its exploiters.

"Soviet Totalitarianism"?

In recent years there have appeared in the West a number of books dealing with the exploits of leading Soviet spies during the World War II period. The latest, and best, in this field is the memoirs of Leopold Trepper, *The Great*

Game. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), concerning the origins and activities of the Red Orchestra, the subsequent *Funkspiel* ("radio game") that outsmarted his Nazi captors, and Trepper's years in Stalinist prisons after the war. Hoping to tap the huge markets for Second World War literature and escapist spy novels of the Ian Fleming genre, advertising for *The Great Game* describes it as packed with "all the unhearable suspense of the very best espionage thriller." But this and related hooks are more than mere thrillers: they starkly confirm Trotsky's contention that the Kremlin was "the central nest of delectation" and "provide revealing insights into the tragedy of a generation of communists caught in Stalin's counterrevolutionary web."

Although they lacked the political fortitude to join the Trotskyist Left Opposition—except for Ignace Reiss (Poretsky), who was assassinated six weeks after his 1937 declaration for the Fourth International—many of the Soviet intelligence agents of the period were not at all the sadistic torturers and assassins generally (and correctly) associated with the Stalinist secret police. Both Trepper and Sorge, along with many others of lesser fame in the Soviet military/intelligence apparatus, anguished over Stalin's treacherous policies and his murderous liquidation of the remnants of Lenin's Bolshevik party. But they remained paralyzed with fear.

The very existence of this layer—what Trotsky called the "Reiss faction" of the bureaucracy—in the heart of the Soviet state apparatus flies in the face of bourgeois theories of "Communist

totalitarianism" in the USSR. One of the standard distortions of Soviet history is the claim that Stalin's crimes were the natural outgrowth of the Red Army, secret police and intelligence apparatus set up under Lenin and Trotsky. Thus a recent academic study asserts:

"It was under Lenin's guidance and direction that the salient features of the secret police... were crystallized. After Lenin's death, the secret police was gradually transformed into an instrument of Stalin's personal dictatorship. But it was Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, not Stalin, who entrenched the power of the secret police and created the institutional foundations for rule by terror."

Leonard Gerson, *The Secret Police in Lenin's Russia* (1977)

Or take the reactionary ideologue Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. In a speech to the American AFL-CIO he favorably compared tsarist Russia and the Spanish Inquisition (!) to the Bolsheviks' revolutionary justice, concluding: "there never was any such thing as Stalinism. ... in reality Lenin had managed to give shape to all the main features before Stalin came to power. ... He is the one who created the Cheka, the secret police, and the concentration camps" (*Warning to the West*, 1976). But contrary to Solzhenitsyn's slanderous attempt to blame Stalin's Gulag on Bolshevism, the military and security organs of the Soviet state originally attracted some of the most scrupulous and self-sacrificing revolutionaries.

The successors to the VChK (acronym for the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, popularly referred to as the Cheka)—the GPU (State Political Administration) and later NKVD—indeed became from the mid-1920's on an arm of Stalinist terror. But many of the more honorable elements sought refuge in the Comintern apparatus and the Red Army's Fourth Department. There they attempted to escape politics by burying themselves in technical work, assuaging their consciences with the thought that at least they were aiding the defense of the USSR from its imperialist enemies.

It was from this layer that Trepper, Reiss and Sorge—three of the most celebrated and effective Soviet intelligence officers of the period—were drawn. Trotsky wrote of Reiss and those like him, "Men keep hoping for a miracle which will on the morrow switch the policy of the ruling clique back to the old rails—and in this hope they keep toiling on." But in the end, because they failed to break with the Stalinist bureaucracy, they were pulverized not only physically but also morally, as Trepper put it, "between the hammer of Hitler and the anvil of Stalin."

Who Were the Soviet Spies?

For the bourgeois mind, which sees all spies as devils and hon vivants, driven by purely personal concerns such as money and adventure, the Soviet intelligence network was a closed book. They could marvel at it—as did Hitler, who declared in 1942 that "The Bolsheviks are our superiors in only one field, espionage"—but they could not understand or imitate it. While all the Soviet networks, which provided the highest quality intelligence during World War II, relied on traditional sources—disgruntled ruling-class individuals with access to vital secrets—at their core stood long-time revolutionary militants who had been won to the communist cause in the days of Lenin and Trotsky.

These militants came from remarkably similar backgrounds. Typically they were members of Communist parties in countries where revolutionary struggles had been smashed and future



Gestapo Archives

Nazi file photograph of Leopold Trepper.

possibilities seemed remote. Such situations produced cadres who had acquired certain military-technical skills, had been battle-tested and hardened through clandestinity and lacked current opportunities in their native countries. Thus there were, for instance, a number of German participants in the abortive October 1923 uprising who subsequently carried out military missions for the Comintern. Among the authors of the classic 1928 handbook on *Armed Insurrection* (published under the pseudonym of A. Neuberger, but actually jointly produced by Red Army and Comintern specialists) were Erich Wollenberg and Hans Kippenberger. And the Comintern military/intelligence emissaries to China in the late 1920's included Wilhelm Zaisser (who later gained fame as "General Gomez," commander of the Interna-



Pathfinder Press

Ignace Reiss



McGraw-Hill

General Jan Berzin, victim of the purge.



International

Red Army commander-in-chief Marshal Tukhachevsky, assassinated by Stalin.

WORKERS VANGUARD

tional Brigades in the Spanish civil war) and the notorious adventurer Hans Neumann.

A similar case was that of Richard Sorge, who joined the German Communist Party in 1919 and spent the next several turbulent years in clandestine work among the mine workers of the Ruhr, going to Moscow after the collapse of the 1923 insurrection. Another Soviet intelligence officer, who later defected to the West, expressed a common, viewpoint among these militants:

"When we saw the collapse of the Comintern's efforts, we said: 'Let's save what we can of the German revolution.' We took the best men developed by our Party Intelligence and the *Zersetzungsdiener* [sabotage squad] and incorporated them into the Soviet Military Intelligence. Out of the ruins of the Communist revolution we built in Germany for Soviet Russia a brilliant intelligence service, the envy of every other nation."

Walter Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service*

While there were plenty of Germans in the Soviet intelligence networks, the core of the spy apparatus was made up of homeless East Europeans—Latvians, Hungarians and especially Polish Jews. Many of the latter had emigrated to Palestine in the early 1920's, joined the Communist Party and later arrived by one means or another in West Europe. Trepper, for example, was born in Polish Galicia, joined the left-Zionist Hashomer Hatzair youth group after World War I, took part in a workers' uprising in Krakau in 1923, was black-listed by the Pilsudski dictatorship and decided to flee to Palestine. There he joined the Palestine Communist Party and initiated the Ichud ("Unity") movement of Jewish and Arab workers. Leading a clandestine existence for several years, after repeated arrests he was finally deported to France.

In Paris he at first lived with a childhood friend, Alter Strom, who had left Palestine a year earlier than he. Three years later, in 1932, he decided to leave France when Strom was arrested by the police as part of the "Fantômas" Soviet espionage ring. (The head of the network, Isaiah Bir, was yet another Polish Jew who had immigrated to France after a stint in Palestine.) Thereupon Trepper went to the Soviet Union, where he eventually came to the attention of the military intelligence branch on the recommendation of Strom. And when he returned to France in 1938 to set up the "Red Orchestra" network, he turned to former associates from his Palestine days, Leo Grossvogel and Hillel Katz, both of whom had been active in the Ichud movement.

