

West Germany Gets the Bomb

Black nationalist militants from southern Africa, who had come into possession of sensational secret South African government documents on nuclear development, finally got a major public response. The Soviet government broke the story wide open with the charge that South Africa was about to conduct an A-bomb test. The Americans then chimed in, with the State Department moaning, "We know that the Soviet Union shares our concern over nuclear proliferation and we are therefore taking their allegations in this matter seriously" (*New York Times*, 21 August).

The South Africans denied everything but on 23 August the *Times* reported: "The French Government said today it had received new information that South Africa was getting ready to set off an atomic test explosion." The story was complete with references to the Russian Tass agency's accusations that the French were helping South Africa develop nuclear weapon capability.

Of course, most of the great powers today shed crocodile tears over the plight of the blacks in southern Africa. But nothing in the American press to date reveals the urgent (and hardly

African) reason why Russia on the east and France on the west have raised such a hue and cry about the South African atom bomb, while having so little to say about nuclear proliferation to Israel. But reference to facsimiles of the original documents stolen by the African Black militants, as published in the British press, reveals what is really going on.

The London *Observer* (14 August) reported that the Russian warning of an imminent South African A-bomb test may be related to "a massive theft of secret papers from the South African embassy in West Germany," the second such theft in two years. The African National Congress produced documents referring to "visits to Germany by South African arms experts, the supply of equipment including nuclear equipment in non-military guises and technical briefings by German personnel." Leading West German companies, including Telefunken, Siemens, Messerschmidt and others have been involved in joint German-South African work at a uranium enrichment plant near Pretoria. And West German scientists were secretly visiting the South African plant to introduce an

exclusive process for enriching the uranium to weapons-grade levels.

Out-of-Town Try-Out

In the 1920's, as a result of the Versailles treaty, German capitalism was supposed to be demilitarized. Correspondingly the Reichswehr entered into an intimate military collaboration with the Russian Red Army for a period, thus obtaining the opportunity to develop the foundations of Blitzkrieg tactics and train officers. Today, under the direction of the West German capitalist government, the greatest industrial corporations in Germany, along with principal German scientists are lathering the South African atom bomb project. Bonn of course denied the reports, but this is what the stolen documents show.

Following World War II, as a result of defeat by the Western imperialists and the Russian delorded workers state, and further sanctified by the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, the powerful German capitalist state was compelled to acquiesce to restricting itself to a defensive armed forces, without heavy bombers, a powerful navy or especially the nuclear weapons which in today's

world constitute the military expression of even middling power.

But Germany is again a very powerful capitalist state. A Japan or a Sweden, and certainly a Germany, have all of the industrial-technical means to develop the full range of nuclear weaponry within a very few years. But for the West German state to openly repudiate the agreements which formally bind it would have major political repercussions which it is not now prepared to face. Instead, as in the 1920's, when the Weimar government felt similarly constrained the foundations of military power corresponding to West Germany's economic weight are being laid down at a distance, in this case in South Africa. That is why Germany's neighbors Russia and France are raising such a stink about the evil South Africans and "their" bomb.

In pointing out this development, we must adamantly oppose the chauvinisms left over from World War II. What is being prepared is a realignment based on a decline in the specific weight of U.S. capitalism. America is no longer hegemonic, merely the most powerful of the world's imperialist nations. The reasons why the principal powers are

continued on page 9



UMW march in Washington earlier this month hit recent cutbacks in miners' health benefits.

"No Card—No Coal!"

Mine Sellout

AUGUST 23 At a heated meeting of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) held in Charleston yesterday, the Union's International Executive Board (IEB) ordered miners to end their two-month wildcat, reportedly with the provision that if the coal operators (BCOA) do not restore the company-paid medical cards within 60 days, they will call the union out on a national strike.

The immediate effect of the meeting has been to boost back-to-work sentiment. Reportedly about one half of the 65,000 miners in West Virginia—the heart of the strike—returned to work today, along with miners in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Alabama and western Kentucky.

Miners in eastern Kentucky's District 30 remained on strike, and roving pickets from that district closed a number of mines in West Virginia, but the bitter eight-week-old strike is in mortal danger.

The sellout maneuver by the UMWA bureaucracy must be rejected by the membership. Once the picket lines are pulled down and the miners return to the pits, it will be doubly difficult to go on the offensive again. The popular slogan of the Washington march two weeks earlier must be revived: "No card, no coal."

Yesterday's meeting in Charleston was scheduled to bring together IEB members and District 17 officials. But

several hundred uninvited rank-and-filers came to Charleston, insisting that the UMWA tops confront them. They fought their way past a bureaucratic goon squad into the meeting room at the Daniel Boone Hotel.

Miller reportedly fled from the room at the sight of the militant miners, returning with a ten-man personal bodyguard. Further "protection" for the executive board was furnished by Charleston police, who showed up in full riot gear. One District 17 miner in attendance told *WV* that as soon as the back-to-work motion was passed, the meeting was instantly adjourned and most IEB members disappeared from the room within 30 seconds.

For weeks the UMWA bureaucrats have feverishly tried to break the strike. They have on numerous occasions ordered the wildcaters to return to work, threatening to discipline the strikers. Miller even appeared on television August 13 to denounce "false prophets" who were promoting the strike.

But Miller and the IEB, whose authority has slipped to its lowest point, were defied repeatedly by the militant miners. Numerous miners have demanded Miller's recall. And last week District 17 miners picketed district headquarters, refusing to allow elected officials to enter. When Joe Duffie, district secretary-treasurer and a well-

continued on page 9

SWP Polemic Against SL:

Alibis of a Social Democrat... 6

Shanker Opposes Implementing Busing

CIA Social Democrats Feted at AFT Convention

At the 61st convention of the 400,000 member American Federation of Teachers (AFT), held in Boston from August 15 to 19, the right-wing social-democratic regime of Albert Shanker weathered a series of attacks from the liberal/reformist opposition.

The major issues were affirmative action and seniority, the Bakke decision and quota policies, busing and school desegregation. Numerous delegates made telling points about the racial insensitivity of the Shanker bureaucracy. However, the opposition accepted the fundamental premise of Shanker & Co. that cutbacks are inevitable at the present time. The axis of the convention debate centered on which section of the working class should bear the brunt of the capitalist austerity attacks, rather than on the need to defend all workers and the poor. The attempt to solve the problem of racial discrimination within the framework of capitalism frequently led the liberal opposition to take positions to the right of the union leadership, as with their support for dumping seniority in favor of "preferential layoffs" and similar examples of reverse discrimination.

What went unchallenged was Shanker's open capitulation before the wave of cutbacks in social expenditures. The most blatant example is New York City, Shanker's home base. Under the whip of the city's fiscal crisis, over 20,000 school jobs have been eliminated, including 12,000 classroom teachers; the school day has been shortened and class sizes increased, while most step increases in salaries have been frozen. Shanker's only response has been to commit more union pension funds to the city's bank-run "Municipal Assistance Corporation" and to disavow the strike weapon. In November 1976 Shanker proposed that collective bargaining be replaced for the duration of the fiscal crisis by a tri-partite board composed of labor, management and "neutrals."

In Philadelphia, another Shanker stronghold, 10,000 layoffs, amounting to one-third of total school employees, were announced last spring; all kindergartens and library services are to be eliminated, all non-teaching assistants

dropped and many elementary school lunch programs eliminated. The teachers union leadership has stood by helplessly, its only response being to beg the state legislature for more aid, to be financed if necessary by massive regressive tax increases.

Until recently, the Shanker leadership has enjoyed a reputation among the hulk of teachers of being a tough negotiator at the bargaining table. But Shanker's capitulation to the cutbacks in NYC, Philadelphia and elsewhere has eroded his traditional base in the union. The failure of the opposition to even make an appeal on this fundamental issue to the convention delegates testifies convincingly to the fact that Shanker's opponents share his class-collaborationist outlook and have nothing to offer as an alternative.

