

Free the 4,000!

Get Con Ed, Not the Ghettos!

Con Edison pulled the switch on eight million people, cutting off their lights and air conditioners, trapping hundreds in the subways and elevators, in the midst of a scorching heat wave, the worst in over a decade. Con Ed chairman Charles Luce tried to evade the massive, criminal corporate responsibility for the disaster by claiming it was an "act of god." What happened? Murdoch's *Post* ran screaming headlines about "24 HOURS OF TERROR," the *News* talked about the "Night of the Animals" and New York police rounded up more than 4,000 "suspects," throwing them into dungeons that had been ruled unfit for human habitation.

The media and politicians have latched onto the night of looting in order to divert attention from the real criminals. With all these people sitting in jail, why haven't they arrested the glorious leaders of Con Ed, we want to know? They're the ones who did it, obviously guilty of criminal negligence and far worse. Even Mayor Beame, not known for his brilliance or audacity, figured out that heavenly forces were not responsible. But within a day this was forgotten as everyone tried to shift the issue to the looting.

When New York City was plunged into darkness Wednesday evening, capitalist social reality came into sharp focus. It was palpably there: the blind irrationality, the oppressive and desperate poverty and racism, the organized state terror, the fear and violence, and not least the official moralizing hypocrisy and mendacity. The proof of the cancerous disintegration of America's cities could not have been more dramatic.

For 24 hours New York was turned off by the criminal Con Ed, from above the Bronx to below the Battery. On the posh East Side of Manhattan there were those who tried to recreate the bonhomie of the 1965 blackout, partying outside their high-rise apartments with champagne. But in the heart of the slums, tens of thousands of ghetto residents—some looting, some watch-



New York Post photograph by DeMaria © 1977, New York Post Corporation

Cop (left) transferring prisoners from station house to paddy wagon during power blackout.

ing, some simply trying to get home—fought with the cops through the heat of the night and into the next day.

While the looting is clearly being used as a cover-up, it was this social phenomenon that marked Blackout '77 as something more than a dangerous inconvenience on a grand scale. There can be no discussion of this social disaster that ignores or tries to deny such a fundamental fact. For when the lights came on again, Brooklyn's Broadway was reduced to rubble; Bedford Stuyvesant, Harlem, Williamsburg and the South Bronx looked like targets of World War II firebombing. And thou-

sands of prisoners, some of them undoubtedly looters and many picked up randomly in police dragnets, were packed into hot-box cells, chained together in unspeakably barbaric conditions.

An intense spotlight was cast on the social conditions of this rotting imperialism. The capitalist class responds to such illumination with a political response that resembles the pupil of the human eye: the more light shed upon its grim reality, the more it contracts around the defense of its private property and the ideological values needed for its defense.

Who Are the Looters?

New Yorkers had plenty to be angry about over the blackout. After a day of record-breaking 98-degree heat and air thick with humidity, they found themselves completely immobilized in the dark for the second time in twelve years. Traffic lights went out and many were forced to spend the night wherever they were at the time. Others stumbled along with flashlights and candles on the meanest streets in the country. They climbed up dark stairwells to apartments without water and seemingly

without air. The sick lined the corridors of hospitals, and when generators failed, nurses pumped air-bag respirators by hand. Doctors performed emergency operations by flashlight and car headlight in parking lots. Fires raged, food rotted. Who knows how many have died as a result: the newspapers are admitting to only three, a patent absurdity in a city of millions.

Who had really looted the city? Every New Yorker knows perfectly well that it is Con Ed, a rapacious legal monopoly that is the object of near-universal hatred. The power company is so despised that it doesn't even bother with the usual kind of image-building "public-service" advertising. It's hopeless and unnecessary. But Con Ed was not alone in its looting. This is only the latest and most dramatic assault upon a population that has been the victim of a long string of attacks. In a single 24-hour period it was subjected to a concentrated blast of what has been the policy of the capitalist class toward New York City ever since Gerald Ford told it to "Drop Dead."

The total denial of a vital social service symbolized in an instant the war

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Clean-up crew on burned out block in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Wide World

"Far Left" in the Spanish Elections/6

While State Police Scabherd

Company Guards Shoot Up Indiana UAW Picket Line

After over three months of striking and countless incidents of brutal company violence, a small United Auto Workers (UAW) local near Elwood, Indiana, is fighting for its life. The 220 strikers have withstood gunfire from professional strikebreakers, nearly 80 arrests, cop scabherding and picket-limiting court injunctions. The workers, four-fifths of them women, now face an attempt by Essex Incorporated to decertify the union with the votes of scabs escorted into the plant under the protection of Indiana state troopers. The small factory, 40 miles northwest of Indianapolis, lies deep in the corn belt, but it is the site of the UAW's sharpest battle this summer. And the strikers have plenty to be angry about with wages at a scandalous \$2.76 an hour, an outrage for a powerful union like the Auto Workers.

Essex Inc. has hired gunmen to break the strike, which began April 6. At 2 a.m. on July 11, one of these guards shot 25-year-old picket Carol Frye in the back. She remains hospitalized in an intensive care ward, with no feeling in her upper legs and with the bullet still lodged in her back. Though Frye's uniformed assailants were seen running into company buildings, no arrests were made.

To prevent the strikers from responding in force to this cowardly shooting, Indiana governor Otis R. Bowen rushed in 60 riot-trained state troopers that same day to disperse over 200 outraged union supporters who had gathered on the picket lines and to strictly enforce a court injunction limiting the union to five pickets. UAW Region 3 representative James Johnson remarked to reporters: "I think Essex without question wanted to see this thing blow up so they could get the Indiana State Police in and they were successful in doing that" (*Detroit News*, 13 June).

The company is expected to start

bringing in scabs again any day and the state troopers are on round-the-clock duty to make sure they are not "bothered." Union spokesmen say Essex' strategy is to get enough scabs hired to attempt to decertify the UAW at Elwood. It is following an identical strategy at a plant near Toronto, where there is also a strikebreaking injunction against mass picketing.

Essex was well-prepared for the strike. Even before the walkout began, the company erected an eight-foot wire fence topped with barbed wire around company property. Armed guards circulated in the parking lot harassing workers. Two professional strikebreaking outfits were brought in to terrorize the strikers and protect the scabs. First, the All States Security Patrol was retained from Detroit. All States advertises "uniformed armed and un-armed guards for any occasion." Their motto: "To help you keep your company straight...don't debate." Currently a gang from Toledo, the A.J. Investigative Bureau, is being used. When Essex resumed production five weeks ago with scabs, the goons, backed up by county police, met the strikers' resistance with savage force.

For weeks the guards fired on pickets and Local 1663's leased property near the plant's main gate, perforating the bus and trailers which serve as strike headquarters and where the strikers often gather. Shots came from holes cut into Essex' sandbagged building and from vents on the roof. A woman told *WV* of diving behind a wall for cover during these attacks. Pickets have been slugged with clubs and lashed with rubber hoses by the arrogant strikebreakers. One striker was hit in the face with a log thrown by the guards. Many pickets have been hit with ball bearings fired from highly accurate "wrist rockets"—high-powered slingshots. Several pickets have been struck by gate-crashing cars driven by the management, guards and scabs. Company snipers have even launched flares to light the night sky for their shooting.

When one militant attempted to photograph a helicopter used to fly in food and supplies for strikebreakers, a riot shotgun was aimed straight at her. In addition to the .38 caliber revolvers which the guards flaunt on their hips, a perfunctory police "search" of the guards' quarters turned up several rifles and shotguns which were "catalogued" but not confiscated. Instead, FBI agents, who have been brought in to help the strikebreaking, interrogated strikers concerning charges that they had fired on the scabs' helicopter.

No UAW members have scabbed and no Teamsters have driven past picket lines, but non-union truck drivers have passed the lines throughout the strike. When workers heard rumors that these trucks were taking molds from the factory to continue operations elsewhere, militants attempted to stop them and a striker was pinned to a fence by a semi-trailer truck.

The workers at Essex were not about to stand by and watch their strike broken. Together with husbands, sons and boyfriends, they armed themselves with baseball bats and clubs and fought it out with scabs, cops and company goons. Though the number of scabs grew from an initial 30 up to 88, they were made to pay for their union-busting work. Some scabs did not return after a trip through the picket line; others entered with shattered car windows.



Grey/N.Y. Times

State troopers deployed against striking UAW pickets.

A local cop described the Elwood situation as a "little Vietnam" and one worker likened the struggle to the Harlan County miners' strike in 1974. The conflict in Elwood bears a striking resemblance, both in the viciousness of the bosses and the grim determination of the workers, to the bitter miners' strike currently going on in Stearns, Kentucky, where hired gun thugs and militant miners have been squared off for months.

When on Thursday, July 7, county sheriff John Gunter claimed his exhausted 13-man force could no longer handle the situation and pulled them out of the dispute, the strikers proved more than a match for their armed assailants. The workers succeeded in shutting off the flow of scabs, leaving 34 foremen and guards in the factory. The company claims that for the next four days, the guards were pinned down by hundreds of rounds of gunfire. Only with the arrival of two squadrons of state troopers Monday night, and after the cowardly thugs had gunned down Carol Frye, did the guards manage to get out of the plant under police protection. Though Essex has only brought a handful of scabs back into the plant since this confrontation, the company has announced its intention to resume production again soon with scabs. The state troopers are at the plant gates, ready to escort them in. The sudden appearance of the state cops, ostensibly to maintain law and order after weeks in which company thugs were firing indiscriminately at the picketers, demonstrates convincingly their role as armed strikebreakers for the bosses.

A racial factor was introduced into the strike by Essex' use of some blacks as scabs. On a sign constructed by the strikers listing various scabs' names, one of them clearly says "Nigger." Moreover, Indiana is historically a center for the violently racist, anti-labor Ku Klux Klan. While keeping out all scabs, black or white, the strikers must not let themselves be duped into poisonous race-baiting. Neither Essex nor the Klan must be allowed to divert the Elwood workers from their clear-cut class fight.

The workers were provoked into the strike by the below poverty-level wages and benefits at Essex. Base pay is \$2.76 per hour, which equals about \$80 per week take-home. Essex has offered to increase this by only 62 cents over three years. Sickness and accident benefits are \$35 per week up to a maximum of 13 weeks. Hospitalization, accidental death and dismemberment coverage

amounts to \$3,000 under Essex' new offer, which as one worker remarked to *WV* is not enough for a decent funeral. Essex provides neither cost-of-living pay nor pensions.

Although the union's bargainers reduced the number of their demands from 77 to 16, Local president Paul Couch told *WV* that the company would review only half of the old contract and simply proposes to delete the rest. Essex also wants to eliminate the job bidding procedure in the plant and demanded that the union pay its committeemen for "excessive" union business on the shop floor.

The union seeks a "substantial" pay increase, which Region 3 spokesman Johnson told *WV* should be about \$1.20 per hour over three years. This raise would still leave Essex workers in 1980 making less than half the amount most auto workers receive! UAW negotiators also seek a modest pension plan, improved sickness and accident benefits and a \$5,000 insurance package. But the Local president indicated the willingness of the UAW bargainers to give in on even these minimal demands: "We could settle in between anywhere."

Workers bitterly complain of Essex' "take it or leave it" bargaining stance, which forced rotten contracts on the local in 1970 and 1973. The 1973 contract was extended 12 months, with a 25-cent wage increase. This year, in the face of company intransigence, the workers decided to fight. *WV* asked Johnson how the union leadership could tolerate such wages in a UAW plant. Johnson lamely answered: "We've only had the plant seven years."