This was not the only circle of emigré Polish Jews working for Soviet intelligence. Ignace Reiss was born in Austrian Galicia and after 1919 became a member of the Polish Communist Party. He worked for a time for the Comintern apparatus in Vienna, then entered his intelligence career by seeking to obtain military information about Pilsudski's forces during the Red Army's 1920 drive on Warsaw. A book by Reiss's widow, Elisabeth Poretsky (*Our Own People*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), recounts how Reiss, Krivitsky and four other Jewish boyhood friends from the same border town all eventually joined the Soviet intelligence service.

The Dark Night of Stalinism

The initial plans for a Soviet intelligence network directed against Hitler's Reich were laid in Moscow in 1937 by General Jan Berzin, head of the Fourth Department. Berzin, a Latvian (Old Bolshevik), had spent years in jail for anti-tsarist activities. During the Civil War he commanded a regiment guarding Lenin and the government, and he had worked under Trotsky in setting up the military intelligence section. A close associate of Red Army commander-in-chief M.N. Tukhachevsky, he was already under the shadow of Stalin's

blood purge. However, he was determined to go on defending the Soviet Union and sought to get around the Kremlin directive against setting up an active network on German territory.

In selecting the comrades to lead such vital and difficult work he sought out those who in their own minds were still seeking to aid world revolution. Trepper says of his decision to join the Fourth Department:

"Over and above our confusion and our anguish was the necessity of defending the Soviet Union, even though it had ceased to be the homeland of the socialism we had hoped for. This obvious fact forced my decision, and General Berzin's proposition allowed me to save my conscience... by fighting far from Moscow, in the forefront of the anti-Nazi struggle, I could continue to be what I had always been: a militant revolutionary."

Many others were attracted to the Fourth Department out of similar motives—an apparent escape route from politics which would afford veteran militants a limited, technical avenue to continue to work for socialism. Elisabeth Poretsky describes an archetypal case, that of the Hungarian communist Theodore Maly. He joined the Cheka during the Civil War, then stayed on but finally could continue no longer after the brutal massacres of the Stalinist collectivization campaigns. "I went to the foreign division of the N.K.V.D. and asked for an assignment abroad.... I could not bear to live in the Soviet Union any more. I had to run away somewhere...." But there was no escaping Stalinism for old party cadres: either one succumbed to it or resisted, and the chances of survival were not qualitatively higher for the capitulators. Maly was shot in 1937.

The purge of the Red Army began at the top, with Marshal Mikhail Tukhachevsky. Tukhachevsky had been deputy chief of staff when Trotsky was commissar for the army but was removed when Stalin's flunky Voroshilov took over in 1925. According to Wollenberg, "Tukha never published a derogatory or even a critical statement about Trotsky," and in his contribution to the 1928 manual on armed insurrection quoted from one of the Red Army founder's orders of the day. Stalin doubtless planned for years to eliminate the popular and respected "Tukha," but the Kremlin's fear of war with Japan in the early 1930's forced Voroshilov to take him back. Then in the summer of 1937 Moscow papers suddenly announced the arrest of the Red Army commander and seven top generals, all old Communists and heroes of the Civil War, on charges of plotting with the Nazis to stage a coup and restore capitalism. The next day their execution was reported.

The details of the Tukhachevsky affair are still murky. Trepper says that Gestapo sources told him they had learned of plans for a coup and decided to back Stalin by planting doctored documents linking the Red Army commander to the Nazis. But whether or not Stalin had additional aid (as in the case of Comintern organizational secretary Ossip Piatnitsky, who was framed by phony German documents), his aim was to clean out the last, key sector of the Soviet state apparatus. In all, 13 out of 19 army corps commanders, 110 out of 135 division and brigade commanders, half the regimental commanders and most of the political commissars were executed, and a total of 25,000 Soviet officers were affected. On the eve of World War II, the Red Army was decapitated by Stalin and nearly destroyed.

Trotsky analyzed the purges:

"The generals rushed to defend the Red Army from the demoralizing intrigues of the GPU. They defended the best officers from false accusations. They resisted the establishment of the GPU's dictatorship over the Red Army.... The generals fought for the security of the

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Trepper on Stalin's Sabotage of Soviet Defense

—Excerpted from Leopold Trepper, *The Great Game* (New York, 1977)

On December 18, 1940, Hitler signed Directive Number 21, better known as Operation Barbarossa. The first sentence of this plan was explicit: "The German armed forces must be ready before the end of the war against Great Britain to defeat the Soviet Union by means of a *Blitzkrieg*."

Richard Sorge warned the Center immediately; he forwarded them a copy of the directive. Week after week, the heads of Red Army Intelligence received updates on the Wehrmacht's preparations. At the beginning of 1941, Schulze-Boysen sent the Center precise information on the operation being planned: massive bombardments of Leningrad, Kiev, and Vyborg; the number of divisions involved—In February, I sent a detailed dispatch giving the exact number of divisions withdrawn from France and Belgium, and sent to the east. In May, through the Soviet military attaché in Vichy, General Susloparov, I sent the proposed plan of attack, and indicated the original date, May 15, then the revised date, and the final date. On May 12, Sorge warned Moscow that 150 German divisions were massed along the frontier. On the 15th, he cited June 21st for the beginning of the operations, a date that was confirmed by Schulze-Boysen in Berlin....

He who closes his eyes sees nothing, even in the full light of day. This was the case with Stalin and his entourage. The generalissimo preferred to trust his political instinct rather than the secret reports piled up on his desk. Convinced that he had signed an eternal pact of friendship with Germany, he sucked on the pipe of peace. He had buried his tomahawk and he was not ready to dig it up yet.

Thirty years after the war was over, Marshal Golikov, writing in a Soviet historical review, officially confirmed the value of the information received

"The Soviet Intelligence Services had learned in good time the dates of the attack against the USSR and had given the alarm before it was too late.... The intelligence services provided accurate information regarding the military potential of Hitler's Germany, the exact number of armed forces, the quantities of arms, and the strategic plans of the commanders of the Wehrmacht...."

Marshal Golikov was in a good position to make such a statement. From June, 1940, to July, 1941, he was the Director of Red Army Intelligence. If the Russian chiefs of staff were so well informed, what was the reason for the debacle after the German attack? The answer is no doubt contained in a note Golikov himself addressed to his services on March 20, 1941:

"All the documents claiming that war is imminent must be regarded as forgeries emanating from British or even German sources."

On the most important dispatches sent to him by Sorge, Schulze-Boysen, and me, Golikov noted in the margin "Double agent" or "British source...."

On June 21, 1941, we had confirmation from Vasily Maximovich and Schulze-Boysen that the invasion was set for the next day. There was still time to put the Red Army in a state of alert. I rushed to Vichy with Leo Grossvogel.... I insisted that Susloparov send the dispatch. Late that evening, I went back to my hotel. At four in the morning the manager woke me up, shouting in my ear,

"It's happened, Monsieur Gilbert! Germany is at war with the Soviet Union!"

On the 23rd, Wolosiuk, the attaché for the army air force under Susloparov, arrived in Vichy, having left Moscow a few hours before the outbreak of the war. He told me that before his departure, he had been called in to see the Director, who had given him a message for me:

"You can tell Otto"—my code name—"that I have passed on the information on the imminence of the German attack to the big boss. The big boss is amazed that a man like Otto, an old militant and an intelligence man, has allowed himself to be intoxicated by English propaganda. You can tell him again that the big boss is completely convinced that the war with Germany will not start before 1944—"

The "complete conviction" of the big boss, Stalin, was to be expensive. Having decapitated the Red Army in 1937—which was responsible for the first defeats—the inspired strategist then turned over what was left of the army to Hitler's hordes. During the first hours of the German offensive—in defiance of all the evidence, and because he had the idea of a planted rumor so firmly in mind—he refused to allow a counterattack....