A central link cementing the AFT bureaucracy to the capitalist class is Shanker's long-time collaboration with anti-Soviet imperialist politicians. Convention guests included not only such bourgeois political figures as Vice President Mondale, Secretary of Labor Marshall and U.S. Commissioner of Education Ernest Boyer, but such well-known cold warriors as Irving Brown, foreign policy aide to Jay Lovestone and George Meany and identified by Philip Agee as the "principal CIA agent for the control of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions."

Shanker's virulent anti-Communism went virtually unchallenged by the delegates, many of whom consider themselves "socialists" and "communists." The glaring failure of a single delegate to speak out against a Shanker-sponsored resolution favoring the freeing of Huber Matos, a military leader and former supporter of Castro whose links to a rightist plot to overthrow Castro in the interests of American imperialism justly landed him in a Cuban jail, is an index of the capitulation of the fake left.

Busing and Affirmative Action

The Shanker bureaucracy, knowing beforehand that it had the votes necessary to win every disputed issue, permitted a moderate amount of debate. The bureaucracy's control was achieved in good part by the unit rule; thus in city-wide balloting in New York City for convention delegates, oppositionists tallied over 25 percent. But, according to the unit rule, Shanker's Progressive Caucus got the entire five-member NYC delegation.

Minority teachers with lesser seniority, as well as the increasingly non-white inner-city population, are among the main victims of cutbacks in spending in the large cities. Fundamental responsibility for these defeats lies with the Shanker administration and other municipal union bureaucracies, who have not lifted a finger to initiate the labor mobilizations necessary to turn back the assaults of the city bosses and defend the interests of the workers and the poor.

However, the answer of Shanker's liberal opponents was not class struggle, but accepting layoffs and then wrangling over who loses their jobs. Seniority is a hard-won union gain that protects

workers from arbitrary victimization. The demand for "preferential layoffs," in which minorities covered by "affirmative action" are maintained in their present proportion in the event of layoffs, is a dead-end solution that ahrogates union seniority principles and falsely blames white male teachers for the discriminatory policies of the ruling class. The Shanker bureaucracy was easily able to withstand the challenge to the seniority principle at the convention, and was even able to posture hypocritically as union loyalists in doing so.

A related but somewhat different issue was the dispute over the Bakke decision. William Simons, AFT vice president and a member of Shanker's Progressive Caucus, bolted on this question to the opposition. While this was the closest fought issue at the convention the Shanker bureaucracy nevertheless won reaffirmation for its position fairly handily, by nearly a three-to-one margin.

Allen Bakke was a white applicant who was denied admission to the University of California (UC) medical school. The medical school maintains a quota system in admissions, and Bakke claimed he was denied entrance because of the racial quotas. The AFT national leadership entered the dispute on the side of Bakke, who was subsequently upheld by the California Supreme Court.

Where quota systems to open up previously restricted fields to oppressed groups do not violate existing union seniority systems or contracts, they may be supported critically. This is the case with university admissions. Shanker's advocacy of "academic merit" as the central criterion only perpetuates class and race bias in higher education. Therefore, the opposition by teachers to the reactionary Bakke decision was entirely supportable.

However, the counterposed motions of the AFT leadership and its opponents both accepted the limitations on education mandated by rotting American capitalism. Quotas in education are at best a lesser evil. What is necessary is a policy of open admissions to higher education, with a living stipend paid to all students. Only such a policy draws a sharp line, eliminating both class and racial stigma. However, within the bourgeois framework accepted by both Shanker and his liberal opponents, such a fight was ruled out.

The other area in which there was substantial debate was over the question of busing to achieve school integration. The AFT leadership pays lip service to busing but claims that it is "disruptive" to the educational process. At its 1976 convention a resolution was passed denouncing busing as only one of several remedies for segregation. The resolution, reaffirmed this year, was obviously designed to duck the issue of busing.

At the convention, opposition to implementing busing as "disruptive" was correctly labeled as a capitulation to racism. One black teacher complained that she had been a victim of busing, pre-1954: "I rode 60 miles past three white high schools.... You support due process for Bakke, but deny it for me."

Unfortunately, the two virtually identical motions in favor of busing,

submitted by the Washington, D.C. and Hayward, California locals, were rendered unsupportable by their call for action by "local, state, and national authorities" against racists who attempt to disrupt busing. Preaching confidence in the cops and federal troops to defend racial minorities is a betrayal; instead, militants must demand the building of an integrated labor/black defense.

1968 and Today

The fundamental political division within the AFT, between Shanker's reactionary business unionism and the liberal moralism of the main opposition, has existed for at least ten years. It was first manifested prominently during the NYC teachers strike of 1968. In that year the Lindsay administration attempted to utilize a Ford Foundation-financed experiment in "community control," as well as the grievances of ghetto residents toward the racially insensitive Shanker bureaucracy, in order to strike a major blow at the union. The Ocean Hill-Brownsville community school board ordered the transfer, out of normal seniority lines, of a number of teachers, which included notable union militants, on allegations of racism. When the teachers called a strike in protest, almost the entire left capitulated to the prevailing black nationalism and scabbed on the strike.

Just as the anti-Shankerites were willing to throw away union seniority in 1968 ostensibly in order to redress racial injustice, so they are equally willing to do so today, in favor of court-ordered affirmative action schemes. The organized oppositions at the Boston AFT convention—the United Action Caucus (UAC), supported by the Communist Party (CP); the Socialist Workers Party (SWP)-dominated Caucus on Desegregation and Equality in Education, as well as the smaller Progressive Labor Party "Red Line" group—were all run by individuals and groups that supported the scabbing in 1968. Not surprisingly, their politics are virtually identical to the dissidents of 1968.

With the exception of supporting a tepid labor party resolution, which failed to even allude to the existence of classes in society and which neglected to call for ending all support to the capitalist parties, SWP supporters liquidated into the Caucus on Desegregation and Equality in Education. This caucus, which uncritically praised George Meany for his support to busing, limited itself to building support for the resolutions on affirmative action, Bakke and busing cited above, which were submitted by Hayward Local 1423, of which prominent SWP supporter Jeff Mackler is president. Mackler & Co. did not even support a slate in opposition to Shanker's Progressive Caucus for delegates to the AFL-CIO convention, fearing to alienate prominent Progressive Caucus members like Washington Teachers Union president William Simons.

The Caucus on Desegregation was the most active group in openly pandering to anti-union and nationalist sentiments. At an open caucus meeting held August 16, a black union official

continued on page 10

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

EDITOR Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER Karen Allen

CIRCULATION MANAGER Anne Kelley

EDITORIAL BOARD Jon Brule Charles Burroughs, George Foster Liz Gordon James Robertson, Joseph Seymour

Published weekly, except bi-weekly in August and December, by the Spartacist Publishing Co., 260 West Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10013. Telephone: 866-6841. (Editorial) 925-5665 (Business). Address all correspondence to: Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, N.Y. 10001. Domestic subscriptions \$5.00 per year. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

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

U.S. Out of the Canal Zone Now!

Jimmy Carter has finally kept a campaign promise. Last fall the Democratic candidate shelved his liberal son-of-FDR pitch to protect his right flank from the reactionary furor over the Panama Canal which Ronald Reagan had touched off during the primaries. Like a reborn Teddy "Big Stick" Roosevelt, Carter pledged that in treaty negotiations with Panama he would "never give up complete control or practical control" over the canal.