Essex' Elwood plant is not some barely-making-it, small-time operation. The company owns or leases some 155 plants. Half are non-union and the remainder are organized separately by the UAW, Teamsters, IBEW and other unions. There is no national contract, and so Essex can bring the full force of the corporation to bear on the separate plants one at a time. Essex Incorporated is fully owned by the conglomerate United Technology (UT), which bought the company in 1974. In 1976 UT was the 35th-largest corporation in the U.S., with over \$5.1 billion in sales. Between a quarter and a third of Essex' sales are to Ford and Chrysler. The Elwood factory itself sells 80 percent of its plastic auto-wiring connectors to Ford, Chrysler and General Motors.

To win this strike, militants in the auto plants must demand that the union

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Islamic Army Coup in Pakistan

After four months of seething turmoil and bloody confrontations, the Pakistani military filled the "vacuum created by politicians" by clapping the feuding politicians behind bars. On July 5 army chief of staff Zia ul-Haq proclaimed on nationwide radio: "The Bhutto regime is ended." He announced that the prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, members of his cabinet and leaders of the opposition coalition—the Muslim-conservative Pakistan National Alliance (PNA)—had been placed under "preventive detention." With a four-man Martial Law Council promising to hold "free and fair elections" in the fall, the crisis which left 350 dead and thousands injured has been temporarily frozen.

Bhutto's "Islamic Socialism" demagoguery had proved incapable of stemming massive outrage over widespread vote-rigging in the March 7 general elections. Ambitious PNA leaders sought to drive him from office and recoup their ballot-box losses through street protests and a parliamentary boycott. They capitalized on mass grievances over the regime's blatant corruption, the failure of land reform, Bhutto's ties to the landed aristocracy and discrimination against the people of Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier province. While keeping one or two PNA leaders available for backroom bargaining and offering limited concessions, the prime minister had imposed martial law on several cities, arrested an estimated 20-30,000 protestors and unleashed savage police repression (see "Riots in Pakistan Shake Bhutto Government," *WV* No. 159, 29 April).

In mid-June, under pressure from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan's other oil-rich benefactors, Bhutto struck a deal with the opposition for new elections in October. The experienced horse-trader salvaged everything he could. He turned back demands for his resignation which had galvanized the mass anti-government marches in April and May. He blocked an interim PNA role in the regime and, by scheduling a new election rather than a re-run, evaded an official admission that the March 7 polls were fraudulent. The agreement evidently stuck in the craw of some of the more intransigent opposition leaders, and on July 4 the negotiations deadlocked over the mechanisms for supervising the October ballot. The army took over the next day.

The bloodless coup, consummated in about five hours with no apparent opposition, had the cooperation of high officials in the state bureaucracy. General Zia replaced the four Bhutto-loyal provincial governors with chief justices of the high courts, created a post of senior federal secretary to act as liaison between the junta and the nearly two dozen government ministries and announced that president Fazle Elahi Chaudhury had agreed to continue in office. Prior to the takeover the Punjab high court had ruled against the imposition of martial law in Lahore.

The military had shown signs of mounting discontent with Bhutto's inability to contain the unrest with anything short of brute force. In late April the foreign minister met informally with a large number of military officers at the Fleet Club in Karachi. Several of them denounced the political gag on the PNA and demanded to know if martial law would lead to a "repetition of 1971" when the army was ordered to slaughter civilians in East Pakistan, now Bangladesh (*New York Times*, 16 May).

Bhutto relied heavily on the paramilitary Federal Security Police to do his dirty work, but on May 6 soldiers in

Lahore were ordered to open fire on a crowd of demonstrators. Use of the predominantly Punjabi soldiers in the Punjab's principal city brought immediate indications of dissent within the army. Rumors that three brigadiers commanding sectors of the city had offered their resignations were not denied by the Defense Ministry (*Guardian* [London], 13 May).

The opposition stepped up its appeals to the armed forces to "save Pakistan" by ousting the government and organizing new elections. A key PNA spokesman, former air marshal Asghar Khan, particularly played on the military's long-standing links with U.S. imperialism. He blamed Bhutto's "stupid and disgraceful statement" accusing the U.S. of conspiring with the opposition because of Washington's refusal to sell 100 A-7 fighter-bombers to Pakistan. Khan also praised Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade as "a breath of fresh air" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 June).

The bourgeois press, both in Pakistan and the West, has generally endorsed the military's self-proclaimed role as a "neutral" mediator standing above politics. In a lead editorial on 6 July, the *New York Times* wrote of the generals' decision to take power:

"Their action, it should be noted, was not accompanied by ringing manifestoes or by any of the self-justifying rhetoric about 'historic mission' or 'national purification' that so often...are the first words of military dictatorships. For thirteen years, from 1958 to 1971, Pakistan's armed forces had ample time to learn just how difficult the job of governing can be. Now, General Zia says, they seek only a civilian government with a legitimate popular base.... 'The friends of Pakistan must hope that General Zia will...prove to have the courage of his apparently admirable convictions.'"

To a degree, the military in Pakistan stands somewhat apart from the fractious rivalries of the tribal and regional organizations, religious and personality cults that pass for political parties. Along with the state bureaucracy, it is the most cohesive bourgeois institution in the country. While the Muslim traders and upper petty bourgeoisie who created the state of Pakistan (with the connivance of British imperialism and the Indian National Congress) were a



Ousted prime minister Bhutto.



Lallont/Sygma

Right-wing oppositionists of the Pakistan National Alliance are arrested under martial law in May.



Lachon/Liaison

Demonstrators face police in Lahore after Bhutto proclaimed martial law.

weak and atomized stratum in pre-partition India, Muslim soldiers, trained at Sandhurst and Dehra Dun, were an integral part of the British colonial army. Thus, Zia and his cohorts see themselves as representing the stability and general interests of the Pakistan ruling class as a whole against the venal ambitions of individual politicians.

Even when not exercising power directly, the military has held the balance of power in various "guided" civilian governments. In 1958 a senior civil servant, Iskander Mirza, asked the army to help him end the chaos of competitive politics. Three weeks later army chief Ayub Khan kicked Mirza out and made himself president. Bhutto, the exponent of so-called "people's power," held numerous cabinet posts in the military/bureaucratic regime. A turbulent strike wave and mass student protests in late 1968-early 1969 drove Ayub from office, but the armed forces' ruling circle simply substituted another military despot, Yahya Khan. After December 1971 the military was so tarnished by the massacres in East Pakistan and its defeat by the Indian army that it required the facelift of a "civilian" regime and simply handed the reins of government over to Bhutto.

But the demagogic Bhutto overplayed his hand in the elections this year, providing a focus for the pent-up resentments of the undernourished, illiterate and disease-ridden populace, and creating a dilemma for the army. On the one hand, no figure in the ruling Pakistan People's Party could be credibly proposed as an alternative to

the domineering prime minister. (Zia took the wily politician at his word: "I am the People's Party and they are all my creatures" [*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 May].) On the other, the nine-party PNA is a marriage of convenience, tenuously held together only by mutual ambitions and resentment of the arrogant Bhutto. Since this conglomeration will hardly be able to govern it may well be that, elections or no elections, the "Army [is] there to stay in Pakistan," as the London *Financial Times* (7 July) headlined an editorial. This prospect holds ominous consequences for the

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Australian Secret Police Target Spartacists

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Since its establishment by the Labor government of Prime Minister Ben Chifley in 1949, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) has devoted the overwhelming bulk of its resources to surveillance, infiltration and harassment of radical and labour organisations. In the last two years, three ASIO agents have been uncovered in the ostensibly Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP): Max Wechsler, Lisa Walter and Ian Gordon.

On Friday, 10 June, the shroud surrounding ASIO's nefarious campaign against the left was pierced again when Janet Langridge, a candidate member of the Spartacist League (SL) since April, voluntarily confessed that she had been a paid agent of ASIO for almost a year. Langridge, 21, was a first-year student at Sydney University and had been a member of the campus Spartacist Club. Together with her boyfriend and accomplice, Mark Tiernan, who was never a member of the SL, Langridge had been submitting reports to ASIO on the Spartacist League since last November. Langridge was expelled by the Spartacist League the same night as she made her confession. The following day Langridge provided further details of her ASIO connections in a taped interview with a solicitor [attorney], Tom Kelly, and a Spartacist spokesman.

Since her confession and subsequent expulsion, Langridge has returned all her internal documents to the SL. She has also co-operated in documenting her ASIO activities by signing the transcript of the interview, providing a statutory declaration confirming her work for ASIO, and revealing further information. After the first interview on 11 June, Langridge was subsequently interviewed by Senator Arthur Gietzelt, George Petersen, New South Wales MLA [Member of Legislative Assembly], and John Edwards, a journalist for the *National Times*. A week later her exposures of ASIO received widespread coverage in the bourgeois press, television and radio. But her co-operation has been inconsistent and vacillating; her break with ASIO has been shown to be incomplete and untrustworthy. After agreeing to break off all relations with both ASIO and Tiernan, Langridge continued seeing Tiernan, who in turn fed information to ASIO, and even allowed herself to be visited by ASIO agents twice.

In the initial interview Langridge recounted that she first applied to ASIO two years ago when Tiernan dared her to do it as a lark. ASIO acknowledged her application with two letters, noting only that it had been considered but that there was no "suitable vacancy" to

which she could be appointed. As later became clear, this was a cover for ASIO's covert recruitment methods.

Almost a year after the letters arrived, Langridge was visited at her flat by two ASIO agents several times and offered a part-time job spying on "targeted" left-wing organisations. They drove Langridge around town, pointing out the headquarters of the SWP, the Communist Party of Australia and the pro-Moscow Socialist Party (SPA). According to Langridge, the agents told her that her first target "would be very soft just to give me background." She would start on a part-time basis, with relatively meagre pay. She accepted. She was given a declaration to sign committing her not to divulge any information about her connection with ASIO.

Of the two agents who initially visited Langridge, one, known to her only as Ken, stopped coming after the first few visits. The other, named Terry Poulus, was to be her ASIO "contact." Langridge was given a special direct phone number, 92-7920, to reach Poulus at ASIO headquarters without having to go through a receptionist, as well as Poulus' home phone number, 625-5660. Poulus would generally pick her up in an unmarked car after she left work at the Council of Auctioneers and Agents in St. Leonards to receive her written reports and pay her \$50 per month in cash, tax free. She signed receipts for the money under a pseudonym supplied by ASIO, Jan Thomson.

In October 1976, Poulus directed Langridge to visit the SPA bookshop and make contact with the Young Socialist League (YSL), youth group of the SPA. On her first visit Langridge was invited to an SPA barbecue and shortly thereafter started attending YSL meetings and other events.

It was over a month later, in late November, that Langridge bought a paper from an *Australasian Spartacist* seller. ASIO was pleased; they told her the SL was an important "target," having never before been infiltrated. She was encouraged to contact the SL through the phone number listed in the paper. Following the initial contact Langridge was invited to attend an SL public class series on Marxism which lasted from December until mid-January, during which time she also came to several personal contact sessions and social events. Poulus had warned her that the Trotskyist groups were generally harder to infiltrate than other organisations, and that the SL was an "extremely hard target." According to ASIO's "expert" on left-wing organisations, Poulus said, the SL was politically the hardest of the left-wing groups in Australia.