The results: the airfields pounded by German bombers; the airplanes smashed to pieces on the grounds; the German fighter planes masters of the sky, transforming the Russian plains into graveyards strewn with demolished tanks. On the evening of the 22nd, the leaders of the army, whom Stalin had forbidden to put their troops on alert, received the order to drive the enemy outside their borders. By this time the armored divisions of the Wehrmacht had already penetrated several hundred kilometers into Soviet territory.

It would take the sacrifices of a whole nation rising up against its invader to reverse the military situation. But meanwhile, Stalin's error would cost Russia millions of lives and prolong the war.

Anita Bryant...

(continued from page 1)

als! You too can help draw the chariot of your oppressor."

Like feminism and black nationalism, the ideology of "gay liberation" is rooted in the New Left polyvanguardist notion that each stratum of the oppressed must "unite" in an "autonomous movement" to fight their special oppression. The commonality of "sexual orientation" is presumed to transcend class differences as workers and their bosses, tenants and their landlords, supposedly discover "unity" around their "common interests."

What "common interests"? The working class and its allies have no stake in the perpetuation of capitalist exploitation and oppression. The bourgeoisie and its professional servants in the Democratic and Republican Parties have a real material interest in the maintenance of the capitalist system of war, racism and oppression, including its ideological and institutional props.

Homosexuality is seen as a threat to bourgeois morality and the institution of the family. Whether homosexuals are marginally and grudgingly tolerated or are persecuted, reviled and ultimately perhaps even slaughtered depends far less on the size of "gay rights" demonstrations than on the immediacy of capitalism's need to frontally assault the working class. In periods of crisis, when fascist irrationality is revealed as capitalism's last resort, leftists, unionists, minorities and social "deviants" will discover just how much "common interest" they have with the "democratic" bourgeoisie! The fundamental tenet of "democracy" under capitalism is the bourgeoisie's "right" to exploit the working class; the rest is ultimately dispensable. Only those who take the liberation of the working masses as their cause can effectively defend the rights of homosexuals.

Fake-Lefts Patronize "Gay Rights"

Political identity is not defined by sexual orientation. Despite its militancy, the "gay movement" will remain a sandbox for Democratic Party cynics and "lifestyle" radicals unless its most thoughtful militants transcend their parochialism and transform themselves into disciplined class-struggle fighters. But this challenging task has been made immeasurably more difficult by the fake-Marxist organizations. The various Stalinists, with their anti-homosexual backwardness, feed the noxious anti-communism pervasive in this petty-bourgeois milieu. Meanwhile the tail-endists exemplified by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) patronizingly enthuse over the classless "lifestyle" radicalism of the "independent gay movement," thereby in effect recruiting for liberal Democratic politicians.

Most notorious among the Stalinists is the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party, which labels homosexuality a "sickness" and bars homosexuals from membership. This attitude is common to all "hard Stalinist" formations, whether pro-Russian or pro-Chinese. It owes less to "workerism" (gutless capitulation before the social backwardness of American workers) than to the need to apologize for the regimes of the deformed workers states, which—unable and unwilling to replace the nuclear family—replicate the backwardness of capitalism, persecuting homosexuals and glorifying the family as "a fighting unit of socialism."

The opportunists of the SWP have become the most sophisticated apologists for the "autonomous" organizations of homosexuals. Knowledgeable homosexual radicals are infuriated to find the SWP portraying itself as their champion, for it was only a few years ago that the SWP abandoned (but never publicly acknowledged or repudiated)

its practice of barring homosexuals from SWP membership. Irreconcilably opposed to a class-struggle program for democratic rights which can win homosexual activists to the socialist cause, the SWP recently used the "gay rights" issue to serve as a left cover for Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign (see box).

Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF), another cheerleader for militant parochialism of the oppressed, has called a national demonstration under the slogan "Demonstrate for Human Rights." The Vietnamese workers and peasants massacred by U.S. imperialism must be turning over in their graves as the American fake-lefts lend credence to the "human rights" pretensions of the number-one imperialist chieftain. YAWF boasts of its "Gay Caucus"; such a structure, which would have no place in a Leninist organization, indicates only that YAWF views the struggle for homosexual rights as the responsibility of its homosexual members rather than of the organization as a whole.

In the Leninist tradition, the Spartacist League has always made the demand for full democratic rights of homosexuals a part of its program and has defended homosexuals against persecution and victimization. The labor movement—and in particular the teachers' unions—must resist the reactionary crusaders' proposals to impose

"heterosexuality oaths" as a requirement for employment. The struggle to break the unions from backward capitalist ideology requires the construction of class-struggle caucuses in opposition to the pro-capitalist bureaucracy which prevents the power of the working class from being mobilized against the forces of oppression and reaction.

The SL has entered into a process of discussion and common work with the RFU(BT), with the aim of principled fusion. A key to the convergence of the two organizations has been the understanding that the class axis is primary and that the fight against all special oppression must be led by the proletarian vanguard party.

Refusing to conciliate "lifestyle" radicalism and autonomist illusions, the SL and RFU(BT) seek to pose a class axis in the fight against all special oppression. Our insistence that sexuality is a private and not a political matter may sometimes shock "gay activists" accustomed to opportunist patronizing, but our revolutionary program will attract the most serious elements from the "gay liberation" milieu.

Bryant's reactionary crusade only underlines the urgency of the fight to weld together a disciplined cadre of proletarian fighters to counterpose a socialist solution to capitalist degradation. ■

Letter from the RFU

Comrades,

The article in the June 24 issue of *WV*, "Lifestylers Attack Trotskyism at RFU Conference," while it generally captured the essence of the conference made an error in analyzing the political evolution of the Red Flag Union. The *WV* article states, "Recoiling from Stalinist bigotry against homosexuals, the RFU developed toward Trotskyism through its study of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution..."

In point of fact, it was not primarily Stalinist bigotry that impelled us toward Trotskyism.

The RFU (until recently the Lavender and Red Union) despite its Maoist leanings was ostracized by the vast majority of the Maoist left because we are homosexuals. So while we were sympathetic to this milieu we were never fully a part of it.

The L&RU's anti-Stalinism repre-

sented an impressionistic revulsion against the manifold atrocities of the Stalinist regimes, and preceded our anti-Maoism. Specifically, our position centered on the elimination of party democracy in the Bolshevik Party under Stalin, Stalin's claim that socialism had been built in the Soviet Union (though we did not yet believe that socialism could not be built in one country) and the backwardness relative to sexuality and the family.

Our movement from the point of moral outrage against Stalinist atrocities of all kinds to the current impending fusion with the SL was primarily brought about by the intersection of the L&RU/RFU with the SL and our understanding of and commitment to the building of a Leninist vanguard communist party.

In the spring of 1976 the L&RU began being baited as Trotskyist despite the fact that we didn't know much about Trotskyism and (at that time) we didn't care to know much. In addition, the crushing defeats of the NYC workers, the wilting of the Portuguese revolution, the shameless antics of Chinese foreign policy in Angola and elsewhere sent us into a tailspin. We were not sufficiently tainted by Maoism so as to be incapable of seeing a betrayal as a betrayal. Incapable as we were of understanding these phenomena we were headed directly for political disillusionment and inactivity. It was around this time that we began attending an SL class on Trotskyism.