And indeed in the two new U.S./Panama treaties awaiting ratification, Carter's negotiators have maintained the substance of "practical control." For the next 23 years the treaties ensure the existence of the U.S. enclave which bisects Panama, although its present 533 square miles will be reduced by 65 percent. The high-living, intensely chauvinist, Yankee colonial statelet and sprawling military base will remain planted in the middle of the squalid Panamanian slums that sprawl along either side of the Canal Zone. In the distant year 2000, Panama will take over operations of the canal, but the U.S. will formally retain the right to dispatch troops at will to defend its so-called "neutrality."

Emphasizing the point, Carter said that under the treaty the U.S. would retain "partial sovereignty" to the year 2000, and after that "the right to defend it with our armed forces and to keep it open, with first priority given to American warships." U.S. negotiator Sol Linowitz was quoted as saying that in the treaties "there are no limits prescribed" concerning the "actions the United States may take, before or after the year 2000, to maintain the 'neutrality' of the canal."

In Memory of Teddy Roosevelt's Big Stick

Despite support from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and endorsements by Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger (testifying that the proposed pact represents the bipartisan interests of the American bourgeoisie), Carter faces an uphill fight to win the 67 votes necessary for Senate ratification. All the right-wing yahoos have rallied round this three-quarters-of-a-century-old symbol of U.S. imperial arrogance and untrammelled military might. Reagan has denounced the president's efforts to sell the treaties as "a medicine show." Strom Thurmond, veteran race-baiting senator from South Carolina, is working with the American Conservative Union (ACU) and similar outfits to muster a huge lobby to block passage. The ACU is running newspaper ads that proclaim: "There is no Panama Canal. There is an American Canal in Panama."

Nor is opposition limited to the far-right fringe. Last year 38 senators sponsored a resolution opposing any dilution of American control over the canal. The House voted, 246 to 164, to deny funds for negotiations for the "surrender or relinquishment" of American power in the Canal Zone.

Specific interests such as the shipping corporations and their lackeys in the maritime union bureaucracies oppose the treaties because they may mean higher transit fees and cut into industry profits. Initially Panama will simply receive a cut (about one-third) of the canal toll revenues amounting to roughly \$50 million each year. This jump from the present measly \$2.3 million annual payments under the gunboat-imposed treaty of 1903 may well send up the toll

rates. The fees have been increased only twice (both times by under 20 percent) since the canal opened in 1914 and represent little more than a financial subsidy at Panamanian expense to the international shipping industry.

But the broader opposition is essentially ideological in character, a jingoistic trumpeting of "manifest destiny," the Monroe Doctrine and every other symbol of U.S. prerogative in the Western Hemisphere. Daniel Flood, a Democratic congressman from Pennsylvania, described the canal as "American as apple pie." Robert Bauman, a Reaganite Republican congressman from Maryland bristled: "We bought it. We built it. We paid for it. It's ours. And President Carter is giving it away." Another conservative Republican senator, S.I. Hayakawa of California, was more frank: "We should hang on to it. We stole it fair and square."

Imperialist Diplomacy and Latin American Nationalism

After the ignominious American defeat in Indochina and the U.S.' loss of economic hegemony over its imperialist rivals, the Panama Canal remains as a symbol of the tarnished glories of U.S. imperialism and its dominance in the Western Hemisphere dating back to the Monroe Doctrine. American power in Panama stems from the treaty of 1903 which is still in effect. This treaty turned

Panama which had just separated itself from Colombia through a "revolution" engineered by Teddy Roosevelt and backed by the Marines - into a semi-colony of the United States. Barely two weeks old, the tiny "republic" signed a treaty with Washington turning over the projected canal and a ten-mile-wide strip on both sides running its length to the imperialist colossus "in perpetuity."

The U.S. became vitally interested in constructing a waterway across the isthmus during the Spanish-American War of 1898, when the battleship *Oregon* had to sail all the way around Cape Horn from San Francisco to reinforce American strength in the Caribbean. Since that time the Canal Zone and most of the 40,000 U.S. citizens who reside there have been intimately linked to the ability of American imperialism to wage war.

Among the 14 military bases in the zone is Fort Gulick, which houses the infamous "School of the Americas." This murder academy (prototype of the counterinsurgency torture school shown in the movie *State of Siege*) has turned out thousands of officers, dictators and CIA agents for Latin America, including the killers of Che Guevara, at least six top members of the Chilean junta and Panamanian strongman General Omar Torrijos.

But Carter is no fool. He recognizes that the imperialist encroachment in Panama has been a major target of anti-imperialist struggle in Latin America for decades. Peaking after the U.S. Army's slaughter of 20 leftist Panamanian student demonstrators in 1964, tensions over the Canal Zone have poisoned Washington's relations with even the most right-wing Latin American regimes. Four successive presidents have sought to renegotiate the 1903 treaty while maintaining U.S. prerogatives. Torrijos, who came to power in a 1968 coup by the Panamanian National Guard, has been central to the U.S.' strategy. His populist/nationalist posturings, bolstered by glowing support from the Panamanian Stalinists and Fidel Castro, give him the stature necessary to sell the betrayal in his country and the rest of the hemisphere. Torrijos has already declared a national holiday to celebrate the agreement, which he described as "the triumph of this generation" (*New York Times*, 21 August).



Don Goode

Gen. Torrijos



Panama Canal Review

U.S. Navy ship being guided through the canal.



Bill Eppridge/Life

Demonstrators raise Panamanian flag during four days of demonstrations in 1964 in which 21 were killed by U.S. troops.

Carter's hopes for ratification hinge on his ability to convince the Senate that: 1) the treaty will ensure the U.S. privileged access to the canal, 2) the present arrangement is too politically expensive, and 3) the strategic importance of the canal itself has diminished sharply. With the advent of a two-ocean navy and greater reliance on strategic air power, its central military importance is considerably lessened. Moreover, technological improvements in commercial air transport will eventually overshadow shipping. To seal his case, Carter will no doubt point out that neither large aircraft carriers nor tankers can even fit through the canal.

The Spartacist League resolutely opposes these treaties. They are nothing but a swindle, another part of Carter's all-round efforts to politically and militarily streamline U.S. imperialism. We denounce Torrijos and all the Latin American rulers who support it. We demand nothing less than the immediate expropriation of the canal and the removal of all U.S. bases in Panama. The working class must take the initiative in kicking Uncle Sam out of the Canal Zone—abolishing American "sovereignty" and seizing the Panama Canal Company, its potential successor, and all other U.S. installations—as part of the broader struggle for workers power by expropriating the pitiful "branch office bourgeoisie" which currently ministers to imperialist interests in Panama ■

Spartacus Youth League Pamphlet

China's Alliance with U.S. Imperialism

Price: \$1

Order from/pay to Spartacus Youth Publishing Co., P.O. Box 825, Canal St Station, New York, N.Y. 10013

Now You See It—Now You Don't

SWP Double Talk on "Rights" for Nazis in Skokie

Lately the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) just can't seem to get its line straight. During the Angolan war, it explicitly refused to take a stand in defense of the MPLA/Cuban forces against the U.S.-backed South African invasion. Six months after the war was over, one of its house organs, *Intercontinental Press*, published a document from the SWP's shrinking (and now formally defunct) international faction of the United Secretariat (USec) in which it took credit for a position of military defense against the imperialist assault. Not a single word indicated that the line had been changed. The SWP's sordid record of abstention on Angola was simply disappeared from view as if it had never existed.

We were recently treated to another display of sleight of hand in the SWP's press. For the last two years this gang of social democrats has sought to secure its respectability in bourgeois "civil libertarian" circles through strident defense of the so-called democratic rights of fascist thugs and murderers. It has condemned the Spartacist League (SL) slogan of "No Platform for Fascists," consistently abstained from militant anti-fascist actions and even attempted to physically protect these vermin and their "rights" from outraged black, feminist and working-class militants. We have been told that efforts to deprive the Nazis and Ku Klux Klan of an opportunity to promote their genocidal creeds were "ultraleft" and that our characterization of these advocates of the death camp and lynching bee as human garbage was "infantile rhetoric."