Janet Langridge, self-confessed cop agent.

When, in January, Langridge was accepted to go to university and the SL began making increasingly heavy demands on her time, she began to express doubts to ASIO about continuing her involvement with either ASIO or the SL. Poulus offered her a twelve-month contract at \$600 per month, again tax free, and arranged a meeting at the Artarmon Motor Inn for her and the head of the Sydney office and a special agent flown up from the head office, who were introduced to Langridge as Bill and Laurie. Laurie's surname was subsequently given as Pollard. (Another unconfirmed report indicates Pollard may actually be the head of ASIO in Sydney.) Langridge again accepted.

In addition to the sort of information she had gathered on the SPA/YSL—names, addresses and car license numbers, reports on meetings and activities—there were particular questions ASIO had for Langridge with regard to the SL. Poulus wanted her to determine the method of elections to and the composition of the SL's leading bodies, detailed information on floor plans and locks in the SL offices, what relations the SL had with international co-thinkers—particularly from a financial aspect. ASIO wanted to know about the personal lives of individual members and any personal tensions that might exist; they could use such information, Poulus told her. Curiously, ASIO's interest showed a distinct sexist bias, focusing overwhelmingly on information concerning male comrades.

Indicating the high level of routine ASIO surveillance of the left and in this

Letter to Attorney General

19 June 1977
Hon R J Ellicott, QC, MP,
Attorney General, Parliament House,
Canberra, ACT.

An individual by the name of Janet Langridge has recently admitted to having been paid up to \$600 a month by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) to spy on our organisation. Documentation of her admissions is being made available to the public. These spying activities, carried out over a period of eight months, constitute an intolerable violation of our democratic rights. We are a fully legal political organisation, entitled to carry on our activities, openly propagating our political views, without subversive infiltration by government bodies. The government has no right whatsoever to pry into our internal affairs, seeking information the only conceivable purpose of which is to facilitate harassment and repressive action against us.

This is the fourth exposure of ASIO spying on left-wing groups in Australia in a little over two years. Left-wing groups are singled out for special treatment and "surveillance" solely on the basis of their political views. This systematic, politically discriminatory activity is clearly intended to intimidate the left and attack the labour movement as a whole.

At a time when your government is demanding workers give up their rights and submit to "austerity," at a time when your government brutally slashes social service provisions for working people, ASIO lavishes money on its hired informers and snooping operations, to harass critics of these anti-labour policies.

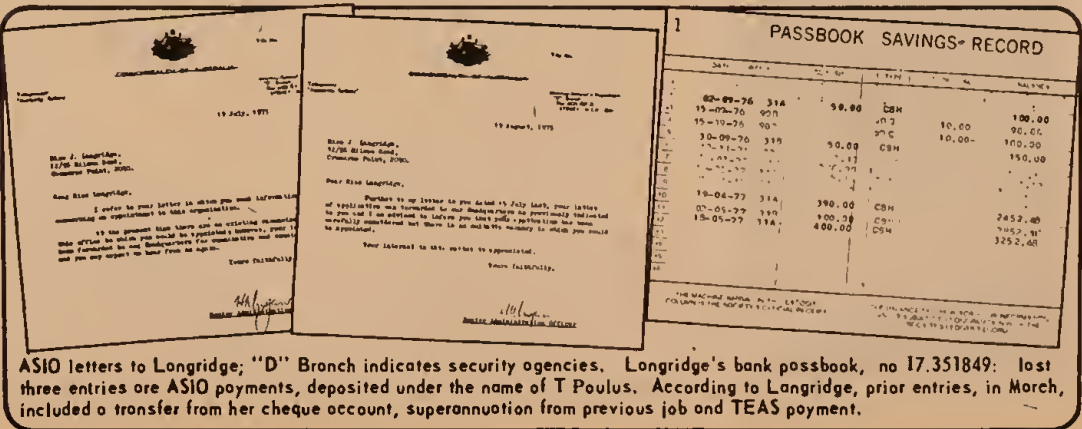
We demand an immediate stop to all government spying on, infiltration and harassment of the socialist and labour movements. We demand the opening of all ASIO's files to the victims of its outrageous prying, and a complete revelation of ASIO's activities against the left and labour movement. We demand that you release full details of ASIO's surveillance and infiltration of the Spartacist League at once. We demand the abolition of ASIO and all political police agencies.

David Scott, for the Spartacist League
copy: Hon Malcolm Fraser, MP,
Prime Minister

case the SL, ASIO told Langridge that they already had the names and addresses of numerous Spartacist members and supporters even before her infiltration. They also had at least one photograph of an SL supporter, which was shown to her for identification.

ASIO took measures to cover up Langridge's income, augmenting it indirectly in the process. They encouraged her to accept her TEAS allowance and not reveal her ASIO salary. To make sure she didn't appear to be living beyond her means and draw suspicion, most of the money would be banked in her account at St. George's Building Society in Crows Nest and ASIO would keep the passbook, showing it to her regularly to verify that deposits were being made.

ASIO also began paying Tiernan up to \$75 per month in cash for giving Langridge "moral support." Tiernan, an apprentice electrical fitter at Delairco, 90 Sussex Street, Sydney (he attends courses one day a week at North Sydney Technical College), was fully aware of Langridge's spying activities from the start. Though he accompanied her to SL classes and social events and for a time expressed interest in joining the SL, Tiernan did not have the fibre necessary to infiltrate the SL, with the rigorous



ASIO letters to Langridge; "D" Branch indicates security agencies. Langridge's bank passbook, no 17.351849: lost three entries are ASIO payments, deposited under the name of T Poulus. According to Langridge, prior entries, in March, included a transfer from her cheque account, superannuation from previous job and TEAS payment.

demands of bolshevik professionalism SL membership would impose. But this lackey remained loyal to ASIO to the end. When Langridge phoned him to say that she was about to turn herself in to the SL on the Friday evening, Tiernan warned ASIO, thereby making further exposure difficult. On Sunday, 12 June, he met with Poulus to report on Langridge's confession, and then accompanied Poulus on a visit to Langridge's home.

On the second visit on Wednesday, 15 June, Poulus and Pollard attempted to persuade Langridge to repudiate the confession she made in the taped interview. Assuring her there were no hard feelings, Pollard (who did most of the talking) sneered that all the left groups jump on the bandwagon of popular issues. (Evidently he was thinking of the SWP.) He affected an attitude of social concern: some of these popular issues were very fine. During the Vietnam Moratorium day, he whined, it was difficult to get anyone to infiltrate left groups because everyone supported the Moratorium—even he did. Consider how the revelations would affect ASIO's public image and the work of its field agents and the embarrassment they would cause "poor" Poulus, he pleaded. This time she refused.

Langridge revealed her spy role to the SL, she claims, because she came to "respect them and... what they stand for and I don't respect myself for what I've been doing." This may well be true. The truth of the class struggle and the honesty, dedication and commitment of those fighting for the cause of proletarian revolution have often proved more attractive than the bourgeoisie's blood money. ASIO's "major fear," according to Langridge, was that she might follow in the steps of ex-ASIO agent Lisa Walter, who exposed her ASIO connections after infiltrating the SWP in Adelaide and then "turning."

But the social democrats of the SWP, instead of expelling this self-confessed former police spy, trumpeted her conversion to socialism and kept her in the organisation. In fact when Ian Gordon, a long-time SWP member, last month confessed to the SWP leadership to having been bought off by ASIO money, even he was not expelled—his resignation was "demanded" (*Direct Action*, 2 June). Unlike the SWP, there is no place in our organisation for "turned" agent Langridge. For a fistful of dollars and a few kicks Langridge and Tiernan were prepared to hand working-class militants over to the ruling class's apparatus of repression.

They cannot be trusted. Principled socialist militants will not want to have anything to do with these people—yesterday's or today's police pimps. Tiernan's co-workers should want to purge their workplace of infection by this unrepentant ASIO accomplice. The Electrical Trades Union should keep him out of its ranks. He is a conscious enemy of the workers movement.

What broke Langridge was the SL's bolshevik discipline and programmatic integrity. Langridge noted that ASIO considered the SL a "hard target" because our politics "went into a lot more depth and there's a lot more expected of a person." But apparently basing their observations of Trotskyist organisations on the menshevik SWP, ASIO hardly comprehended what that meant. When Langridge complained of overwork they suggested that she stop attending an internal SL class series. She replied that she could not do that—that wasn't how the SL functioned.

Despite the utmost vigilance on the part of revolutionists, it must be assumed that the bourgeoisie's secret police agencies can penetrate our ranks. But the promiscuous slander mongering and paranoid cop-baiting of renegades like the Healyite Socialist Labour League create an atmosphere of apolitical mistrust within the entire workers movement which only facilitates the work of the secret police. The best defence against police infiltration into the workers movement is to maintain a high level of political debate unmarred by slander and violence. Genuine revolutionists respond to police infiltration not by coddling inherently untrustworthy "turned" agents, nor by spreading vicious, unsubstantiated rumours, but by exposing actual, known agents to the entire left and workers movement.

Symptomatic of ASIO's cynical disdain for the bourgeois legality it claims to defend is its non-payment of taxes on its hirelings' wages. Nor does ASIO's charter, as defined by the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Act of 1956 (quoted in *National Times*, 16-21 May), "to obtain, correlate and evaluate intelligence relevant to security..." on any rational interpretation encompass investigations of the personal habits of left-wing activists or infiltration of socialist organisations. Social democrats and liberals will raise a hue and cry over such "excesses" and demand that the secret police be reformed. For Gough Whitlam it is sufficient for ASIO to be run by a judge to guarantee its propriety. The liberal Committee for the Abolition of

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2,000 Pickets Shut Down General Dynamics



Evening Globe [Boston]

Cops try unsuccessfully to take General Dynamics management past mass picket line at struck Quincy shipyards.

BOSTON, July 18—Twenty-five strikers were arrested this morning following a confrontation between police and a 2,000-strong mass picket line at the General Dynamics (GD) Fore River shipyard in Quincy, Massachusetts. The shipyard, just outside Boston, was struck at midnight last night by two locals of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipyard Workers of America (IUMSWA) and by morning 2,000 strikers were on the line when police tried to pass management through. But despite the mobilization of over 100 cops, the local authorities failed to clear a path for the scabs and one cop was hospitalized while six others received minor injuries for their strikebreaking activities.

However, the mass picket line was dissolved shortly after by IUMSWA Local 5 president Stanley Kyler under threat of a court injunction from an NLRB attorney summoned up by the company on a few hours' notice. According to the evening *Boston Globe*, Kyler's bullhorn-amplified announcement limiting the lines to 100 picketers "could barely be heard over the loud boos from the strikers." Thus the stage has been set for a replay of the bitterly fought 17-week strike at the Quincy yards in the summer of 1974.

The Quincy shipyard is one of only three major industrial establishments in the greater Boston area. It is currently the world's largest builder of liquefied natural gas (LNG) tankers, and one of the state's ten largest industrial employers. Riding the crest of the oil-company orchestrated energy pseudo-crisis, the Quincy shipyard has acquired \$1.4 billion worth of LNG tanker contracts, and is seeking more.