We entitled our pamphlet on Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, "Permanent Revolution: A Vindication of Marxism," because it, along with the Trotskyist understanding of the Russian question, rehabilitated for us the Marxist principles of proletarian internationalism, workers democracy and communist morality.

Given our contradictory status in the Maoist camp and the petty-bourgeois life-styleist gay liberation movement, we were open to investigating Trotskyism. Ultimately it was our understanding of the crisis of revolutionary leadership that has proved decisive in our movement toward the SL, the nucleus of the vanguard communist party.

Fraternally,
Mike Weinstein
(for the) Bolshevik Tendency of the Red Flag Union

SWP Tails Carter's "Human Rights" Hoax

The ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has seized on the recent demonstrations protesting the persecution of homosexuals not only to pander to the most backward elements of "gay rights" activism but also to do its bit for Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" campaign.

On June 28 the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights—a thoroughly reformist hodgepodge which includes the SWP, the National Gay Task Force, the Feminist Liberation Front, the Gay Activist Alliance, NOW, the NAACP and the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee—held a "mass meeting" (about 100 people showed up) in New York "to build a mass movement in the community to fight for protective legislation for Lesbians and Gays." The main point on the agenda was the planning of a demonstration at the United Nations in August around the slogan "Defend Human Rights for Lesbians and Gays."

A supporter of the Shachtmanite Revolutionary Socialist League who spoke in favor of both the demonstration and the proposed slogan, noted piously that it was important to avoid being used as a left cover for Carter's imperialist campaign. This half-hearted caveat apparently stirred the Committee of Lesbian and Gay Male Socialists—which includes supporters of International Socialists and the Marxist Education Collective—to put forward a motion from the floor "that the tone and content of the demonstration explicitly differentiate ourselves from Carter's Human Rights campaign." The motion passed 55 to 54 with the *SWP* voting against!

Soon after, this meeting of self-appointed spokesmen of various sections of the oppressed degenerated rapidly into screaming and race-baiting. The final confrontation was precipitated when a man in the audience addressed himself to "the lady in the back." The term "lady" was too much for the "brothers and sisters." The chairman, who called for order, found herself the subject of a motion to "condemn the chair for preventing her sisters from fighting a sexist attack!" Other women stormed out of the meeting shouting, "This isn't a coalition to fight for our rights. It's a white, male-supremacist, racist organization!"

Two days later the SWP held a public forum in Los Angeles on the question of homosexual oppression. Represented on the panel were the SWP, NOW and the ACLU. There was also a lesbian feminist and one Morris Knight, who played the role of strikebreaker during a protracted strike of workers at the Gay Community Services Center where he serves on the board of directors.

The SWP chaired the meeting in its usual fashion, i.e., appealing to the most apolitical elements in the audience and refusing to recognize political opponents. When the spokesman for the ACLU said that communists, along with fascists and the church, were the worst enemies of homosexuals, the SWPers did not utter a word of protest. Questioned about this later, they asserted that the comment was "irrelevant."

SL/SYL PUBLIC OFFICES

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Room 522
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Terry Moore/New York Times



WV Photo

Left, company-hired gun thugs in position behind barricade face striking Stearns miners, right, across "no man's land."

Company Thugs Wound Striker

Solidarity with Stearns Miners!

Last week a striking coal miner was shot by company gun thugs in Stearns, Kentucky. While on picket duty June 23, the miner, Ray Hamlin, was hit in the leg with a shotgun blast, indicating that the strikebreaking criminals of the Storm Security Service had advanced from behind their mine site fortifications 200 yards from the picket line, crept through a wooded "no man's land" and fired from close range on the pickets.

Tensions have skyrocketed in the wake of the shooting and the miners have called for a mass protest rally July 8. Plans by the Blue Diamond Coal Company to begin bringing security guards into the mine through the picket line, ostensibly out of fear that previously-used helicopters may be shot down, could soon lead to an explosive confrontation. When asked what will happen if Blue Diamond tries to bring in scabs to re-open the mine, United Mine Workers (UMW) spokesman Chuck Shuford told *WV*, "It'd be a holocaust."

The day after the shooting, 125 miners, their wives and children, demonstrated in front of Blue Diamond's Knoxville, Tennessee, headquarters. Though the demonstration was planned some weeks earlier, the pickets were doubly incensed over the shooting the night before. Angry miners marched around the building taunting company officials who peered out of office windows above. A group of miners attempted to enter the building. "We want to see how you live," one striker yelled at a Blue Diamond official, who locked the door as three police cars arrived at the scene. One UMW organizer remarked to a reporter, "It was pretty tough controlling some of these guys when we got here this morning.... A lot of these men were on the picket line last night" (*Louisville Courier-Journal*, 25 June).

Nearly 160 miners have been on strike since last July 17 for a UMW contract at the Stearns Justus mine. Since February, when Blue Diamond hired the security guards to break the picket line and pave the way for scab labor, the miners have been subjected to a hail of gunfire almost every night, and sometimes in broad daylight. The company goons are heavily armed with shotguns, pistols, rifles and even high-powered semi-automatic AR-15's, the "civilian" version of the Army's M-16.

But the coal miners are not about to

be run off. They have dug in on a piece of property they bought on their side of the picket line, built their own protective sandbag barriers and have shown militant determination to defend their strike by the means necessary.

The strikers face not only an intransigent anti-union boss and his hired gunmen, but the pro-company cops and courts as well. Kentucky state police regularly escort company officials across the picket line but look the other way when up to 500 rounds a night pour into the miners' picket camp. Until the arrest of the guard charged with shooting Hamlin, the police had not arrested a single one of the trigger-happy thugs. The apprehended guard was immediately released when Storm Security put up his bail.

In contrast, 27 miners plus UMW organizer Lee Potter face up to 60 years each in jail on felony charges based on the trumped-up charges by the gun thugs that miners have "assaulted" them. Circuit Judge J.B. Johnson, who is scheduled to hear the case, has already shown what kind of "justice" the miners can expect. He has forbidden mass picketing, threatened to close down the miners' picket camp, issued blanket contempt citations against the union (which even the Kentucky Supreme Court had to throw out as illegal) and forced the UMW to post a \$100,000 bond to cover the possibility of future "damages" to Blue Diamond property.

On the day of the recent shooting, UMW director of organizing John Cox sent a telegram to Kentucky governor Julian Carroll protesting the rampant violence against the miners and the strikebreaking role of the state police, and urgently requesting a meeting. Predictably, the governor has not responded. But that same night 29 state police cars were reported massed at the local courthouse, ready to sweep down on the miners.

The Stearns strike has become the flashpoint of class warfare in the southeastern coalfields. The recent escalation of violence has even caught the attention of the bourgeois media, which up to now have ignored the strike. An NBC television crew was on hand June 25, pinned down with the miners by the murderous, unrelenting gunfire from the mine guards. CBS toured the mine site July 1 and the anti-labor *New York Times* ran an article the same day that struck an obnoxiously neutral

posture, commenting on the "irony" of such violence in a strike centered on mine safety and noting the long hours and difficult working conditions of the Storm Security guards!