Imagine our surprise upon opening the 29 July *Militant* to find the headline "Nazi Scum in Skokie" staring out at us! And doubly so to read that

"Of course [!], the ACLU's position [of offering free legal defense of the Nazis' 'right' to march through this predominantly Jewish suburb of Chicago] by ignoring the fact that Nazis use their marches as a staging ground for violent attacks... offers no guide for action to the outraged residents of Skokie..."

We were truly astounded to read that Chicago SWP honcho Andrew Pulley believes that "potential victims of fascism and ultraright terror 'have the right and the obligation to block these forces in the most effective way and by any means necessary'."

The *Militant* article reports a letter by Pulley to the Chicago *Defender*. "The real issue in the Skokie debate," Pulley wrote, "is not the Nazis' right to free speech, but the need to counteract their violence 'by visible protest - demonstrations, rallies and other public actions'." Yet only a week earlier, SL supporters at a Chicago Militant Forum challenged the SWP to defend its record of responding to fascist provocations with nothing more powerful than debates and petitions to the bourgeois authorities while actively defending the 'right' of fascists to recruit for their terror campaigns. This same Andrew Pulley responded

"The best way and the most effective way that you are going to fight fascism today is not by focusing on the Nazis or any esoteric super right-wing group who do not play any decisive role in the racist or the ultimately fascist attack that is going down. The best way to fight fascism today isn't to demonstrate against the fascists, but to expose their

ideas. And you have to debate them because they represent a certain viewpoint in this country."

At the July 22 Forum, Pulley was only defending the established "wisdom" of this reformist cabal—stick your head in the sand and maybe the fascists will go away; if instead they bloody your flanks, hold a teach-in and plead with the police (themselves often fascist infested) to protect you. But if leftists, black or labor militants attempt to meet force with force and teach the cowardly race-hate terrorists a lesson they won't forget, according to the SWP's legalistic logic, this must be denounced as "ultraleft."

A pontificating sermon directed against the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League by Malik Miah on "Free Speech and the Fight against the Ultraright" (*Militant*, 1 August 1975) initially laid out the SWP's answer to revolutionaries who would take Trotsky's advice to "acquaint the fascists with the pavement":

"The SYL, for example, puts forward the slogan, 'No platform for the fascists,' and denies what it calls the 'supposed' right to freedom of speech" of fascist groups.

"The 'no platform' tactic gives the racists and fascists a new weapon to use against their opponents. It allows these thugs to pose as a persecuted minority or as defenders of democratic rights... an effective struggle against reactionary ideas and violence cannot be carried out if one begins by placing qualifications on democratic rights in the case of fascists."

More recently, a July 1977 SWP *Discussion Bulletin* contained a report on what is apparently considered an exemplary mobilization of "community

defense" against Nazi death threats. For three months the Pasadena party branch in southern California sought liberal endorsements for its two demands on the city's mayor: "...that the community be aroused against Nazi terrorist attacks, probably through a public forum sponsored by the Human Relations Committee, and that a police department desk be set up to deal with right-wing terrorism."

While the fascists continued to rampage, the SWP continued its vigils in the municipal halls. The account of a meeting with an arrogant and hostile chief of detectives provides a starkly revealing glimpse of the deep contempt which the guardians of capitalist "law and order" have for these toothless reformists:

"We pointed out that there had been six attacks in the past year and suggested that the Nazis be kept under observation. [Police Lt.] Robenson said the police had no more right to have a file on the Nazis than they would to have one on the SWP."

"We pointed out that there was an important difference: The Nazis had committed a series of terrorist acts and now threatened death. We were not asking that anyone's free speech be violated but that physical assaults be stopped."

"Robenson put that off with a patronizing smile and the comment, 'As long as there are gentle people like you in confrontation with people who are not so gentle, it is a problem.'"

What lesson did the SWPers draw from this shabby treatment? "We should have gone into the meeting with the cops with one or two civil libertarians so that elements like... Robenson could be hung with their own words."

So why all of a sudden do we discover these "gentle people," these housebroken ex-Trotskyist lapdogs, threatening to use "any means necessary" to stop "Nazi scum"? The answer is that the SWP, while pursuing openly reformist policies, also claims to represent Trotskyism. Moreover, as a "fraternal" supporter of the USec, the SWP seeks to avoid giving polemical ammunition to the centrist Mandeliste majority of that pseudo-Fourth International, some of whose members have been maimed or killed in confrontations with fascists in Britain and France. Thus we are occasionally treated to the spectacle of Joseph Hansen writing in *Intercontinental Press* (25 November 1974) terming the SL/SYL's call for labor/black defense against racist attacks in Boston "a commendable standpoint" while the SWP itself adamantly refused to raise such a demand. The *Militant's* fancy footwork over Skokie is a replay of this two-faced policy.

Apart from maintaining its "Trotskyist" credentials for international consumption, the SWP now finds that its "free speech for fascist" line stands in the way of its domestic appetites. If white liberals dismiss the fascists as harmless nuts, black people instinctively understand that the Klan and Nazis are a deadly serious threat. Even sections of the black liberal establishment do not defend the "rights" of these flaunting racist terrorists. For example, the leading black establishment paper in Chicago, the *Defender*, has criticized the ACLU for defending the Nazis. The SWP's civil libertarian line on the fascists is profoundly unpopular with even the politically raw, liberal black youth it seeks to recruit.

In the *Militant* article on "Nazi Scum in Skokie" Pulley is quoted as saying (in a "telephone interview"):

"At the same time, it is the obligation of all those who hate what the Nazis stand for to unite massively with Skokie's Jewish community against this Nazi provocation. To default in this responsibility is to allow rightist outfits like the JDL [Jewish Defense League] to appear as the only serious champions of the efforts by Skokie's Jews to defend themselves."

"This is why the Black community and the labor movement must be mobilizing today in solidarity with Jews in Skokie."

Our jaws drop in amazement at the effrontery of these doubletalkers! This is well and good for a "telephone interview," and makes it look like the SWP carried out a militant policy of mass protest against the threatened Nazi marches. But at no time did the SWP carry out such actions in Chicago (or anywhere else).

Twice in recent months there have been anti-Nazi demonstrations in Skokie, on the April 30-May 1 weekend and on July 4. The latter was little more than a publicity stunt by the JDL, but the earlier demonstration (called by B'nai B'rith chapters) drew several hundred militant community residents and leftists, notably the SL/SYL (see "Carter's America: Klan Burns Crosses on the Fourth," *WV* No. 166, 15 July). The SWP was not to be seen either at this rally or at small rallies by a hodgepodge of left-wing groups on both occasions.



April 30 demonstration against Nazis in Skokie.

continued on page 9



WV Photo

August 20 march in New York.

Anti-Communist Gay Rights Demos Flop

The "spirit of Stonewall," which, according to many gay activists, was about to usher in a new era of militancy, seemed nearly extinguished last Saturday (August 20). Whereas gay rights demonstrations a few months ago immediately following the defeat in Dade County, Florida of an ordinance protecting the civil rights of homosexuals drew hundreds of thousands of protestors, the August 20 demonstrations called in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco to demand "human rights for everyone" were able to muster only a few hundred at most. The Democratic Party hacks and hopefuls, who had swarmed like vermin over the earlier demonstrations, were, with very few exceptions, conspicuous by their absence on the 20th. Liberal support for gay rights is a sometime thing.

The oppressed homosexual population is the most visible target of an ominous reactionary offensive against

democratic rights. The current anti-homosexual backlash, the racist vigilantism against school busing, the "right-to-life" crusades against abortion, etc., are not isolated phenomena, but represent a concerted rightist drive against even token democratic gains. Nor are they the excrescences of right-wing "ultras" isolated from the bourgeois political "mainstream," as recent Supreme Court decisions show. The forces of social reaction are on the march, and it is Jimmy Carter and his class who are calling the tune.