However, under the current IUMSWA contract, mechanics at Quincy continue to earn considerably less than at competing LNG-tanker shipyards, and fully a dollar an hour less than workers at the nearby Bethlehem Steel Shipyard in East Boston! Adding importance to the strike is the integrated character of the union in the racially-polarized Boston area, where racist violence continues to rule the streets in large sections of Boston's white ethnic communities. A decisive victory for the strong shipyard workforce, which has tripled its size in the last three years, could infuse militancy into Boston's weak and battered labor movement.

But the policies of the business-unionist IUMSWA leadership do not bode well for a strike victory. Whereas three years ago, at least a court injunction was needed to halt mass picketing, this time one picket-line chat with a solitary NLRB attorney did the trick. (Subsequently, GD management has petitioned for a court injunction against stopping scabs.) Already this year, several small strikes in the Boston area have been smashed by police-protected scabherding. Only mass picket lines and mobilization of broad support can protect the Quincy shipbuilders from a similar fate. However, the anti-communism and goon-squad tactics of the Kyler leadership, who threatened to have cops remove a few Spartacist League supporters from the picket lines, is just the kind of self-defeating bureaucratism that will ensure the isolation of the embattled Quincy strikers.

Victory to the Quincy Shipbuilders! Rebuild the Mass Picket Lines! ■

Press Covered Spy Case



FORUM

Carter's "Human Rights" Crusade—Imperialist Chief Exploits Stalinist Crimes
Defend the Gains of the October Revolution!

Speaker: Paul Collins
SL Central Committee

Date: Friday, July 29, 1977
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Jane Addams House,
3212 North Broadway,
Room 201

Date: Friday, August 5, 1977
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Red Rose Bookstore,
1774 West Greenleaf

CHICAGO

For more information call (312) 427-0003



MCE election rally.

Sygma



PCE and PSOE election posters in Madrid.

M. Lopez Rodriguez

"Far Left" in the Spanish Elections

The Spanish parliamentary elections of June 15 marked a large step toward the realization of Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez' plans to reform the Francoist dictatorship into a semi-bonapartist regime, euphemistically termed "Spanish democracy." This must be recognized as a victory for a previously discredited regime which has balanced for months on the brink of mass proletarian upheavals which could have toppled it in a matter of hours. The Iberian bourgeoisie breathed a collective sigh of relief when the polls closed without major incidents and vote counts gave the largest totals to Suárez' Democratic Center (CD) and the Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) of Felipe González.

That these tightly orchestrated elections were brought off successfully was above all the work of the mass reformist workers parties, the social-democratic PSOE and the Communist Party (PCE), who systematically frustrated mass demonstrations and general strike actions in order not to endanger the shaky Juan Carlos monarchy. Although their own legalization was due precisely to these illegal mobilizations of the combative Spanish proletariat, they were called off as soon as they threatened to go beyond the bounds of token protests.

But the election of the first post-Franco Cortes (parliament) by no means spelled the end of the Juan Carlos/Suárez regime's problems, as could be seen in the 20 percent devaluation of the peseta on July 12. This action, which will cause a drastic increase in the cost of living for the working masses, is only one of a series of austerity measures which powerful banking houses are clamoring for and which the government must implement if it is to avoid a massive flight of capital.

In the wake of the elections, Felipe González had proclaimed that the Socialists would not support a classic austerity policy. But when consulted by Suárez about the devaluation, the PSOE leader played the role of "his majesty's loyal opposition," declaring that his reaction was "positive" (*Le Monde*, 13 July). However, this acceptance is no guarantee at all that the unionized workers will not seek to recoup their losses through massive wage demands in the fall.

González' opportunist shillyshallying on the government's austerity policies was typical of the behavior of both the PSOE and PCE during the campaign.

The PSOE took on somewhat leftist airs, accusing the CD of being virtually interchangeable with the Francoist hardliners of the Alianza Popular (AP), and accusing the Communist Party of being pro-monarchist. The PCE, in turn, tried to appear "moderate" by aggressively proclaiming its "Eurocommunism" and concentrating its attacks on the AP "bunker." However, after the electioneering was over both the mass reformist parties made clear their intention to cooperate with the government.

The Popular Front Axis

In the last several years, as the dictatorship began to totter and a pre-revolutionary situation opened up, the axis of political developments in the opposition has been the popular front. By linking and subordinating the workers parties to liberal/"progressive" sectors of the bourgeoisie, the Carrillos and González could dampen the militancy of the proletariat "in order not to frighten our allies and thus break the democratic front." Beginning in 1971 with regional groupings (the Asamblea de Catalunya) and prominent politicians (the Pact for Liberty), two separate popular fronts (dominated by the PCE and PSOE respectively) emerged, which united early last year in the Coordinación Democrática. During this time most of the large demonstrations were called in the name of the various popular fronts rather than by the workers parties.

But after this period of broadening and unifying of the popular front formations, beginning late last year they suddenly became "marginalized." Thus in the June elections the PSOE and PCE ran independently of each other and their erstwhile Christian Democratic allies. Does this indicate a shift to the left? Not at all. Rather, matters had become so delicate that any mobilization of the left could bring down the isolated Suárez cabinet, and González/Carrillo preferred to limit themselves to bargaining directly with the government.

In the December 20 referendum on a vague program for "democratization," the parties of the Coordinación Democrática called for abstention. However, instead of fighting for an active boycott—calling for a political general strike against the sham referendum, holding mass demonstrations demanding the immediate granting of democratic rights, etc.—the reformists and

their bourgeois coalition partners did nothing at all. As a result, since the issue then appeared to the masses as a choice between Francoism and "reform," and there was no revolutionary alternative, Suárez was able to successfully execute his referendum maneuver.

In early February, after the cold-blooded assassinations of five lawyers associated with the CC.OO., the Communist Party called off further protests after two days, alleging the threat of a coup d'état. Its answer was the traditional policy of all reformists: if you don't resist, the class enemy won't attack. Justifying later this treacherous order, which cut short the developing momentum toward a nationwide general strike, PCE leader Simón Sánchez Montero said: "What would have happened if the PCE had reacted violently after the assassination of the lawyers in Atocha? It is obvious that if we had taken to the streets we wouldn't have legal status today" (quoted in *Combate* [LCR], 26 May).

Since the objective was now to "negotiate" with the government, a more propitious form was found in the selection of a "commission of ten" which supposedly represented the Coordinación Democrática, but actually made it amenable to Suárez by cutting out the smaller groups to the left of the PCE. When the government refused to negotiate a minimum program—not even legalization of all parties or norms for a democratic election—the commission, too, fell apart as each group sought separate audiences with the prime minister to obtain legal status for itself.

But having achieved legalization—due to the regime's fear of a mass explosion in the streets if it did not give in—why didn't the PCE and PSOE renew their previous class-collaborationist alliance? "First, to avoid awakening memories of the popular front of 1936, which led to the civil war; second, to avoid provoking a bipolarization of Spanish political life. A front of the left would doubtless have produced in response a front of the right, and the country would be once again divided in two" (*Le Monde*, 19-20 June). It was necessary to avoid frightening not only the "democratic bourgeoisie" but the army and Francoist ultras as well! Consequently, the Christian Democrats—competing for the same political space as Suárez' Democratic Center—lost their role as guarantors for the bourgeoisie within the popular front, and all but disappeared

as a viable political force.

Thus the absence of a formal popular front in the June elections in no way suggested a move toward class independence by the dominant reformist parties. On the contrary, a popular front was judged to be "too advanced" and a threat to Suárez' reform plans. (Certainly it would have sharply cut into the CD vote.) So during this campaign the main axis of the PCE/PSOE class collaboration was an implicit deal with the government not to heat up the elections. However, the fundamental framework of the reformists' policy remains the popular front, and we will doubtless soon see its formal reappearance. Especially given the 40 percent share of the popular vote won by the PCE/PSOE, the Communist and Socialist bureaucrats need the cover of the popular front to mask their refusal to fight for their supposed aims of socialism.

Because of the reformist workers parties' popular-front policy and support to the Suárez government, the Spartacist tendency called for *conditional opposition* to the PCE and PSOE candidates in the June 15 elections. We called on the working-class ranks of these parties to force their leaders to break from their bourgeois allies as a condition to any electoral support. The popular front was key.

Boycott the Elections?

Although the entire Spanish "far left" remains illegal, in the two months before the elections it became clear that they would be able to field candidates under electoral fronts, although it would require considerable work and expenditure to obtain the thousands of signatures necessary to place them on the ballot. This new situation deeply divided the groups to the left of the PCE over the question of whether or not to participate in the elections, and if so under what program.

Several organizations of the so-called "far left" responded by calling for a boycott of the Cortes elections. These included the Vargate Partido Obrero Revolucionario de España (PORE), the "Maoist" Partido Comunista de España-Reconstituido (PCE-R), the shell of the anarchist CNT labor federation, one wing of the fractured Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista (POUM), the Lambertist Organización Cuarta Internacionalista (OCI), and the Liga Comunista de España (LCE, a sympathizing section of the

Pabloist "United Secretariat" [USec]).

The CNT's boycott position was based on anarchist traditions of electoral abstentionism, and the PCE-R (which supports the mysterious terrorist group GRAPO) bases theirs on the adventurist assertion that "Now is not the hour of votes but of barricades" (*Bandera Roja*, May 1977). The POUM, PORE, OCI and LCE, however, all argue for boycott on the grounds that the elections were manifestly undemocratic, and an integral part of Suárez' plans for "Francoist reform." Thus a joint statement by the LCE and Spanish OCI declares:

"...these elections are the ultimate desperate attempt of the Spanish bourgeoisie, of the imperialist bourgeoisies which back it, of the Kremlin bureaucracy and its satellite bureaucracies to uphold the continuity of the Francoist state and lend a shameful legitimacy to Juan Carlos."

Informations Ouvrières, 2 June 1977

The premise that these elections are a key element of Suárez' plans to consolidate a strong-state regime rooted in the Franco dictatorship is correct. That is why we wrote in "No to 'Reformed' Francoism!" (*WV* No. 161, 10 June 1977) that "A mass revolutionary party would seek to do away with this abomination of a pseudo-parliament by fighting for a fully democratic constituent assembly." We added that "if the mood of the masses was such that it could have a major impact, the communists would call for an active boycott of elections such as those of June 15."

However, it was clear well before the voting that the reformist leaderships had ensured that, with the possible exception of the Basque country, the workers would vote in the Suárez elections. If there were a mass boycott of the vote in Euskadi, we said, Trotskyists would join with the workers in protesting the reign of police terror in those provinces. However, we insisted that "There is no point to calling for a boycott unless there is a real chance of success." For a small revolutionary nucleus to do so alone would be sectarian self-isolation. As it turned out, participation in the Basque provinces was high and boycott calls by some of the nationalists were largely ignored.

The boycott position of a section of the Spanish "far left" ignored the central question of whether the June 15 elections could actually be sidetracked and/or discredited. Since the workers were going to vote anyway, this meant that an important opportunity was lost to bring their program before the masses by running candidates. They also refused to appeal to the Communist and Socialist ranks to force their leaders to break with their bourgeois allies as a condition for critical support. Thus the call for boycotting these elections raised by a small propaganda group in practice amounted to the same thing as the "boycott on principle" posture of ultra-left currents such as the Bordiguists.