But the strike has an importance far beyond its media appeal. The attention of coal operators and miners throughout the region, which is still predominantly non-union, is riveted on this

The Stearns strikers face a barrage not only from the mine guards but from the courts. Twenty-seven of the strikers and UMW organizer Lee Potter go on trial in October, charged with three felonies each and facing up to 60 years in jail. These militants require the financial assistance of all friends of the labor movement. The Partisan Defense Committee urges that donations for legal expenses be sent to the Miners Legal Defense Fund, 1521 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

bitter test of strength. If the strike is broken, many companies will try to junk the UMW when the current contract expires December 6. A prime target for an employer offensive would clearly be the Brookside mine in nearby Harlan County, organized in a 13-month strike in 1973-74. *Workers Vanguard* was the first left newspaper to publicize the Stearns strike (see "Miners Resist Coal Operators' Gun Thugs," *WV* No. 158, 20 May), and we have repeatedly stressed the importance of winning this crucial strike.

For its part, the employers' Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) has lined up solidly behind Blue Diamond and its owner, Gordon Bonnyman, who has kept the union out of his other two mines at Scotia and Leatherwood. The BCOA, determined to crush the growing militancy and wildcats which disrupt its dictatorial control, is gearing up for a showdown with the UMW and is backed up by the Carter administration, whose energy policy demands "labor peace" in the coal fields.

The BCOA has repeatedly provoked the Mine Workers, taking advantage of the union's divided and spineless leadership to try to batter the union to its knees even before the expected coal

strike this winter. In the latest incident, the BCOA refused to transfer available cash to cover the Health and Retirement Fund, causing big benefit cutbacks. This sparked a wildcat, centered in West Virginia, which grew to 35,000 miners but was cut short by the annual two-week vacation period which began June 24. Knowledgeable sources in the UMW expect the strike to mushroom when the vacation period ends.

UMW president Arnold Miller, with no idea how to counter the bosses' attacks or contain the ranks, is also facing challenges of his recent narrow re-election. These have a new impetus since Miller's attempt to enforce the highly unpopular health benefit cuts. Lee Roy Patterson filed motions for a new election July 1 and Miller's other presidential opponent, Harry Patrick, is also pushing for a rerun. Since Miller's foes control the union's International Executive Board, a new election is a definite possibility Miller is expected to appeal to the federal courts to avoid a rerun, a move which will embroil the union in renewed government intervention on the very eve of a national strike.

While Patterson, Miller and Patrick plot how to bring the strikebreaking government into union affairs to feather their own nests and how best to quash the wildcats, none has given more than lip service to the Stearns strikers. Just as the violent strike at Brookside required a nationwide shutdown to win, so the fight at Stearns cries out for solidarity action by the entire UMW. The coal operators cannot be defeated by equivocal compromises and evasive maneuvers. Their escalating provocations must be met by a nationwide strike.

Coal miners must prepare now by electing strike committees from their ranks to take on the BCOA. The miners cannot wait until one of their own is killed on the battle lines at Stearns. Strike the coal fields! Stop the union busters! Victory to the Stearns strike!

Euro-Communism: Joining Carter's "Human Rights" Campaign?

Spaakar:
ED CLARKSON
Spartacist League

Saturday, July 9 at 7:30 p.m.
215 W. 23rd Street (between 7th and 8th Avenues)
New York City

CWA...

(continued from page 12)

Taft-Hartley—anyone who plans to cash in on Carter's campaign promises will be unpleasantly surprised.

Oppositions Crumble

AT&T is a capitalist giant which has trampled on its employees' rights and the interests of working people for decades. Its operations are run like a medieval fiefdom: impossible production standards subject phone company workers to arbitrary harassment and discipline; pay raises can be held up at the whim of the foreman; more than three to five days illness per year is considered excessive, and may result in discipline and firing. Women employees—over half the CWA membership—are concentrated in underpaid job classifications and are routinely subjected to the most inhuman, petty company abuse, traditionally with the tolerance of the union leadership.

With the addition of the spectre of massive job losses to this already infuriating pattern of management abuse, there is a felt need among telephone workers for a nationwide CWA strike against the Bell system. Yet the International bureaucracy's long history of defeats, cowardice and active sabotage of strikes has made many union members doubt the chance of waging a successful strike against the all-powerful Ma Bell. Workers in New York Local 1101 well remember how they were left out on a limb in 1971 by Beirne, walking the picket lines alone for more than half a year only to be forced to settle for a \$1 per hour increase. This sellout led to the 1974 introduction of "national bargaining," which simply meant that everything was decided at the top through the protection of a rigid news blackout on the negotiations, and abandoning those locals who walked out on the principle of "no contract, no work."

In several recent conventions, such betrayals by the International have sparked protests from local leaderships feeling pressure from their outraged ranks. Thus at the 1975 convention, District 10 officials, among others, protested vehemently against the news blackouts and other backroom maneuvers. Such "militant" talk was cheap when nothing was at stake. But today, with the contract expiration little more than a month away, even these phony bureaucratic "oppositions" have evaporated. At the annual (!) Local 1101 membership meeting last week President Ed Dempsey, one-time critic of the International, announced that his relations with Watts were never better, and that the crucial issue of job security will not even be part of the national bargaining demands (being relegated to local negotiations). As 1101 well knows, not even the most militant local can hold out alone against AT&T. Yet there was not the slightest challenge at the meeting to Dempsey's convention report.

The unanimous re-election of the International Executive Board at Kansas City and the absence of a single challenger was an indication of the crumbling of bureaucratic and reformist oppositions in the CWA. The only floor fight at this year's convention was over the credentials of the Atlanta delegates, with local rank and filers protesting that elections had been held without notifying the membership. The president answered haughtily, "We always hold our elections this way."

The United Action Caucus (UAC), which in the past had sent delegates to the convention, went unrepresented this year, and consequently the International's decision upholding the decision of a Local 1101 trial board suspending four UACers for five years went unchallenged. The UAC, true to its policy of tailing after left-talking "democratic" bureaucrats, had supported Dempsey in



Mickey Mouse phone: what Bell System "develops" with rate increases.

1972 only to be shafted by their candidate a few years later. And where a genuine class-struggle opposition would seek to mobilize union members' support against the bureaucracy's attempt to purge oppositionists from the union, the UAC reacted by threatening to take the CWA to court.

Despite the systematic betrayals of the Watts/Beirne bureaucracy and consequent cynicism in the ranks, so intense is the present threat of job losses that there would be a real basis for support for a nationwide CWA strike were there a leadership in the union with the demonstrated capacity and militant determination to bring it off. But only the Militant Action Caucus (MAC) in Bay Area CWA locals has shown the way forward in the intense crisis facing phone company workers. At the 1973 convention MAC led the fight to defeat the bureaucrats' "19-2-C" clause which would hamstring all oppositionists in the union. And last year MAC successfully waged a year-long fight based on mobilizing the membership to win back the job of fired MAC member Jane Margolis. This struggle—one of the few times in memory where a militant successfully won a job back after being fired by Ma Bell—was significant in proving that the phone company can be defeated.

During the present contract period, the Militant Action Caucus has been fighting for a nationwide strike against all layoffs, downgrades and forced transfers; for a 20-hour week with 40 hours pay; for an across-the-board wage increase to close the gap between traditional male and female job classifications; and for a full cost-of-living allowance. The key to a successful strike must be the mobilization of militant picket lines which shut down the buildings. No one—not non-unionized operators and clerical workers and especially not management—must be allowed to pass! Since automated phone equipment enables skeleton crews of management scabs to maintain operations, militants must demand that the union occupy key telephone installations to prevent such scabbing. The Watts machine would naturally oppose such militant measures, so strike committees must be elected to prevent bureaucratic sabotage and to ensure that effective picketing protects the workers inside struck buildings.

This is the way forward for phone workers, a road that can only be opened up through ousting the pro-company bureaucracy. As a recent MAC leaflet distributed to Bay Area phone locations said:

"We will drive the Company hack only by determined militant action. The union has considerable power—500,000 members. We could control the communications of the entire nation. We must strike in our own defense and we must strike nationally...."