The earlier gay rights demonstrations were massive outpourings of justified indignation by homosexuals and tens of thousands of supporters of democratic rights appalled by Anita Bryant's victory for bigotry in Dade County. The Spartacist League participated in these actions while warning against the politically amorphous "lifestyle radicalism" pervasive in the gay liberation milieu. While other avowed "socialists" were uncritically tailing the new "mass movement," we insisted that only the class axis in the fight against oppression could prevent gay activists from falling into the trap of Democratic Party "constituency" pressure politics. The August 20 demonstrations, in explicitly embracing the anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade, became simply a vehicle for twisting the legitimate anger of homosexuals outraged by Bryant in support of an even more dangerous enemy: Jimmy Carter, who as U.S. imperialism's top cop is the world's most powerful foe of human freedom.

In New York, Carter's left-wing apologists got more than they bargained for. The demonstration in front of the United Nations was joined by a contingent of gay counterrevolutionary Cuban exiles—*gusanos*—doubtless a jarring experience for those who have insisted that the gay liberation movement is inherently revolutionary. The *gusanos* carried a banner inscribed: "Ni Anita, Ni Fidel, Libertad al Homosexual Cubano" ("Neither Anita nor Fidel, Freedom for the Cuban Homosexual") and distributed a leaflet which—ludicrously—deplored the fact that most Cuban exiles did not solidarize with their cause and called on them to include gay rights in "whatever political solution" they have for Cuba.

While most demonstrators apparently accepted these counterrevolutionary scum on the

Militant Detroit CWA Operators Forced Back to Work

Fed up with rotten national and local contract settlements, approximately 500 telephone operators in eight southeastern Michigan cities wildcatted August 15 demanding that negotiations between the Communications Workers of America (CWA), Michigan Bell and AT&T be reopened. But despite the operators' militancy the strike was broken three days later due to massive company scab-herding. On August 19 the operators in the isolated traffic locals accepted a company agreement of amnesty to strikers and returned to work.

The wildcat (in eight cities)—Detroit, Allen Park, Livonia, Plymouth, Port Huron, Flint, Saginaw and Ann Arbor—was provoked by the series of sellouts and maneuvers which marked the CWA contract bargaining this year at both local and International levels.

Over 100,000 jobs have been lost in phone since 1973 due to automation. For months the CWA International under Glenn Watts had been bombastically vowing that in this summer's negotiations it would settle for nothing less than a shorter workweek with no loss in pay to protect the union from further layoffs. Yet at the very same time the International was paving the way for betrayal by stipulating at the CWA convention last June that most of the "job security" issues would be handled

more paltry than the ones the week before. In New York, for instance, Local 1101 "won" one more unpaid vacation day and a promise that members would be offered transfers *somewhere* in the continental U.S. as an alternative to being laid off!

Women Operators in Militant Wildcat

While the International representatives have been tripping over themselves in praise of this latest "best ever" contract, few phone workers were buying the whitewash. It is significant, however, that of all CWA workers it was a predominantly female traffic department that alone dared to defy the bureaucracy.

The Michigan operators showed much militancy and ingenuity in organizing picket lines and dispersing them to other phone locations such as installation and repair garages. In some cases operators phoned "411" and operators in other area codes to suggest they join them in the strike. At the Michigan Bell headquarters building in downtown Detroit operators faced police tactical mobile units and attack dogs which had been called in to enforce the company scab-herding operation. One black operator who stepped out too close to a police barricade was arrested. With signs reading "Nobody Asked Me, No



WV Photo

Striking phone workers picketed Michigan Bell headquarters in downtown Detroit last week.

on the local level. Since these key demands can only be won through the most determined national strike, Watts' plan delivered the kiss of death to the issue even before negotiations had been formally opened.

On August 6 the International agreed to a contract whose sole concessions to "job security" were a few more vacation days, a slight reduction in forced overtime and a severance bonus to senior employees to encourage early retirement. This settlement was so bad that even many of the kept local leaderships were forced to disavow it to retain a shred of credibility with their members.

Thus on August 14, a suspiciously coincidental series of local "spontaneous" strikes broke out in key centers of telephone militancy such as New York and Detroit. When these "strikes" were settled a mere seven hours later—on a Sunday morning before most of the members even knew they had begun—the ranks' frustration mounted further. The concessions won through this bureaucratic hoax were, of course, even

Contract!" and chants of "No Contract, No Work!" the operators protested the bureaucratic extension of the old contract until the ratification vote September 16.

The operators' wildcat gave the lie to the widespread feeling among male craft workers that women in phone are the union's Achilles' heel, a feeling particularly prevalent in New York where operators have yet to be organized. By setting up picket lines at craft locations the operators pointed the way forward to the kind of solidarity desperately needed and not often present in the CWA. And while many CWA craftsmen did honor the women's lines and several garages were completely closed down, it was craft scabbing at the main Detroit Bell Building which heavily contributed to breaking the strike.

A number of phone workers told WV that the problems in the area stemmed from the bureaucratic division of Local 4000 in 1968. At that time Joe Beirne, International vice president Hughes and the present head of craft Local 4001

continued on page 10

SPARTACIST LEAGUE LOCAL DIRECTORY

ANN ARBOR (313) 769-6376
c/o SYL, Room 4316
Michigan Union, U. of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

BERKELEY/
OAKLAND (415) 835-1535
Box 23372
Oakland, CA 94623

BOSTON (617) 492-3928
Box 188
MIT Station
Cambridge, MA 02139

CHICAGO (312) 427-0003
Box 6441, Main P.O.
Chicago, IL 60680

CLEVELAND (218) 566-7806
Box 6765
Cleveland, OH 44101

DETROIT (313) 869-1551
Box 663A, General P.O.
Detroit, MI 48232

HOUSTON
Box 26474
Houston, TX 77207

LOS ANGELES (213) 662-1564
Box 26282, Edendale Station
Los Angeles, CA 90026

NEW YORK (212) 925-2426
Box 1377, G.P.O.
New York, NY 10001

PHILADELPHIA
c/o SYL, P.O. Box 13138
Philadelphia, PA 19101

SAN DIEGO
P.O. Box 2034
Chula Vista, CA 92012

SAN FRANCISCO (415) 564-2845
Box 5712
San Francisco, CA 94101

TROTSKYIST LEAGUE
OF CANADA

TORONTO (416) 366-4107
Box 7198, Station A
Toronto, Ontario

VANCOUVER (604) 291-8993
Box 26, Station A
Vancouver, B.C.

continued on page 10

Alibis of a Social Democrat

Though attempting a more or less global critique of the Spartacist League program, Pearlman's real grievance is self-evidently the SL's refusal to implement his posturing left-reformist approach to the Boston school housing crisis of 1974-75. During this period, Pearlman urged that the SL should throw its small, largely white student Boston branch into physical confrontations with the enraged anti-housing racists. Simultaneously, he sought to soft-pedal the SL's revolutionary criticism of the reformist/Democratic Party bloc which had left the black masses defenseless before the vicious reactionary onslaught. The saga of Pearlman's opposition to the SL leadership over this issue, melodramatically titled "Why They Ran From the Black Struggle in Boston," comprises half of Pearlman's two-part article.