In contrast, the Leninist position on participation in bourgeois parliaments and elections is based fundamentally on an analysis of the possibility of going beyond these institutions. As Lenin wrote of the Bolsheviks' tactics toward the 1905 tsarist Duma, "The boycott proved correct at the time, not because non-participation in reactionary parliaments is correct in general, but because we accurately appraised the objective situation, which was leading to the rapid development of the mass strikes first into a political strike, then into a revolutionary strike, and finally into an uprising" ("Left-Wing" Communism—An Infantile Disorder," April-May 1920).

This was not the case, however, in 1906 and particularly 1907 and 1908. Lenin considered the Bolsheviks' boycott of the Duma in the latter years "a most serious error." As he wrote in 1907:

"...to be successful the boycott requires a direct struggle against the old regime, an uprising against it and mass disobedience to it in a large number of cases (such mass disobedience is one of the conditions for preparing an uprising).

Boycott is a refusal to recognize the old regime, a refusal, of course, not in words, but in deeds, i.e., it is something that finds expression not only in cries or the slogans of organisations, but in a definite movement of the mass of the people, who systematically defy the laws of the old regime, systematically set up new institutions, which, though unlawful, actually exist, and so on and so forth.... Unless there is a broad revolutionary upswing, unless there is mass unrest which overflows, as it were, the bounds of the old legality, there can be no question of the boycott succeeding."

—"Against Boycott"

Popular Frontism, Maoist Style

The continuing rightward trajectory of the PCE (acceptance of the monarchy, support for American bases in Spain, praise of Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade, etc.) and the unbridled demagoguery of the PSOE present an opportunity for a revolutionary nucleus to use the elections to address themselves to the worker-militants of these parties. Where Trotskyists are unable to run in these elections, they would seek opportunities to give critical support to groupings in the workers movement which on key issues line up against the class collaboration of the reformists.

Socialist Workers Party leader Felipe González



Jonqueres/Kappa

The largest organizations to the left of the Communist Party all took advantage of the electoral regulations to present candidates in electoral fronts. The large "Maoist"-syndicalist groups—the Partido del Trabajo de España (PTE), the Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores (ORT) and the Movimiento Comunista de España (MCE)—each initiated an electoral front, respectively the Front of the Democratic Left (FDI), the Workers Electoral Slate (AET) and the People's Unity Candidacy (CUP). However, while all were strongly anti-Suárez, none of these candidacies in any way broke with the popular frontism of the PCE/PSOE.

The most important fact in evaluating their campaigns is that the PTE, ORT and MCE belonged to the Coordinación Democrática. While generally advocating greater militancy and occasionally leading important strike actions, all three groups call for an alliance with the bourgeoisie. Thus, for example, the PTE condemned Carrillo for abandoning the Platform of Democratic Organizations (POD), a reincarnation of earlier popular fronts, and the "commission of ten." The POD, it wrote, "because of the broad range of forces it contains, its democratic political program and its offers to negotiate with the government represented an alternative and a serious danger to the reform policy of the Suárez govern-

ment" (*Correo del Pueblo*, 3 March). The ORT has had a similar line of servile class collaboration, and for many weeks this spring its main demand was "the POD must meet!"

With the PCE and PSOE both capitulating before the Juan Carlos monarchy, the CUP and the AET centered their electoral programs on the demand for a "democratic republic." The FDI, led by the somewhat more aggressively opportunist PTE, called for a plebiscite to decide between monarchy and republic. At best, this is simply the classic Stalinist formula for a "two-stage" revolution in which the "first" (read, "only") stage is a bourgeois republic. Consequently, these soft-Maoists are actively searching for bourgeois allies for their mini- and maxi-popular fronts. Despite sometime militancy in labor battles, they are necessarily hostile to the perspective of generalizing the workers' struggles into a proletarian revolution against the regime. Although presently small in size (their combined membership is estimated at 30,000), these "far leftists" could only repeat the tragedy of the Spanish civil war or Allende's Chile, where the working class suffered bloody defeats because it was tied to the class enemy by

the popular front.

All three groupings did poorly in the voting, despite considerable election propaganda, averaging about half a percentage point each. Furthermore, their opportunism got the better of them so that they lost to their allies the few parliamentary seats they won. Thus in Catalonia the PTE ran under the title *Esquerra de Catalunya* together with the *Esquerra Republicana* and *Estat Català*, two bourgeois nationalist parties that are today only a shell of their former selves. This coalition won a single seat, which went to the head of the *Esquerra Republicana*. The MCE, in turn, ran in the Basque provinces (its home base, where it plays a leading role in the workers commissions) in the *Euskadiko Ezkerra* alliance together with the EIA, a recently formed political group associated with the nationalist-terrorist ETA-V. Winning 9.3 percent of the vote in the province of Guipúzcoa, the coalition elected a deputy and a senator, the first close to the EIA and the second an independent lawyer. The ORT-led AET did poorly everywhere.

Capitulation to Popular Frontism, "Trotskyist" Style

The only electoral grouping which was not involved, either directly or through its leading party, in the diverse popular-front coalitions in Spain was the Front for Workers Unity (FUT),

headed by the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR—a sympathizing section of the centrist majority of the USec). The FUT is to the left of the three other "far left" electoral slates. Its program calls for a workers government and puts forward a perspective of "the conquest of socialism in a new state based on workers councils." It also calls for dissolution of the present Cortes and free elections of a constituent assembly, and for nationalization of the banks and large companies.

But the program of the FUT is by no means revolutionary. It includes a call on the state to disband the fascist gangs (a demand which Trotsky opposed as sowing the worst democratic illusions), and the demand "For the Republic!" (*Combate*, special edition in French, undated [May 1977]). While Trotskyists are prepared to defend a bourgeois republic against monarchist, militarist or fascist attempts to seize power (as in the Spanish civil war), to raise the slogan of the (bourgeois) republic independently is to sanction state power in the hands of the capitalist class.

In addition to the LCR, the FUT contains three distinctly smaller "far left" groups: *Acción Comunista*, a tendency which arose from "new working class" theories in the 1960's; the *Organización de la Izquierda Comunista* (OIC), which describes itself as "council communist" and holds that the USSR is "state capitalist"; and the main surviving wing of the POUM, which still hails its "glorious" role during the Barcelona May Days of 1937. The maneuvers among these rather different groups turned the FUT into a chaotic mess, particularly in Barcelona where the LCR was weak and its "irresponsible" bedfellows dominated.

Thus, on the day before the elections *Acción Comunista* withdrew (as it said it had planned to do all along!), thereby invalidating the FUT lists in several provinces! During the last week of the campaign, the OIC launched a project for turning the FUT into an "anti-capitalist people's movement," the guiding conception behind the MCE's CUP (modelled, in turn, on last year's presidential campaign of Major Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho in Portugal). At the same time, the OIC cut off communications with the LCR, and on the morrow of the voting quit the FUT in order to take up discussions with the MCE! According to an article in the organ of the French LCR, *Rouge* (24 June), "The development and public appearance of these differences and the elements of political confusion which they engendered have led the comrades of the [Spanish] LCR to consider that the negative aspects of the FUT outweigh its positive aspects."

The unseriousness of the FUT enterprise, the result of a vain attempt to unite quite disparate groups under a common program, was enough reason for Marxists to refuse to support its candidates. In almost every way it resembled the ill-starred attempt at a joint presidential candidate by the LCI and PRT in Portugal last year, which had to be withdrawn when it was discovered that their choice was a convicted thief of household appliances. But the more fundamental problem with the FUT from the point of view of Trotskyism was its failure to center on the struggle against popular frontism. In fact, in the edition of the FUT program published in French, it does not even mention class collaboration in any way! It merely amounts to a more militant program for democratic rights than the PCE would support, with a few words about socialism in the future; in short, it could have been signed by a Spanish Allende.

A subsequent Catalan version of the FUT program does include a denunciation of "organic accords with bourgeois forces...such as the Coordinación Democrática, the POD, the Commission of Nine, etc." However, it does not

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Con Ed...

(continued from page 1)

of attrition against the population of New York City: the slashing of jobs and services in health, education and transportation. With the willing collusion of the labor fakers—Gotbaum, Shanker, Davis, et al.—the capitalists were able to cripple the unions and bleed the city dry under Big MAC. Not so long ago, the NYC populace saw the bankers and corporations as their enemies, and could have been united behind a labor offensive against the capitalist dictators.

No wonder, then, that the politicians have grasped the looting issue with a vengeance. With the aid of the media they have launched a wide-open racist campaign against "animals" who live in what they call the "jungle habitat." Not Con Ed, nor the banks, nor the bourgeois politicians are the criminals, they cry, but rather the looters. And the solution is familiar: more cops, stiffer sentences. Those who bear the responsibility for the joblessness proclaim the guilt of the ghetto youth whose unemployment rate exceeds 40 percent.

Drop Charges Against the 4,000! Shut Down the Tombs!

Nearly 4,000 alleged looters were rounded up and stuffed into cells that were suddenly "found" for the racist dragnet. The judicial order which closed the Tombs in 1974 was "interpreted" to allow their reopening in the present "emergency" situation. Many of the prisoners have not yet seen a judge, as the city DA's prepare to railroad as many as they can on felony charges. Since it has no evidence, the government's tactic is to put them before a grand jury, whip up a racist hysteria and see if it can get convictions on the basis of a cop's "memory." For the same reason, the papers are now publishing statistics about how many of the arrested have previous criminal records—for the obvious reason that everyone knows the police have no proof. Meanwhile, constitutional procedures were thrown out the window as the "suspects" were booked without opportunity to post bail.

And what prisons they were thrown into! In the arraignment "pens" and the Tombs, thousands who had been indiscriminately swept up stripped to their shorts for a trial by heat. They were brought in shackled wrist to wrist in long lines and dumped into dark, dank holes where the heat exceeded 115 degrees. Often cells as small as ten feet by ten feet contained as many as 40 men or women. Bodies glistened with sweat; they slept one upon another with no bunks or mattresses. They cried for soap, food, mops and medical attention. They got rats, stench and more heat.

It all resembled nothing so much as the "middle passage" of the slave trade. And the liberals who a few months ago



Rebbot/Sygma



Brooklyn factory in flames.

McElroy/Newsweek

wept tears for the cruelty exacted on the fictional young slave Kunta Kinte in *Roots*, while heaping praise on their "humane" society where such things could not occur, joined in a ferocious attack upon the ghetto residents who didn't "pitch in" at this moment of crisis. Mayor Beame, who proclaimed "*Roots* Week" earlier this year, declared he had "no sympathy" for the prison conditions of "looters," and didn't want to hear from "bleeding hearts." Meanwhile, a man died in the "pen" at the Brooklyn House of Detention, and hundreds are being illegally held in this racist roundup. Left, black and labor organizations as well as all defenders of democratic rights must demand their immediate release.

As for the looting itself, it was a straightforward ripoff of property. There were no major reported racial incidents. The lights went out and they just took what they could get. They took groceries and shoes, liquor and furniture. Cars were driven up to stores and loaded up; iron gratings were pulled down with crowbars. In one spectacular haul, 50 Pontiacs were hot-wired and driven away. Interviewed on the streets, the comments of the looters were frank and to the point. One young girl explained to a reporter that sneakers were \$24 and she could use a pair.