"Phone workers must thoughtfully prepare for a struggle. The International has a record that we can remember and it shows determination in keeping us encased in cement. When we, the ranks of the union, break out of their grip, we will forge a leadership that we can trust to fight on our side."

OCI Slanders...

(continued from page 4)

obliged to testify once more. Unable to reply to the questions posed by Commission members, Pierre Lambert was repeatedly reduced to enraged mutterings such as:

"Draw whatever conclusion you like, listen, it's your business. I'm not here for that.... You're not here to ask me questions about my organization."

—testimony, 16 December 1976

Yet the OCI's utter irresponsibility at the time that Varga joined emerges with perfect clarity from Lambert's testimony. First of all, he admitted that Varga's archives had been accessible to the OCI ever since Varga joined in about 1962: "this was a fellow who kept his archives, at his place everything was well classified, etc." Then Lambert explicitly declared that, prior to Varga's joining, "nobody asked him" for explanations of his political activity and that "if we had asked him, he didn't have to say anything." As for the OCI's attitude toward the Varga archives at that time, Lambert was eloquent: "They were letters in Hungarian mostly, in Russian. Not problems of direct interest to us." As the Spartacist tendency said in our draft conclusions, the OCI had:

"...a special responsibility to try to examine these archives, given the central importance of a complete and unambiguous break with imperialism on the part of those who claim to have broken with the Stalinist bureaucracies in Eastern Europe and the USSR."

But all these "problems"—including the possibility of agents infiltrating would-be Trotskyists' ranks—did not "interest" the OCI!

Now, there are two possibilities. One, that the OCI is telling the truth: it was not familiar with Varga's past, because "there were no problems of direct interest" to the OCI. In that case, it would seem that the OCI accepted Varga without worrying in the least about possible infiltration by police agents—KGB or CIA—into its organization, without asking him the slightest question about his previous political activity. Or two—and this seems more likely—that the OCI was aware of Varga's character and a good part of his past, but covered it up in order to show off its "Eastern European work." It is certainly no accident that the OCI's noble concern about the character of the main leader of its much-vaunted "Eastern European work" dates from the emergence of political differences with Varga.

For us as Trotskyists, it is essential to verify the total break from all illusions that the Stalinist bureaucracy will reform itself, as well as from Stalinophobia, on the part of militants like Varga who come out of the degenerated and deformed workers states, before accepting them as members.

Still on the defensive, the OCI several months later drew the Commission's attention to an interview with Varga in a Spanish newspaper and, in one final brief, urged the Commission to uphold "at least" the iSt's position:

"Starting from the documents, Varga cannot be characterized—at the least—differently than did *Spartacist*, as a 'highly dubious' figure; i.e., to the extent that it is not a question of a 'moral' characterization, as an individual who had kept up a certain kind of relations with the imperialist dens."

—letter, 8 March 1977

SWP: OCI's Best Defender

The Commission was also the scene of a factional struggle between the two wings of the USec. In the beginning, the SWP, trying its best to protect the OCI, did not even want testimony taped! More generally, the SWP representative systematically intervened to limit the scope of criticisms against the OCI. In the last analysis, the SWP had to grant that the OCI had proved nothing—and that the OCI employs violence against competing organizations—but still

maintained that the main culprit was...Varga! It is the responsibility of the SWP above all that the Commission's conclusions do not state the obvious: the lack of proof of the OCI's accusations against Varga renders them lying and slanderous. It was also the SWP which insisted on weakening the rejection of the accusations, substituting "these accusations have not been proved" for "...have in no way been proved."

As for LO and the LCR, in their common aim of scoring points on the OCI they maintained that Varga's past was of interest only to his own organization and that a condemnation of the OCI would suffice. Thus LO refused to draw the obvious conclusion about Varga, already contained in the draft conclusions submitted by the LTF representative, mandated by the iSt:

"...although Varga himself publicly admitted having undertaken consciously anti-communist activities in order to 'combat Marxism,' he has never explained—nor has he explicitly renounced—certain formulations found in his letters at that time, which enable us to characterize his attitudes as anti-Semitic and racist. Varga therefore appears as a highly dubious figure."

The LCR and LO wanted to condemn the OCI but refused to characterize Varga's attitude; the SWP, by way of contrast, was more than willing to characterize Varga, but refused to condemn the OCI. Caught in a bind, the Commission rejected the conclusions drafted by the iSt, and called instead on the SWP reformists to write the most innocuous conclusions possible. Though the LCR might have preferred to condemn the OCI, it refused to break with its partner in the USec rotten bloc.

Seizing the pretext that the conclusions did not characterize the OCI's accusations against Varga as false because unproved, LO refused to sign the conclusions. The iSt, on the other hand, agreed to sign the Commission's conclusions on the condition that an appended iSt statement be published with them. While the conclusions represented the absolute minimum of what had been established by the Commission, the iSt signed them in the interest of arriving at clear and authoritative conclusions. LO's refusal to sign—under an obvious pretext—can only undermine the Commission's authority and thus lessen the impact of the very conclusions which LO claims to support.

All these petty and factionally motivated maneuvers stand in complete contradiction with the methods and traditions established by the Dewey Commission. While maintaining a sense of historical proportion, we must recall that Trotsky strongly insisted that—since the Dewey Commission had amassed sufficient proofs to show that Trotsky and Sedov were not guilty—it was both just and necessary to take one step further and accept the moral and political responsibility for drawing the conclusion that the Moscow Trials were frame-ups.

In opposition to all the other organizations participating in the Commission, the iSt assumes this responsibility in drawing a two-sided conclusion: since the OCI has adduced no sufficient proof to back up its accusations against Varga, these accusations must be characterized as false and therefore lying and slanderous. The OCI's practice of violence against the Vargaites is therefore shown to be drawn from the Stalinist arsenal. On the other hand, Varga's refusal to explain himself—his past and the content of his letters—shows him to be a shady character, a "highly dubious" figure. ■

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Soviet Spies...

(continued from page 7)

Soviet Union against the interests of Stalin's security. That is why they died."
—"Army Opposed to Stalin,"
6 March 1938

Berzin was one of the most important of this group. He had been in Spain acting as military adviser to the anti-Franco forces, then returned to Moscow in 1937 (voluntarily or on recall; the versions vary) to protest the GPU massacres of anarchists and anti-Stalinist communists in the Republican areas. For a time he was back at the head of the Fourth Department, and it was during this period that he commissioned Trepper to set up an anti-Hitler spy network. Later that year Berzin was removed from his position, then shot in December 1938. But Trepper, as he saw it, remained "faithful to our agreement" and carried out the mission entrusted to him. Here was the pitiful tragedy of Reiss and his comrades, who kept hoping for a miracle and kept toiling on.

The Red Orchestra Plays

But in spite of everything, the Reisses, Treppers and Sorges accomplished brilliant work, heroically risking their lives to defend the USSR. Trepper waited for two years, painstakingly building up a legitimate business cover with the aid of Grossvogel, who had entered the rubber trade some years earlier. The import-export companies he set up—Simex in Paris and Simexco and the "Foreign Excellent Trenchcoat Company" (!) in Belgium—also served as direct sources of information, via their black-market dealings with the German Todt Organization, which supervised construction work for the Wehrmacht. By day the network conducted its business, wining and dining German officials in fancy restaurants and luxurious apartments. By night the Orchestra transmitted.