Though Comrade Pearlman's oppositional course in Boston proceeded primarily from parochialism and impressionistic impatience, the present article offers a sweeping indictment from the standpoint of the SWP of the SL program for the black struggle. For Pearlman, the SL's proletarian program and labor-centered strategy, based on the recognition of the social power of the trade unions, are counterposed to an "independent" black movement. They are counterposed because the only black movement which the SWP can imagine is the black nationalist radicalization of the late 1960's, with its separatist illusions and hostility to white workers and the union movement. With the SWP's avid concurrence, the black nationalist movement accepted the bourgeois's prescription that the advancement of racial minorities would come only at the expense of white workers, not at the expense of the ruling class. With this fundamentally despairing perspective, the black nationalist movement was sometimes effectively mobilized by the capitalists against the unions, whose present pro-capitalist leadership has been at best indifferent to blacks' efforts to resist the racist status quo.

The SWP reformists take the default of the labor movement as a given. For Pearlman, the black struggle equals "self-determination," and the rise of black separatist ideology was simply "a positive development." The SL of course recognized that the militant black nationalist radicalization possessed a positive aspect as an attempt to repudiate the reformist gradualism associated with M.L. King and the NAACP. The task of revolutionists facing that radicalization was to seek to win the best of the black militants to a revolutionary class perspective. From this crucial task, the SWP abstained.

The ideology of black nationalism assisted in the destruction of the Black Panther Party, which despite its petty-bourgeois/lumpen hustlerism attracted some of the most committed black militants. The "Oil the Pig" rhetoric which seemed the just and logical expression of the seething rage of the besieged ghetto population only facilitated the murderous cop vendetta which decimated the Panthers. The extermination of the Panther cadres, combined with the absence of a revolutionary class perspective, facilitated the reconciliation of the surviving Panther leadership with the Democratic Party. Of course, the SWP need shed no tears over the



At 1974 Boston demo Spartacist League/SYL banner called for labor/black defense against racist attacks.

PART 2: The Slander of SL Abstention on Boston Busing

destruction of the Panthers, which it always smugly dismissed as "ultra-left."

Abstention on Boston Busing?

Unlike the SWP, for whom the Spartacists were always an irrelevant "sect," Pearlman implicitly posits a more or less healthy period for our organization, roughly corresponding to that of his membership. Thus he betrays an amusing subjectivity. (We would note only that though Trotsky had more to do with the Comintern than Pearlman did with the SL, he tied the CP's definitive degeneration to the German betrayal, not to his own departure!) For Pearlman, Boston was the center of the universe, and the SL's inability to intervene to change the balance of class forces in Boston was the definitive test of SL "abstention." He writes:

"The Spartacist League reacted to the first shocks of antihousing violence in a seemingly healthy manner. It issued, on September 22, 1974, an open 'Letter to Boston Trade Unions, Black and Socialist Organizations' titled 'Act Now! Defend Black School Children!' The letter was 'a proposal for a broad mobilization, initiated by the unions, black and socialist organizations, to build a mass popular demonstration around the common slogan, 'Stop the Racist Attacks Against Black School Children!' The Spartacist League, a labor-socialist organization, pledges to devote all available resources and energy to aid in the building of such a demonstration! This pledge was to be put to a severe test in practice two months later."

"Spartacist also understood that no socialist organization had the authority to initiate such a demonstration..."

The unanticipated violence of the anti-busing reaction in Boston created an initial political vacuum in which the SL was the *only* group advocating a broad mobilization against the racist

attacks. Needless to say, the SWP made *no response* to this call to action; its policy was passive propagandism in favor of federal troops—a liberal line counterposed to the fight for the independent mobilization of the workers and oppressed. On October 9, the SWP's local electoral candidates issued a press release; it is instructive to compare its thrust with the *New York Times* editorial of the same date:

"We completely support the demands made by the leaders of the Black community that federal troops be sent to Boston immediately to protect Black students from the escalating racist violence."

"In this atmosphere, federal troops must be sent immediately to uphold the desegregation order and to protect the Black students who are implementing it. All necessary force must be used to smash the racist offensive and guarantee the safety and constitutional rights of the Black people in this city."

Militant, 18 October 1974

"Mayor Kevin White has now joined the NAACP in requesting Federal help in the form of United States marshals. Others in Boston are beginning to murmur quietly about the need soon for federal troops."

"Mayor White should get the help he needs, whether it is Federal marshals now or Federal troops in the near future if the marshals coupled with the Boston police Department cannot restore order. What is at stake in Boston is not simply orderly integration of that city's school system, important as that is, but vindication of the rule of law."

New York Times, 9 October 1974

From the outset the SL warned against the suicidal illusion that the imperialist army or the racist cops would "protect" the black masses. Programmatically, the SL fought for the slogan "Extend Busing to the Suburbs," a demand which would

support a modest democratic gain (inner-city busing) while focusing attention on the discrimination against both black and white working people represented by the segregation and class privilege embodied in the lily-white middle-class suburban school systems. This demand laid the basis for winning support from the white working class for the integration struggle, thus potentially defusing the racist anti-busing mobilization centered on poor white neighborhoods like South Boston.

Despite small forces, the SL achieved some prominence as the only left-wing organization to come to the defense of the besieged black population of Boston. Pearlman tells the story this way:

"A small local demonstration of Boston Blacks on October 12 accidentally catapulted Spartacist into the international press when an Associated Press photo featuring Spartacist banners was published throughout the world, including in the major European CP dailies. So the media reward those who know how to make signs and banners."

The reality was not so "accidental" and explodes the Pearlman myth of SL "abstention." Our militant banner, "For a Labor/Black Mobilization to Defend Black Children and Columbia Point," was picked up by the media because the SL had the *only* organized leftist contingent at the demonstration.

Moreover, besides devoting our entire local resources (hacked up by national leaders and black comrades from other locals) to agitating for a mass, united-front demonstration to stop the racist attacks, we offered active solidarity with the embattled black tenants in Columbia Point, a large housing project bordering South Boston which was harassed by white vigilantes and subsequently occupied by several hundred cops. Pearlman's article lauds this effort at community self-defense but makes no mention of any attempt by the SWP to intersect it.

This is because the SWP couldn't have cared less about black self-defense. While the SL was publicizing the siege at Columbia Point, the SWP was seeking a deal with black Democratic Party

politicians and community leaders whose only response to the crisis was to call on Gerald Ford to dispatch the U.S. Army to Boston. Reflecting the timidity of local black leaders and their hat-in-hand appeals for federal troops, the SWP fought to derail any serious militancy in the anti-racist struggle. Thus, at several mass meetings called by black and Latin student groups at the Boston branch of the University of Massachusetts in October, SWP national leaders counterposed a campus teaching to building a demonstration against the reactionary anti-busing campaign.

The United Front and the December 14 Demonstration

While claiming that the SL "remarkably" was quick to pick up the busing issue, Pearlman alleges that

"Hidden, however, in this orientation were two fundamental assumptions that were to lead to the SL's criminal abstention from the busing struggle and the early liquidation of its prodesegregation work in Boston.

"The first assumption was that a significant popular mobilization against the racists could be built only through the unions. In the SL's view, a mobilization of 'blacks for blacks' without labor-union participation would be 'hopeless.' And second, the freedom of all 'participating groups' in the joint action to raise their own particular points of view was not, in the SL's opinion, to be satisfied through leaflets and banners. In the SL's view of the united front, this meant the 'freedom' of tiny socialist organizations with no mass influence (like the Spartacist League) to insist on having a speaker at every rally, as a matter of principle, in order to criticize other participating organizations from the podium.

"Meanwhile, however, under the sponsorship of Black Democratic State Senator-elect William Owens, Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF) had quietly put together some 300 endorsements calling for a December 14 [1974] 'National March and Rally Against Racism' (later titled the 'Freedom March for Human Dignity'). For many of us in the Boston SL, this development seemed to be a crystallization of much that we had been working for.

"But when the Boston Local executive committee phoned Robertson after attending the initial meeting of the Emergency Committee and advocated endorsement of the December 14 demonstration and participation in the committee, Robertson blasted, 'Betrayers!' and hung up."