While the mayor and the politicians bemoaned the fact that all New Yorkers did not "pull together," the media compared the looting to the ghetto upheavals in 1964 and 1968. This is to view social life through the eyes of a ghetto pawn shop owner or police desk sergeant to whom all mass upheavals in the community may look alike. The 1964 Harlem "riot" was a response by ghetto residents to an actual police riot. In 1968 there was mass anger at the assassination of Martin Luther King. Both instances were far more politically motivated outbursts than the scavenging during last week's blackout. Nevertheless, New Leftists and the Stalinoid "Third World" tailists of Youth Against War and Fascism see in this a "full-scale rebellion."

In fact, the looting was an anti-social act that will only hurt the ghetto communities in both the short and long run. *Newsweek* magazine reported that one of the participants commented, "tomorrow they won't be able to go to the stores—there won't be any. They'll have to build this same hole all over again." But as is obvious from the miles of boarded-up stores in American inner-city slums, the "same hole" is not rebuilt. And life in the ghettos, already unrelieved misery, just gets worse. The day after the blackout it was almost impossible to get a loaf of bread, much less fresh milk, in Bushwick.

But the fact that looting is a self-defeating, anti-social act does not give the bourgeoisie—which created the ghettos in the first place—a license to declare open season on looters. This was not the San Francisco earthquake,

where marauding looters preyed upon the homeless poor in the midst of their desperation. Even less was it a revolutionary situation, where the looters represent a threat to the establishment of a new society. It was not a political act, but a massive enactment of the individualistic rule of survival in the devastated slums of America.

The values and "respect for property" that Mayor Beame claims to expect from his citizenry are nothing but self-serving piety. The lumpenproletarian population created by capitalism in its death agony in fact has the values of capitalism. But it lacks the organized firepower and remains limited to small-time hustlers while the capitalists run a far greater operation that is immensely more remunerative. This fact is often grasped by the poorest of the poor, and the unctuous cynics of big business condemn this cynicism. The special outlook shared by the bourgeoisie and lumpenproletariat was captured by Bertolt Brecht in his *Three-Penny Opera*. The anti-hero, MacHeath, a rapist, robbler and knife-stabbing murderer, explains to his audience the situation of the common criminal in capitalist society:

"We bourgeois artisans who work with honest jimmies on the cash boxes of small shopkeepers are being swallowed up by large concerns backed by banks. What is a picklock to a bank share? What is the burgling of a bank to the founding of a bank? What is the murder of a man to the employment of a man?"

Tragically, this not-very-political night of misrule and community mass ripoff will have very terrible political results as the capitalist politicians gear up for their racist scare campaign, trying to out-do each other in "law and order" hypocrisy. In contrast, while revolutionists condemn looting as dangerously anti-social, we demand amnesty for the thousands rounded up in the cops' dragnet and point the finger of accusation at the real criminals: the capitalists.

Expropriate Con Ed!

On Sunday, July 9, Chairman Luce of Consolidated Edison, went on a television talk show and justified the utility's latest rate increase by asserting that there was next to zero chance that the blackout of 1965 would ever be repeated. Three days later came Blackout '77. "It was lightning," Luce told angered New Yorkers huddled around their transistor radios; Con Ed reassuringly announced that all would be well again "in a few hours." The *New York Times*, well practiced in presenting unpopular right-wing dictators as "men in the middle," profiled Luce as a man of "public aplomb" and a "cool man on the hot seat." After all, what can a mere investor-owned utility do against the wrath of Zeus.

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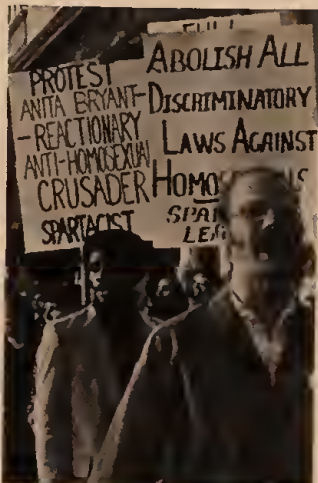
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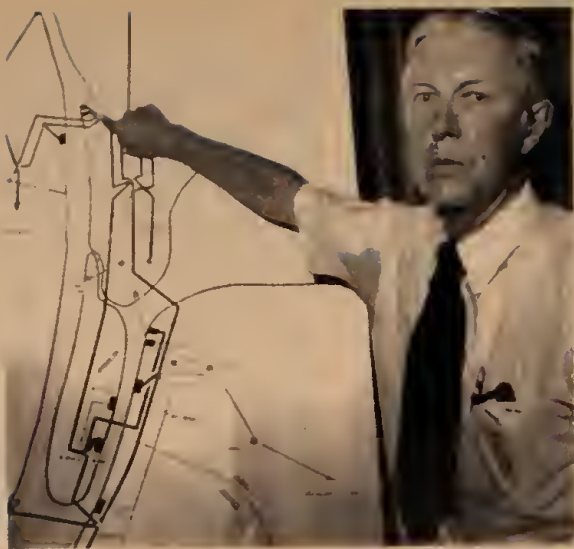
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WV Photo



Charles Luce: It can't happen here.

Chuck Pulin

The NYC populace is less inclined to alibi the power company. Not only is Con Ed a center of tax-sheltering corporate boondoggles; not only does it have the highest rates in the country, 17 percent higher than Chicago. It is also well-known for its petty vengeance. In the spring, at the height of Jimmy Carter's energy conservation campaign, the newspapers reported that some eco-freaks had hooked up a small windmill on their rooftop. But to do so they had to get a special dispensation from the government to run it, and were charged higher than normal rates by Con Ed for the privilege.

On a larger scale, Co-op City, the mammoth middle-income high-rise housing project in the Bronx figured out that it would be considerably cheaper and more reliable to set up its own power plant than to have its 60,000 residents pay Con Ed individually. The

power monopoly responded with uncontrolled wrath. Co-op City was forced to dump its plan except for a small generator maintained to light its hallways and run the elevators. So its hallways were lit and its elevators ran throughout the blackout. But Con Ed got its revenge: rebellious Co-op City didn't get its power back until hours after the rest of the Bronx was lit up again.

It is no wonder, then, that a man named George Metesky is something of an underground folk hero in New York. The disgruntled ex-employee of Con Ed who became known as the "mad bomber" acted out the impermissible fantasies of many customers as he mysteriously went around town planting bombs in protest.

Even the bourgeoisie is annoyed beyond endurance with the way Con Ed runs its operations in the financial

center of U.S. imperialism. They were particularly vexed over the time it took to restore power to the city. It caused the Stock Exchange to close down for one of the few times in history. New York city council president Paul O'Dwyer declared it was "no act of god." Beame, running for re-election on the ludicrous slogan, "Let Abe Finish the Job," weightily pronounced Con Ed guilty of "at the very least gross negligence—and at worst something far more serious." Even nearby power companies are reportedly wary of linking up with the Con Ed network because of its reputation for fouling up.

Nowhere else in the world do such mammoth power disasters occur. But this is not solely due to a unique incompetence on the part of Con Ed management. Instead, it is the result of American "free enterprise," which in this case means a power system serving a tremendous load limited to an extremely small territory. In most countries of the world power generation and supply have long been a state service, and mammoth blackouts are a thing of the past due to the existence of a nationwide grid. But Con Ed has exactly three lines leading to Quebec in the north, from which it gets most of its power and which would be the major supply source if its own plants were put out of commission.

It is also the case that compared to 1965, Con Ed has progressively shut down many of the local generators which were "uneconomical," so that it today has little reserve capacity in the case of an emergency. This focuses a more general constraint on its activities that promotes such disasters: the extremely low margin of tolerance, caused by the capitalists' drive to maximize return on capital. During last winter's bitter cold snap, after freezing people to death the gas companies likewise pointed to the gods of weather and proclaimed an emergency. As we wrote:

"At the same time capitalism ensures a very narrow margin of tolerance of abrupt shifts. Spare capacity is a capital asset. In order to maximize the rate of profit, all capitalists therefore seek to minimize unused capacity and inventories. That is why any significant change in natural conditions—drought or flood, arctic freeze or heat wave—produces under the capitalist mode of production 'emergencies' for which adequate preparations and material reserves do not exist."

—"Expropriate the Energy Trusts," *WV* No. 145, 18 February

It is obvious, with two severe "energy crises" in the space of six months, that the fuel and power monopolies cannot be trusted to supply the energy needs of the population on a rational basis. Con Ed and all utilities must be expropriated without compensation. And unless one wishes to see them run into the ground like every other urban social service in this country (transport, hospitals,

From Gracie Mansion and the editorial board rooms of the NYC dailies, the comfortable preached about the values of civilization and decency. Certainly, those who were arrested for looting were poor, they intoned, but what about the old-time values of self-help and pitching-in during a crisis. At such times, we are told that rich and poor are in the same boat—the "democratic leveling effect," one of the glossy magazines called it. Taking advantage of the dark just wasn't fair play.

This widespread sanctimony was put into perspective in a plithy column by Russell Baker (*New York Times*, 19 July). He noted that Jimmy Carter had recently enunciated his "unfairness doctrine" in opposing Medicaid abortions for poor women. "Life is not fair," Carter said, not only in abortions but other things as well. Baker brilliantly made the connection to the hypocritical moral outrage over the blackout looting:

"...one wondered whether the poor folks would take their rotten luck like good sports. The answer came within a few hours when New York went dark and thousands of them started looting.

"This is not to suggest that they needed Mr. Carter's lecture to learn that they had been living on the unfair side of the tracks, or even to persuade them that the Government was willing to let them grow old there. Very few probably even heeded the President's statement, if indeed they heard it....

"The point is that while it is very sturdy of comfortable men to point out that life is unfair, the people it is unfair to are not apt to be morally or philosophically elevated by the announcement.

"If you are going to preach that unfairness is inescapable for some, good sense suggests that you also accept the inevitability of beastly behavior by people who have to carry the burden. Unless you are a Dickens heroine, it becomes insufferable after awhile constantly having all the unfairness left on your doorstep while the Mayfair swells are eating Scotch salmon, weekending in the Hamptons and enjoying exclusive membership in the Abortion Club.

"You may not take to the streets with torch and shotgun, but you are likely to find your eyes going glassy when the professor, or the President, talks about social obligations. If the lights go out on a steamy summer night—well, life is unfair, isn't it? And how often does it provide a chance for a romp?"

schools), it is clear that this demand must be linked to the struggle for a workers party to eliminate the bourgeois state and capitalist industry which keep them in this sorry state.

Today the bourgeoisie screams about poor people looting groceries and sofas and small appliances while Con Ed for the past half century has been robbing the city blind. Thus the demand for expropriating Con Ed is raised by revolutionaries not only because privately owned utilities are a historic anachronism, and certainly not to fulfill social-democratic dreams of municipal "socialism." In taking up this call, communists seek to focus the deeply felt hatred of the working people and other sectors of the population who have suffered under the arrogance of this bloodsucking monopoly.

Shortly after the blackout New York was declared a "disaster area," an act enabling the ruined small businessmen to get low-interest loans so they can try to rebuild. While this is supportable, it must be understood that capitalism cannot do the same for the workers and poor. It will not provide shoes for the shoeless, houses for the homeless and jobs for the masses of the unemployed. For this it takes the socialist revolution, led by the Trotskyist vanguard party, drawing to its banner the working masses and all the oppressed. ■



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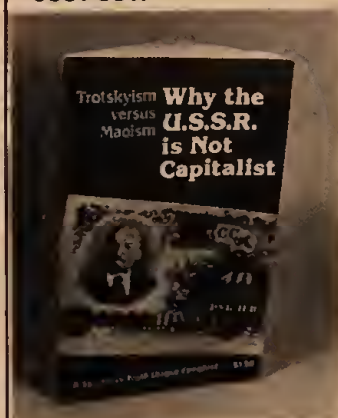
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Pakistan...