"Between 1940 and 1943, the musicians of the Red Orchestra—that is, the radio operators, also known as 'pianists'—sent the Center about 1500 dispatches," Trepper reports. One category concerned war materiel and weapons development, where the network scored some vital successes. Plans for a new German tank were obtained and transmitted to Moscow in time for Soviet industry to prepare an even better version, the KV tank. Plans for a new Messerschmidt fighter were delivered on microfilm, and within months a superior Soviet version was rolling off production lines. A second category of dispatches concerned information on the military situation and plans. Thus when Hitler met with the German High Command in eastern Prussia in the fall of 1941 and proposals for the encirclement of Moscow were drawn up, the stenographer who took down the remarks of Hitler and the generals was a member of the Orchestra. Trepper can write proudly: "The Soviet chiefs of staff were informed of every detail of the attack, in time to prepare the counteroffensive that succeeded in driving off the Wehrmacht."

The Red Orchestra included groups in Amsterdam, Brussels, Copenhagen and Paris, but by far the most important was the Harnack/Schulze-Boysen group in Berlin. Arvid Harnack was a Marxist scholar, from a family of respected intellectuals and government officials and held a responsible position in the ministry of economics, from which he was able to ferret out much information useful for the Soviet war effort. Harro Schulze-Boysen came from a conservative monarchist family with a long tradition of sending its sons into the officer corps. Already a leftist, Schulze-Boysen had his anti-Nazi convictions strengthened by a brief imprisonment and brutal beating by the Gestapo in 1933. As an intelligence officer in Goering's air force ministry he

fed vital statistics on military production and plans directly to Moscow.

In 1939 the two joined forces in a broad anti-Nazi underground resistance grouping whose components were listed by Trepper as including:

"the writer Dr. Adam Kuckhoff and his wife Greta; Dr. Adolf Grimme, the socialist ex-minister of Prussia; Johann Sieg, an old militant and editor of the *Rote Fahne*, the newspaper of the German Communist Party; and Hans Coppi, Heinrich Scheel, Hans Lautenschlager, and Ina Ender, former members of communist youth organizations. When the war broke out, the best members of the group were assigned to intelligence work, but in practice there was no rigid separation between the Red Orchestra network and their resistance activities. Schulze-Boysen ran both of these—and this confusion of tasks was an unpardonable error, which would be paid for very dearly."

Part of the group was busy setting up escape routes for Jews and prisoners, sabotaging war production and putting out underground propaganda. One of its most spectacular efforts was the overnight plastering of Berlin with posters attacking Goebbels' propaganda exhibit on "The Soviet Paradise"; the posters proclaimed, "Nazi Paradise = War, Famine, Lies, Gestapo. How Much Longer?" Meanwhile, the intelligence apparatus was feeding high-level information to Moscow, including: German high command plans for the spring 1942 offensive in the Caucasus; Luftwaffe parachute raid schedules; monthly aircraft production figures; reports of tension within the military high command, etc.

The Orchestra Smashed

The Wehrmacht first stumbled on the Soviet intelligence apparatus headed by Trepper on 26 June 1941, just five days after the German invasion of the USSR, when a radio operator routinely monitoring a Norwegian transmitter picked up a mysterious call signal and coded message. Hundreds of these messages, which the German military counterintelligence (Abwehr) was initially unable to decipher, were picked up over the next few months, as well as unmistakable evidence that another "pianist" was transmitting from the very heart of the Third Reich. The hunt for the network which the Germans called the "Rote Kapelle" was on.

In this stealthy battle the radio transmitters of the Orchestra were vital, and also inevitably its weakest point. As Gilles Perrault points out in his excellent history, *The Red Orchestra* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969):

"Without a transmitter, a network loses all value; it has been set up for the sole purpose of collecting information and can be effective only if it passes that information on. Yet the very instrument that justifies its existence automatically places the network in jeopardy, for it alerts the other side to its activities. Take the heads of the Abwehr: they had no idea that a Soviet spy ring was operating in Belgium, much less in Germany; it was the pianists who put them on the track."

It was only a matter of time before German technology and the vast resources mobilized by a special commando formed by Heinrich Müller's Gestapo and Admiral Canaris' Abwehr would undo the network. The ability of the German regime to use hundreds of clerks to fit together the tiniest bits of information, to send its agents throughout occupied Europe, made the discovery of at least part of Trepper's apparatus almost inevitable. (However, tactics employed by members of the Red Orchestra within the very radio company supplying the Abwehr with equipment delayed the end for a while.) Thus it took the Sonderkommando only about six months each to destroy all of Trepper's groups: two in Belgium, one in Berlin and the central group in France.

On 12 December 1941, German counterintelligence finally closed in on the Red Orchestra transmitter at 101, rue des Atrebatres in Brussels. Sophie Poznanska had been decoding messages but heard the sound of boots on the

staircase and threw everything she could into the fireplace. David Kamy had been monitoring a transmission in another room and was caught only after a wild chase. Trepper himself narrowly escaped that first round-up; he rang the doorbell in the midst of the Abwehr raid and only managed to extract himself by indignantly showing his papers from the Todt Organization.

There followed a desperate battle of wits as Trepper sought to salvage his network: the narrow escapes, the search for a transmitter, the activation of a replacement for the Orchestra's second-in-command, Kent, whose nervousness had made him a liability. Inside the prisons there were harrowing scenes of torture, confessions, suicides and the heroism of comrades who refused to talk at the cost of their lives. Hitler's "Nacht und Nebel" (night and fog) decree of December 1941 aimed at spies, traitors and anyone suspected of "crimes against the Third Reich" authorized any and all measures to obtain information, as well as execution without appearing before a tribunal.

Many of those captured in the Belgian group were sent to Breendonk prison. Here many of Trepper's associates heroically met their fates, tortured by thumb screws, red-hot irons and electric needles. Hillel Katz had his fingernails extracted and disappeared a year later. David Kamy was shot in 1942; Sophie Poznanska committed suicide. In Berlin, the Harnack/Schulze-Boysen group was broken up in the summer of 1942 with over 100 arrested and tortured. More than 50 were eventually executed, some by beheading, others (like the two leaders) by hanging on specially constructed hooks. Some succumbed to the unbearable pain and talked, for which no one can condemn them. As Trepper wrote:

"A person who has not experienced the atrocities of the Gestapo cannot imagine them.... The survivors of the Red Orchestra who have returned from hell

carry the memory of ravaged flesh, which to this day jerks them awake in the night."

The "Big Chief" (Trepper) was himself finally caught in November 1942 in Paris. The Germans hoped to use Trepper and his captured radio operators in a great "Funkspiel" (radio game) with Moscow, feeding the center false information on rumors of a separate peace. Trepper agreed to go along, seeing in this risky game his only chance to slip a secret warning to Moscow of the real situation (the *Funkspiel* had already begun some months earlier, and the center was accepting the phony messages as valid despite Trepper's warnings that the "pianists" had been arrested). He managed to smuggle out a message detailing the whole scheme, and ten months later escaped from his German captors by walking into a pharmacy during an outing.

TO BE CONTINUED

Varga Affair Conclusions...

(continued from page 5)

statements, the OCI was in possession of sufficient information about Varga's past to have warranted suspicion concerning the source of financing for the Imre Nagy Institute. However, Pierre Lambert testified that in 1962 the OCI had no grounds for such suspicion.