Since the December 14 demonstration and the events surrounding it occupy a large place in Pearlman's polemic, it is important to set the record straight.

In the first place, the notion that the SL defines a "united front" in terms of our right to have "a speaker at every rally" is even more ludicrous than it is a slander—and it is both. Especially when fundamental differences in class thrust separate the forces participating in a common action, it becomes doubly unprincipled for revolutionists to lend their name to an action unless they have the possibility of making their criticisms clear. There can be no united front, for example, where a bourgeois politician censors the propaganda distributed at a demonstration. Yet at the mid-November planning meeting for the march which Pearlman refers to, this is exactly what happened. A member of Owens' staff laid down the law for the assembled fake-leftists (including virtually the entire Boston SWP branch). In return for personally sponsoring the march, Owens reserved a personal veto over all key decisions—the route of the march, tactical control, the speakers list, official propaganda, etc.

Furthermore, Comrade Pearlman's own motion at the Boston SL local meeting of 24 November 1974 makes it clear that the SL leadership's position was not insistence on "a speaker at every rally," but rather a demand for "written guarantees pertaining to veto power over propaganda and for an anti-federal troop speaker on the platform."

The SWP, meanwhile, conceded to YAWF the privileged access to Owens and accepted the bureaucratic fiat of this Democratic Party demagogue in return for an auxiliary student commit-

tee, the germ of the later National Student Committee Against Racism (NSCAR), to give it some organizational leverage. However, the subordination of the December 14 demonstration to an ambitious bourgeois politician looking for a "militant" reputation and hacked up by a fake-leftist outfit with proclivities to adventurism (YAWF) very nearly led to a disaster.

In the middle of the march, when the police changed the parade route, Owens and YAWF engaged in a dangerous macho display. From the top of a car Owens shouted: "We'll go down Boylston Street at any cost." With several thousand sandwiched into a two-block area, penned in by the police in front, a solid row of shops on one side and a steep dropoff onto a turnpike on the other, the front line of YAWF marshals attempted to break through the police lines. They were brutally beaten back, with a number of arrests and bloodied heads. Not just the SL, but also the SWP, on hearing of plans for the confrontation, held back its forces and marched separately. But it was the SWP's own capitulationist policies, leaving total control of the event in the hands of Owens, that set the stage for this potential bloodbath.

Boston as the Center of the Universe

The next phase of Pearlman's internal struggle, as presented in his article, was a discussion of organizational priorities by the SL leadership. He writes:

"In March 1975, a meeting of the Political Bureau was held, including Central Committee members and organizers from outside the New York national center, who were convened to decide organizational priorities for the coming period. I gave the report on Boston and advocated an upgrading of our intervention into the busing struggle. This viewpoint turned out to be a minority of one among the national leadership of the party... Robertson said that Boston had no labor movement, the situation for Blacks was therefore hopeless.

"The SL could not conceive of the Black community along with allies, with little

or no union support to begin with, organizing to defend itself and carry out desegregation. Robertson's conclusion was that the task of the SL was to organize 'the Red Army in Detroit' and come back and 'smash the Boston racists.' This slogan became the watchword of this Political Bureau meeting, which formalized the liquidation of the SL's Black work in Boston. 'No more Black comrades to Boston!'"

Here Pearlman's Boston-centered approach to the party and to black work comes sharply into focus. As is often the case, the argument over priorities was expressed in decisions on concrete allocations of forces. The meeting's decisions included the projection of a weekly press that coming fall; the choice of local priorities—which centered on the reinforcement of major industrial Midwest cities where the SL had a trade-union implantation in basic industries—precluded the reinforcement of Boston. Pearlman has obviously garbled a good deal ("the Red Army in Detroit") but he is correct that the meeting reaffirmed the perspective for Boston as a small local involved mainly in student-centered work.

Nevertheless, Pearlman's article in effect admits that the prospects for actually realizing labor/black defense on a mass scale were not hopeful. "Boston's economy is built around light manufacturing, finance, commerce, and universities. No major union with a significant Black membership that could rally prodesegregation forces exists. Only the small Meat Cutters union publicly supported desegregation. The Fire Fighters and Teamsters, bastions of white workers under the sway of racist forces, passed anti-busing motions. The Massachusetts state AFL-CIO passed an anti-busing motion at its fall 1975 convention."

Truly the SWP is shameless. If the SL is "abstentionist" because it insisted that prospects for a small communist organization to affect Boston's poisoned racial situation were not hopeful, it must follow that the SWP, with its substantially larger forces (to say nothing of its presumably better line, in Pearlman's

view) must have had a field day. Alas for Pearlman, he can make no such claim. The leadership which the SWP hailed and tailed led the so-called "mass producing movement" straight into the arms of the Democrats and the cops. Two and a half years have passed since 14 December 1974 and the situation is worse than ever. The South Boston Marshals are stronger and black school children are still assaulted. The "mass movement" evaporated. The SWP's last hoped-for "mass action," scheduled for 24 April 1976, had to be canceled. The late, unlamented NSCAR began to consciously downplay Boston husing in favor of the South Africa issue, and in 1976 moved its national headquarters from Boston to New York.

For us, though certainly not for cynics like Pearlman, perhaps the most serious charge made in the article is the imputation that the SL pursued different policies in public and internally. He asserts that the SL leadership characterized the Boston struggle as "hopeless" privately, while in public:

"the SL struggled, in print, for a 'Labor/Black Defense.' It attended NSCAR conferences and screamed about the betrayals of the SWP."

This perverse distortion proceeds from Pearlman's parochial impatience, indignant that we did not posture that we could substitute ourselves for the broad mobilization of the organized labor movement and black organizations to defend busing. A historical example may help to illuminate Pearlman's fallacy. Trotsky called for the Communist and Socialist Parties to insurrect against Hitler's rise to power; in fact, the CP's default was the acid test which prompted Trotsky to revise his characterization of the Comintern. He castigated the mass workers parties for their betrayal, but did not call upon small organizations of revolutionaries to insurrect.

The notion that Boston was the best place for the SL to undertake black work was axiomatic to Pearlman because that was where he lived. Thus Pearlman and his sometime bloc partner in Boston, A. Lumumba, viewed as an attempt to liquidate black work the SL leadership's proposal to transfer Lumumba to New York both to play a role on the black commission and to become part of a long-time SL industrial fraction which has become known as the only consistent defender of a status of workers—overwhelmingly young and predominantly black and Spanish-speaking—whose low seniority is institutionalized in second-class status within the union. The presence of an articulate black comrade in this union fraction would have assisted the fraction's fight against discrimination against these mainly minority group workers, as well as facilitating his own political integration within our organization.

A Lumumba was a talented comrade with a black nationalist background. Never more than partially won to Trotskyism, he stood partway between the SL and the kind of black radicalism characteristic of the Cleaver wing of the Panthers. Pearlman was able to pull Lumumba into a bloc against the rest of the Boston local leadership through a proposal for a local black fraction, counterposed to the perspective of transferring Lumumba to New York. Pearlman has no shame in solidarizing with Lumumba, who he says quit the SL "challenging the entire Spartacist theory and record on the Black question." The omnipresent "author's notes" which are cited as authoritative source material throughout the article make their appearance here as Pearlman quotes Lumumba as characterizing SL activity as "raising demands, but having no program."

In a footnote, Pearlman asserts that Lumumba "based his opposition on Trotsky's writings on Black nationalism." This is a rather egregious case of selective falsification. For a brief period,

continued on page 8



SWP called on Boston black community to rely on the bourgeois state for protection against racist attacks.



SWP groveled before the "leaders of the black community" such as Bill Owens of the Democratic Party. Above, Owens speaking at December 14, 1974 Boston demonstration.

Alibis...