(continued from page 3)

popular masses which greeted Bhutto's downfall with enthusiasm. The new military rulers will prove no more sympathetic to their plight than the autocratic pseudo-populist prime minister.

General Zia has been widely described in the bourgeois press as a "professional" lacking "personal ambitions." Because of his pro-American sympathies, he is favorably compared to Libya's Colonel Qaddafi. But, in fact, he is like the Libyan in at least one crucial respect: both are exponents of "disciplined" regimes based on the reactionary religious and social tenets of Islam. In one of his first actions, Zia decreed harsh punishments based on the Koran: cutting off the hand of a thief and execution of armed robbers. The same regulations bar "strikes, agitation or political activity of any kind" at schools and universities, as well as all trade-union activity (*New York Times*, 11 July).

Zia describes himself as a "soldier of Islam." On becoming chief of staff in 1976, he gave his troops a new slogan: "Iman (faith), Teqwa (abstinence) and Jihad (holy war)." He made a pilgrimage to Mecca last year. Although he maintains no party ties, Zia's coup was hailed by the president of the rabidly right-wing Ja'amiyat-i-Islam party, which spearheaded the PNA campaign against Bhutto's "secularism" ("Bhutto drinks whisky" was a favorite chant during the anti-government marches). He also freed the Pir of Pagaro, leader of a half-million Hur tribesmen who revere him as a Muslim holy man.

Like his fellow bonapartes in the Near East, Zia has demonstrated that the "brotherhood" of Islam not only means the slaughter of "infidels" like the Hindu workers and peasants of India but does not even embrace Muslim insurgents who threaten the interests of the Islamic

bourgeois states. In 1970 he led a Pakistani military advisory mission to Jordan at the time of King Hussein's "Black September" massacres of Palestinian nationalists. More recently, Pakistani military forces (as well as Iranian troops) played a key role in suppressing the Dhofari insurgency in Oman, since Bhutto and the generals were worried that the revolt would spread from the Arabian sultanate to disaffected minority tribes in western Pakistan.

If Bhutto's semi-bonapartist regime defended its corrupt and demagogic "Islamic socialism" with bayonets and police clubs, the junta will justify its strong-arm methods with the Koran. The conservative bourgeois politicians of the PNA feel that the coup may be their ticket to power, and indeed they may get some ministerial portfolios in the bargain. However, even if elections are held as promised in October, the army will at most recede a few steps into the background and continue to exercise a determining influence, as it has on both military and "civilian" governments for more than two decades.

The current euphoria among Bhutto's opponents will soon fade as the impact of strict military rule is experienced. Given the massive repression by the Bhutto regime, the oppressed Pakistani masses had no reason to support his increasingly arbitrary personal rule—and, in fact, there was not even a ripple of activity in defense of the toppled government. But the workers and peasants must have no illusions in the constitutional pretensions of Zia and his fellow generals, or in the democratic talk of the highly unstable and reactionary PNA coalition. Their fate remains tied to the proletariat of the subcontinent, which desperately requires a Trotskyist vanguard party to break the chains of imperialist domination, smash the military despots and venal politicians who enforce capitalist rule, and uproot the vestiges of feudalism in the process of consummating a socialist revolution. ■

Spanish Elections...

(continued from page 7)

Once mention the words popular front, nor the lessons of the civil war, and fails to mention the most important popular front locally, the Assemblée de Catalunya. This is consistent with the LCR's whole history, which has been one of constant waffling and capitulation on the question of the popular front. Thus last January the LCR signed a joint communiqué in Barcelona together with bourgeois liberals and the Carlists deploring the murder of several policemen, demanding that the police arrest the fascists (many of them off-duty police), and concluding with a pitiful plea to the Francoist state to usher in "democracy."

In February the LCR participated actively in negotiations for a full-fledged popular front in the Basque region. It was asked to sign a common political platform with other "far-left" groups, petty-bourgeois Basque nationalists and bourgeois formations. The LCR balked only on the grounds that it disagreed with two planks in the platform, one calling for a provisional government and the other for a return to the

gram whose "maximum" demand is the inauguration of... a bourgeois republic!

The absence of any struggle against popular frontism as a key point in the FUT program, the LCR's own repeated capitulation on this point and its continuing desire for programmatic blocs with organizations (PCE, PSOE, MCE) which are members of popular fronts demonstrates that it was impossible for revolutionaries to combat the class collaboration of the PCE/PSOE reformists by calling for votes to the FUT.

The failure of the various tendencies of the "far left" to chart a revolutionary course toward the June elections underscores the burning need to build an authentic Trotskyist party in Spain. Only by rigorously drawing the lessons of the civil war, showing the key role of the popular front in paving the way for Franco's victory and by demonstrating the central role of a series of popular fronts in shoring up the rotting Francoist regime during the last two years, can a Trotskyist vanguard guide the Spanish proletariat to victory. Only as part of a reborn Fourth International can such a party achieve the vital international extension of the revolution, through an Iberian Federation of Soviet Republics in a Socialist United States of Europe. ■

LCR banner.



Rubio/Cambio 16

Communist Party election rally.



Checa/Kappa

Indiana...

(continued from page 2)

declare a ban on handling all Essex parts, in order to shut off company sales. The full power of the union must be brought to bear, up to and including, if necessary, coordinated solidarity strikes at Big Three plants, which would pressure the major auto makers to force Essex to settle. The many UAW locals in Indiana and throughout the Midwest must immediately dispatch contingents of pickets to Elwood to repulse the anticipated cop/scab assault. Workers from Indiana UAW locals in Kokomo and Anderson, the scene of violent anti-union attacks in the 1930's, as well as other areas, have picketed at Elwood, but the UAW leadership has kept these efforts small. The presence of state troopers is a provocation directed at the entire labor movement. Not only the UAW but other unions in Indiana must be prepared to halt this armed strike-breaking by calling solidarity strikes. Failure to take these elementary solidarity measures will leave the road clear for cop-enforced scabbing and defeat for Local 1663.

UAW officials, however, are simply waiting for the axe to fall. Local president Couch admitted to *WV* that he has no strategy to beat back the company and win the strike. Couch is hoping that the Region 3 or International officials will come up with something. In an interview with *WV*, Region official Johnson expressed his fears of mass picketing with the assistance of other locals, which he felt would result in mass arrests or even martial law. Johnson also rejected solidarity strikes as an illegal secondary boycott in

violation of the Taft-Hartley act, which even he conceded is "nothing but a strikebreaking law." Johnson said he would like to urge the UAW Department heads for Ford and Chrysler to pressure those companies to influence Essex to settle.

But Solidarity House has no intention of taking such measures. A Region 3 official admitted: "You can't get anybody in Detroit to do a goddamn thing about it because they want to sit on their fat asses.... Those guys in Detroit in charge of these departments have a pretty decent working relationship with the companies and they don't want to get involved in anything like this." There is plenty of evidence to back up this charge. UAW president Doug Fraser is not known for his ability to win strikes, but for his eagerness in crushing them. Just last March Fraser personally intervened to break a ten-day solid wildcat at Chrysler's Indianapolis Electrical Plant, leaving 23 union officials fired and 44 militants suspended in his wake.

A militant defense of the Elwood strikers requires an implacable struggle against Fraser and the rest of the UAW bureaucracy. With militant support from UAW locals across the country, the Essex workers could win far more than they are even asking. Minimal demands should include wage and benefit parity with the UAW scale at the Big Three. The conditions of the Essex workers, as well as of thousands of others who toil in the high-profit and low-wage sweatshops of corporations like UT, drag down the standards of all workers. And the terror being inflicted on these workers is an attack on all unionists. The UAW can and must act to stop the scab-herding, gun-toting, union-busting thugs. ■

Republican statute of autonomy for the Basque region. Far from breaking with popular frontism, the LCR agreed to sign the pact if these two points were removed.

It must also be remembered that the FUT was only a fallback for the LCR. The LCR originally called for a common electoral slate of working-class and "revolutionary nationalist" parties based on a minimal democratic program: "amnesty, legalization [of the parties] with no exceptions, self-determination, election to a Constituent Assembly, republic, support to mass struggles, rejection of the 'social pact' [wage restraint]" (*Inprecor*, 28 April). Thus the LCR was yearning to issue common electoral propaganda with the PCE and PSOE—the historic betrayers of the Spanish proletariat—on a pro-

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NEW YORK

Steel...

(continued from page 12)

steelmaking operations are located in the East Chicago plant, and a local strike would therefore effectively shut down the company." But Inland's 18,000-man workforce voted strike authorization by a scant margin of 53 percent. Only in Local 1033 at Republic did the 4,800 workers produce anything resembling a mandate by voting 2,453 to 1,257 in favor of strike sanction. However, according to Guzzo, the Local has accepted an offer made by Republic Steel on July 11 (*Daily Calumet*, 14 July). It appears likely that a strike will also be averted at Local 1010.

...But Sadlowski Grandstand Play Flops

The inability of the Sadlowski forces to win a solid mandate in District 31 reflects their capitulation to the International. Neither Sadlowski nor Balanoff did anything to mobilize the rank and file when Abel announced his sellout contract. Both verbally condemned the contract but advised steel workers that, since the ENA was "legal," they had no choice but to live with it. Sadlowski occupied himself with pursuing court suits against the union in the hope of overturning the International elections, while Balanoff busied himself trying to worm into the good graces of the International. The new District 31 director went so far as to tell a *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter (30 May) that his union philosophy was "basically the same" as McBride's!

The *Business Week* article suggested that a reason for the local strike votes "is that some militants in the union want to test the ENA to see if the local strike option really works." However, the failure of the Sadlowski "opposition" to forthrightly demand that the ENA and the sellout agreement be dumped through industrywide strike action demoralized the membership. Understanding that the key to winning any real demands was a breakthrough on the industry level, the USWA ranks lacked enthusiasm for the Sadlowski/Balanoff campaign to win local strike authorizations. Sensing this reluctance, the phony oppositionists went to great pains to emphasize that they were for strike authorizations in order to...prevent strikes! Balanoff huffed, "The companies are trying to give the workers the impression that if they vote 'yes' in a strike vote, there will automatically be a

strike. That's an out-and-out lie" (*Daily Calumet*, 21 June). Balanoff claimed that the mere threat of a strike was enough to whip the companies into line.

Militants should certainly have voted "yes" in the local strike authorization ballots, but not as a mere pressure tactic. Without strike action, steel workers will not win anything substantial from the bosses. Rather, Steelworker militants must view local strikes as an opportunity to expand them beyond the confines dictated by ENA (and accepted by Balanoff/Sadlowski). They must be extended into an industrywide walkout to break the no-strike agreement, as well as overturn and renegotiate the national contract.

Layoffs at Southworks

At a fourth District 31 plant, U.S. Steel's Chicago Southworks Division, the local leadership's request to conduct a strike ballot was denied by the International. The pro-Sadlowski Local 65 leadership headed by president John Chico, which was elected on campaign promises of implementing trade-union "democracy," had signed a sellout local agreement behind the backs of the membership immediately after the



Jim Belenoff, District 31 director.

national agreement was announced. This gross bureaucratism even stirred into action a number of Chico supporters, most notably those around the Communist Party-backed National Steelworkers Rank and File Committee.