• Two OCI leaders, Pierre Broué and Jean-Jacques Marie, collaborated with the journal edited by the Imre Nagy Institute, *Études*, on several occasions prior to 1962. They therefore at least knew of the Institute's existence. But the Commission was unable to hear their testimony concerning the extent of their knowledge of the Institute in this period, due to the OCI's refusal [to allow them to testify]. For the same reason it was unable to hear testimony from Roger Monnier, the OCI member with whom Varga had deposited his archives.

The Commission is therefore not in a position to know whether the OCI learned about the archives only in 1973.

4) The use of violence.

The Commission heard testimony indicating that on several occasions the OCI has used violence against LIRQI members in order to prevent them from distributing their press, and not in self-defense. This testimony comes from different individuals and different organizations.

The Commission is therefore convinced that these attacks did indeed take place. It is inadmissible for an organization in the workers movement to act in this fashion, and this must stop.

* * * * *

The Commission of Inquiry's minutes are public in nature, before the entire working-class movement, in order to allow all working-class militants who may so desire to form their own opinion. The Commission makes the entire workers movement judge of the "Varga affair" and of the attitude adopted by its protagonists.

Paris, 29 May 1977

signed by:

Gus Horowitz
(Socialist Workers Party)
Jean Lesueur
(international Spartacist tendency)*
Georges Marion
(Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire)

• The international Spartacist tendency wishes to note that it votes in favor of these conclusions with the following reservations, whose reproduction constitutes a condition to signing the conclusions:

- 1) The OCI's unproved accusations must be characterized as slanders;
- 2) Varga's current attitude, namely to refuse to shed light on his past, must lead to characterizing him as a suspicious and highly dubious individual;
- 3) The OCI's use of violence against Varga's supporters must be characterized as deriving from Stalinist methods.

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WORKERS VANGUARD



CWA ranks face company's drive to cut jobs through automation.

Economist



Paul Hoses/ro/New York Times

Convention Report:

CWA Tops Defend Bell Monopoly Profits, Ignore Job Threat

The nearly 100,000 telephone workers whose jobs have been eliminated by the Bell System during the last few years will get a bitter laugh from U.S. vice president Mondale's remark to the 39th annual convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), held in Kansas City June 19-24, that the CWA is the "best union in America." From the standpoint of Ma Bell and the bosses' government, this may be true, but not for phone workers.

The key issue facing communications workers across the country is jobs. Yet the CWA bureaucracy has done nothing to halt the phone monopoly's assault on working conditions and the livelihoods of its employees. The convention demonstrated that they have no intention of lifting a finger in the future, either. The facts speak for themselves:

- Since 1963 almost 100,000 jobs lost.
- Over half of Western Electric installation locals throughout the U.S. with members on layoff, some with up to ten years seniority.
- Massive automation of central offices, at the rate of one a day, through the introduction of Electronic Switching Systems (ESS) which can replace 400 workers with 35 technicians.
- Opening of "phone stores," where customers purchase their telephones for self-installation.
- Drastic cutbacks in CWA Western Union locals; the 3,600 unionized employees in 1966 now down to below 1,000.

As for "affirmative action" programs, touted by government and management as the answer to past job discrimination by the Bell System, recent figures report an increase of 500 top-salaried women at executive level...and a net loss of 10,000 to 15,000 women workers over the last four years.

It is no secret that American Telephone and Telegraph management is planning a major new wave of layoffs of phone workers. The question is: what

is the CWA planning to do about it? The major provisions under the heading "job security" in the report of the union's Bell System Bargaining Council to the recent convention called for eliminating subcontracting; making all overtime voluntary, at a minimum rate of double-time; providing for a shorter work year, through longer vacations, a 32-hour workweek, ten "personal days" off with pay yearly, etc.

Most of these demands are minimal enough. The call for a shorter workweek does not even include a provision for no cut in pay, and CWA International vice president for District 5, Ray Stevens, wrote in the union newsletter "Take Five" that the 32-hour week should be a legislative rather than a contractual demand (i.e., phone workers should beg Congress instead of flexing their industrial strength). But the kicker is that even these "demands" have no relationship whatsoever to what the CWA bureaucracy will fight for.

The CWA Executive Board Report, 1977 puts down in black and white that the labor fakers are prepared to accept continued job cuts in phone. In the section on organizing, the International baldly admits: "Despite an expected increase in business volume annually, employment in the telephone industry will continue to drop because of technological advancements." Instead of fighting for more jobs for communications workers, the CWA leadership is seeking to protect its dues base by roping in members "from virtually every kind of industry that exists." A list of organizing projects over the last year included nurses, librarians, furniture movers and even strikebreaking cops in two cities.

What phone workers need is a militant strike against Ma Bell. Such a strike, fought around key demands like a 20-hour workweek at 40 hours' pay, is the only way to bring AT&T to its knees and stave off the decimation of the union. But CWA president Watts has

made it clear that he will do everything he can to avoid a confrontation with the company. In February he announced, "For the first time in our 39 years of dealing with Bell, CWA will try this year to get an early settlement."

What's Good for Ma Bell...

The motto of CWA tops is, what's good for Ma Bell is good for the union. In the past, union bureaucrats have repeatedly defended requests for rate increases by AT&T affiliates, and at this convention a resolution was unanimously passed protesting attempts by electronics corporations (RCA, IBM, ITT) to horn in on Bell's profitable "interconnect" (business communications systems) revenues. The convention also went on record against any attempt by the Federal Communications Commission to force divestiture of Western Electric and perhaps the operating companies as well.

But higher profits for AT&T do not mean more jobs for phone workers. An example obvious even to the CWA bureaucracy is the introduction of customer charges for directory assistance in 19 states. This policy, certainly profitable for Bell, is directly responsible for the elimination of thousands of operators' jobs. Meanwhile, increased Bell System profits (third quarter after-tax earnings in 1976 topped \$1 billion) are invested in purchasing more automated equipment to replace additional thousands of union members.

Anti-trust schemes to attack the phone company's power by forced divestiture of the highly integrated Bell System are nothing but a backward looking utopia; their inevitable failure is shown by the hoax of the break-up of Standard Oil or U.S. Steel. But the alternative is not to defend the bloated profits of this universally hated monopoly at the expense of CWA members and the masses of consumers gouged by AT&T. The Bell system should be nationalized without compensation,

and urban phone service provided free of charge.

The CWA misleaders will never raise such militant class-struggle demands. Watts' predecessor, Joe Beirne, coalesced the CWA out of several of company unions during the late 1940's, establishing a union that has been doggedly company-loyal ever since. It was not surprising, therefore, to see AT&I management present at the convention as invited guests, as they are every year. Just as natural was the appearance of Democrat Mondale, since the CWA was an early and enthusiastic hacker of Carter in the last presidential elections. Yet despite its slavish devotion to "friend of labor" Democrats (the CWA even stuck by McGovern in 1972), the phone union and the rest of the labor movement have gotten nothing but a kick in the teeth from the capitalist parties and government.

Among a recent spate of anti-labor court decisions was one in New York state ruling that strikers are not eligible to receive unemployment benefits. This case grew out of the several-month strike by New York CWA locals in 1971-72, and if the decision is upheld on appeal the strikers may be required by the courts to repay seven months of jobless benefits. While forced to recognize that the Carter administration has been somewhat less than wholeheartedly pro-labor, all Watts could do was cry crocodile tears. "To be perfectly blunt," he told the convention, "we must insist that our national leaders have the intestinal fortitude to match their commitment, the commitments that they have made in the past." But as George Meany has already found out—after administration moves led to the rapid succession defeat of the construction site picketing bill, an AFL-CIO proposal to raise the minimum wage to a measly \$3 per hour, and efforts to eliminate the open shop provisions of

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