These fake leftists, agreeing with Chico that, once signed, the local contract could not be discarded, suggested that a meaningless "straw poll" be conducted around the agreement anyway. Not wanting any vote on his agreement and looking to refurbish his tarnished credentials, Chico suddenly announced that the issue of seniority had not been resolved and prepared to conduct a strike vote on this single issue. The International, sensing that most of the membership had been alienated by the maneuvers of the various factions of the local leadership, decided it was safe to intervene and bureaucratically suppress the strike vote.

While the International was squelching the possibility of strike action at Local 65, rumors of mass layoffs and even a possible plant shutdown circulated through Southworks. The company is claiming that it has lost \$22 million at Southworks since last January, and already in the past few weeks hundreds of workers have been laid off.

The economic outlook for the steel industry as a whole remains uncertain. Despite massive profits raked in last year there has been very little expenditure for capital investment. Less profitable operations have been shut down: Bethlehem has announced the closing of two smaller steel plants and U.S. Steel laid off 1,000 workers in Youngstown last month. Numerous steel workers,

including those at Southworks, are on reduced work schedules. U.S. production of steel for the domestic market has contracted relatively; steel imports in May were the highest since December 1974, rising to 18.2 percent of the nation's apparent steel supply. And there was a wave of hedge buying associated with last May's steel price increase, after which orders slumped and have yet to recover.

The answer of the pro-company USWA bureaucracy to the threatening layoffs was easily predictable: chauvinist protectionism. The July issue of *Steel Labor* wrote: "We are once again disappointed with President Carter. Our newest disenchantment with the new administration stems from plans to review and possibly cancel controls on the importation of specialty steel products imposed by the government less than a year ago." And further: "Our union will man the battle stations again in the hope that the present controls on imported special steel can be retained."

Steel workers must reject the bureaucracy's protectionist program of trade war with Japan and Western Europe. This will not end unemployment. Instead, plans must be laid to launch a struggle against the steel bosses, who cynically raise prices while complaining about foreign competition. Steel workers at Southworks must demand that the financial records and books of the price-fixing corporate monopoly be opened to the union. Let's see how "broke" the company really is! This must be part of a broad campaign to launch a struggle against the steel trusts' closing down of "unprofitable" ventures, culminating in strike action against layoffs.

Unfortunately, steel workers remain leaderless in their struggle to reverse the rotten contract deals and impending layoffs. District 31 director Jim Balanoff admitted to *WV* that he expected further industrywide layoffs, but had no solution beyond pointing to the union's supplementary unemployment benefits (which require two years' seniority for eligibility, do not provide full income maintenance and are exhausted after a year, except for workers with 20 years' service). Neither the Abels and McBrides nor the Sadlowskis and Balanoffs, but only a new class-struggle leadership, can lead steel workers to victory. ■

Australia ...

(continued from page 5)

Political Police, headed by Joan Coxedge, would like to see "All crimes...defined and offenders prosecuted by the existing police apparatus" in order to do away with the need for ASIO (quoted in *Scope*, 26 August 1976). In other words, once the bourgeoisie declares some aspect of left-wing activity to be "criminal," then suppression is justified.

For revolutionists, ASIO's real crimes do not consist in its violations of bourgeois standards. Nor is its real charter defined by acts of Parliament. Its real charter determines that it will daily commit crimes against the working class. Its surveillance and harassment of working-class militants and organisations are carried out with the purpose of preparing their arrest and assassination when defence of the "security" of capitalist class rule requires it, as it inevitably will—however remote this eventuality may seem in wealthy, social-democratic Australia. The only law for the bourgeoisie's secret police is always and by any means necessary to maintain and defend the decrepit, destructive system of capitalism.

Unlike the stealthy would-be assassins of ASIO, we have nothing to hide. We stand proudly under the red banner of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky. We state our aims openly and explicitly: the abolition of capitalism and all class society around the world. To this end we fight for an international revolutionary leadership of the working class, for the rebirth of the Fourth International. We demand that ASIO, ASIS and all the other secret police agencies be abolished, that all infiltration into and harassment of the workers movement cease. But we also recognise that the bourgeoisie will never do away with its political police, an essential part of the repressive apparatus on which its state power and class dictatorship rests. Only after the proletarian revolution, mobilising the great toiling majority against the privileged capitalist minority, destroys that apparatus and installs the working class in state power will ASIO and all the bosses' spoons and spies meet the fate they deserve. ■

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Langridge speaks

"[Poulus] said that it was going to be very difficult [to infiltrate the SL]... Because it was an extremely hard target... Because they were a Trotskyist organisation and their politics were a lot harder; their anti-racism organisation was a bit more difficult and a lot more demands would be put on a person who was involved in their activities...."

"...[their politics] went into a lot more depth and there's a lot more expected of a person."

"[ASIO said] they didn't know anything about it [the SL] and that's why it was so important that I infiltrate it... They know of it, that was all...."

"[They were curious to find out about it] especially because it was a Trotskyist organisation.... They had information from the [fake-Trotskyist] SWP and they just wanted to see what the Spartacist League was like in comparison."

"...I had to work my way into their confidence; become a member, do everything that was expected of me, go to the local meetings, make thorough reports of the people, how many were there, the positions they held."

"...they promised that if I did okay that they would make sure that I could get to university which was my dying ambition to do."

"It was exciting, it was stimulating, I had to work in the public service and I wanted to go to the university and I wanted to have plenty of money."

(Questions: "So what happened?")

"I had to be honest. I couldn't stand what I was doing anymore...."

"It's just the fact that I respect them and I respect what they stand for and I don't respect myself for what I've been doing."

—Interview with Langridge, 11 June

(Question: "In your so-called career as a spy, what do you regard as your biggest triumph?")
"Confessing."

—Channel 2, ABC News, 20 June

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WORKERS VANGUARD

For A Nationwide Steel Strike Against ENA!

Sadlowski Local Strike Talk Goes Nowhere

**Hundreds Laid Off at
Chicago Southworks,
More Threatened**



U.S. Steel Southworks plant in Chicago.

WV Photo

CHICAGO, July 16—When outgoing United Steelworkers (USWA) president I. W. Abel rammed through a "moderate" (i.e., takeover) contract for the nation's 350,000 basic steel workers last April, the capitalist press was ecstatic. However, Abel's no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA) did not explicitly prohibit local strikes over local bargaining issues. So with the August 1 contract deadline approaching, some business journals have worried aloud over a possible wave of local strikes, particularly in the key Chicago-Gary District 31 (more than 100,000 USWA members).

Business Week (11 July) wrote in a lead article:

"The basic steel industry has hummed along without an authorized strike for 17 years, but the possibility of major work stoppages this summer is now taking shape. In an unusual display of militancy, steelworkers at two Chicago-area mills—including the huge East Chicago (Ind.) plant of Inland Steel Co.—voted to strike on Aug. 1 unless local plant issues are resolved by then. Dozens of other local steel unions are also conducting strike votes this week....

"Aside from a few wildcats, there have not been any steel strikes since 1959....

"This year is likely to be different for a number of reasons. The USW's recent presidential election stirred up rank-and-file militancy over working conditions in the mills....

"Spearheading the drive was Edward Sadlowski, who was defeated last February for the USW presidency by Lloyd McBride....

"One of Sadlowski's main campaign issues was that new and younger steelworkers, in particular, are demanding better treatment on the job. Appearing at packed union meetings on the eve of the balloting, Sadlowski urged a vote for a strike. 'The size of the "yes" vote is the size of the hammer we'll have to pound out an agreement,' he said."

In all, some 33 USWA locals voted to request International approval for a strike if contract issues remain unresolved at the August deadline. However, of these, 21 are engaged in iron-ore mining and processing; only four represent steel-producing plants. Furthermore, in the 37 locals that conduct-

ed strike-authorization ballots, of 50,000 workers participating under 60 percent voted "yes."

ENA Strangles Steel Workers

The results demonstrated a widespread perception among the Steelworkers' ranks that little of substance can be won through isolated local strikes. Under the ENA, all economic matters (wages, cost-of-living allowances, supplementary unemployment benefits, etc.) along with other key issues, including the basic structure of union seniority, are determined by industrywide bargaining. If these issues are unresolved, they are dispatched to compulsory arbitration; strikes are barred.

Locals may still seek International approval to strike over so-called "local" issues. However, the International in collusion with the companies has made every effort to narrow the scope of such "local issues." As soon as Abel/McBride & Co. signed their sellout agreement with the steel trusts last spring, they designated hundreds of demands raised by local bargaining committees as "not properly local issues"—thus further dampening enthusiasm for local strikes.

As a result, most of the local bargaining issues were reduced to such propositions as parking lot improvements, better food service in cafeterias, company provision of work clothing, etc. Even where issues affecting vital areas of health and safety, crew size and working conditions were ruled local in scope, they were pared down to encompass only small sections of a given plant, making it difficult to mobilize the entire workforce in defense of these demands.

Under this arrangement McBride & Co. could be certain that their cozy relationship with the companies would not be threatened. Strikes, if they occur, will have limited impact, and the International can even score a few points by granting strike authorizations to locals. If the strikes turn out badly,

responsibility for them can be foisted off on the local leaderships. Local and district leaders, in turn, who did nothing to lead a fight against the industrywide sellout, can posture as militants by campaigning for local strike authorizations. The only consistent losers are the rank and file, who find themselves with little to fight for and the prospect of strikes that can easily be isolated on a local level.



Ed Sadlowski

Malinowski

It was not, therefore, surprising that the membership was less than enthusiastic about local strikes. The most important strike authorization votes in the large steel-producing plants took place in the pivotal District 31, a stronghold of fake-militant bureaucrat Sadlowski. Sadlowski is former director of the district; now he serves as an appointed staff official under the current director, Jim Balanoff, who was Sadlowski's campaign manager.

District 31 Leadership Pulls Out the Vote...

The district leadership made an all-out effort to garner a large "yes" vote at

Local 1033 (Republic Steel), Local 1010 (Inland Steel) and Local 1011 (Youngstown Sheet and Tube). Rallies attended by several hundred workers were held at the Local 1033 union hall on June 20, two days before the balloting there. Speakers included Balanoff, Sadlowski and Local president Frank Guzzo. Union officials denounced Republic management for mailing letters to all employees urging a "no" vote and threatening that a "yes" vote would likely mean reduced orders, possible layoffs and short working hours.

Subsequently, union officials charged management with attempting to interfere with and influence the strike balloting. Guzzo claimed that foremen brought workers to the union hall to vote on company time. Officials at Local 1010 at Inland also charged the company with the same practices.

The intense campaigning generated a heavy turnout at the balloting. However, despite the energetic efforts of district and local officials, the results were not decisive. At Youngstown Sheet and Tube, with a production and maintenance workforce of 8,000, the referendum for strike authorization passed by a margin of only 31 votes. The vote was turned around, however, when the clerical workers and unionized company "security" thugs voted to reject a strike and the International ruled that sanction must be based on a majority of all votes cast by USWA members. Ironically, company cops are now in a position to veto strike action as well as break into the lockers of steel workers, assault strikers and run scabs through picket lines. These enemies of labor must be driven out of the union!

Local 1010 is Balanoff's home local and the largest local in the USWA. As *Business Week* reported: "...a strike could be disastrous for Inland. All of its

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