(continued from page 7)

Lumumba did, indeed, latch onto Trotsky's misconception of a "black nation" in the U.S. to bolster his arguments against the SL. But this was only a brief resting place in his exit from the Trotskyist movement. Pearlman neglects to mention that, by the time he quit the SL, Lumumba's main source of "theoretical" inspiration was the virulent red-hating black nationalist Harold Cruse.

The real political orientation of Lumumba was seen at what Pearlman refers to as a "Black community picnic" in the summer of 1975 at Carson Beach. "an action to open up that South Boston public beach to Black citizens." He does not mention that this action was also Lumumba's first venture into public political activity following his resignation from the SL. As the "picnic" turned into a melee between rampaging racists and leftist confrontationalists, Lumumba devoted himself to physically assailing white leftists.

Who Abstained in the Unions?

Pearlman's claim to the mantle of pro-husing advocate within the SL is also given the lie by the record of his trade-union work. Under the direction of the SL Trade Union Commission, Pearlman was active as an individual oppositionist in the teachers' union. The PB meeting which allegedly abandoned Boston blacks by refusing to reinforce the Boston local also authorized Pearlman to run for office in his union. Pearlman's impulse, however, was to downplay the husing question, focusing instead on a scheme for "one-to-one" quota hiring of minority teachers which, in the words of a TUC motion of 8 May 1975, "could be critically supported in the event of a vote in which all other choices beyond support or opposition had been eliminated (i.e., a referendum on racism), and otherwise should be opposed with explanations and programmatic alternatives." The TUC was forced to admonish Pearlman that:

"Our position on busing and labor/black defense, and the need to link it to a systematic struggle against racism leading to class struggle behind the full sweep of our anti-capitalist program, must be the main theme of the Boston campaign. In particular, a sharp attack must be launched against the union bureaucracy for their open capitulation to racism."

As often happens to those who are sensitive only to the conveniences of the moment, Pearlman's opportunism refutes his claim that only he, and not the SL leadership, cared about the fight to defend school husing in Boston.

The Call for Troops

The dismal failure of the Boston liberal and black milieu to pose any perspective of real action in defense of busing independent of the Democratic Party, combined with the labor bureaucracy's craven capitulation to virulent white racism, left Boston blacks defenseless before the anti-busing onslaught. The so-called "mass movement" was simply coopted by the Democrats and its sole operative demand was the plea for "protection" by federal troops. The reformist SWP shared in the responsibility for this disastrous situation. In justifying the SWP's main line for Boston, the call for troops, Pearlman makes explicit these reformists' view of the capitalist state as effectively class-neutral:

"Super-Marxists" often recall only Engels and Lenin's dictum that the state, in the last resort, is 'special bodies of armed men' and that therefore the police and army are the 'arms of the ruling class.' They forget that under bourgeois democracy the state also 'mediates' and maneuvers between classes and does not massacre Blacks and workers in every circumstance.



Police escort buses arriving at South Boston High School.

They also forget that there are tactical differences between sections of the bourgeoisie that revolutionists must exploit."

On every major question the SL and SWP meet as enemies on the political battlefield, as Bolshevik against social democrat. This hostility is above all characterized by a counterposed program with regard to the bourgeois state, although the ex-Trotskyist SWP is usually not so explicit about its revisionism as in this passage. For Leninists, the state is an instrument of oppressive class rule, "a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms" (*State and Revolution*). But for the social democrat it is an institution that stands above the class struggle and mediates it; thus the reformists' program is to pressure the state to side with the workers and oppressed. The petty-bourgeois ideologists, says Lenin, "correct" Marx in such a way as to make it appear that the state is an organ for the reconciliation of classes." It is significant that in order to attack the SL's opposition to the call for federal troops to Boston Pearlman is compelled to "correct" the ABC's of Leninism. He certainly proves, if nothing else, that he is no "Super-Marxist."

Pearlman thinks that supposed "socialists" should parrot the working people's suicidal illusions in the capitalist state; when "concrete experiences" demonstrate the cops' real role, then the "vanguard" can follow the masses in repudiating the attempted bloc with the imperialist army! This is "leadership," SWP style.

Though Pearlman's deepgoing estrangement from the SL program while in our organization led him into opposition over numerous questions, from tenant organizing to Ireland, he never approached the consistent reformism exemplified by the SWP and its "federal troops" betrayal. At the Black Commission held during an SL Central Committee plenum on 15 August 1975, Pearlman took exception to the Black Commission motion, which stated:

"We support the self-defense of blacks when confronted with racist attacks upon [their] community. The effective suppression of racist terrorist organizations within their own communal base requires an integrated military force based upon the labor movement. To imply under the slogan of black self-defense the possibility of black military intervention into white racist areas is adventurist and a provocation to race riots in Boston today."

This motion was the basis for WP's statement, which Pearlman quotes, that "only the social power of the trade unions and the presence of significant numbers of whites among the defenders provide a means for unlocking the intensifying racial polarization confronting Boston's black people."

Pearlman's counter-motion, calling for "defensive activity by [black self-defense] organizations on or by buses going to predominantly white areas and in front of schools in such areas," was an exercise in tactically adventurist voluntarism. In fact, there was an organization in Boston at that time which was courageously carrying out substitutionist attempts along the lines suggested by

Pearlman, but it was *not* the SWP. It would not suit Pearlman's present purposes to solidarize in hindsight with the anti-racist confrontationism of Progressive Labor, but Pearlman's uncritical reference to the showdown at Carson Beach (in which PL was heavily involved), like his earlier approving comments about YAWF and its provocative tactics on December 14, betray his real sympathies at that time.

Fruits of Betrayal: NSCAR's Demise

The occasion of Pearlman's last significant political fight in the SL was the 24 April 1976 "mass action" proclaimed by the SWP. Comrade Pearlman apparently does not feel impelled to provide his readers with any account of this fight. Though his motion shows his degeneration in the direction of SWP reformism, he may be embarrassed to put in print his characterization of the march as "reformist." Whatever his reasons, we are pleased to correct his omission:

"Motion [Pearlman]: The policy of the local vis-a-vis the April 24 march should be:

- a. no political support
- b. to build this reformist march in our own way
- c. to build our own contingent
- d. In particular to recommend to the youth [organization] that campus fractions promote, as a priority activity, building the march as a step in the fight for husing but consistently criticizing its reliance on the government and calling for a class struggle contingent."

Pearlman's motion was defeated in favor of one put forward by the Boston local leadership:

"I hat the April 24 demonstration called to demand 'use of city police, state police and federal troops' to enforce husing is a roadblock to the struggle to build a movement to defend the rights of blacks. It is an attempt to channel the struggle into reformist parliamentarism and pacifism. Therefore, we do not build the roadblock but mobilize our own class struggle contingent centered on: support busing, extend it to the suburbs, labor-black defense to counterpose a class struggle program to this march's program."

Poor Pearlman. He could not resist the lure of a roadblock built on sand. The April 24 march never came off and NSCAR went the way of all "mass movement" front groups; the SWP is left with little to tail but the ultra-establishment NAACP.

Pearlman's strutting and fretting cannot conceal the SWP's amusing dilemma: it does not really have a line on the black question! When the militant black nationalist mood held undisputed sway among black youth, the SWP proclaimed it unequivocally "progressive" and rushed to help break the 1968 NYC teachers' strike in the name of "community control" of the schools. Consistency would demand opposition to school integration and thus to busing, and indeed black nationalists, like Baraka's Congress of Afrikan Peoples, oppose husing as an attack on the all-black schools which they see as their potential bailiwicks for patronage.

But the SWP styles itself the champion of busing. Indeed, the decom-

position of the black movement assisted by the failure of the SWP to fight to break black militants away from separatist utopianism and toward a class perspective left the SWP with little to tail except the pro-busing liberalism embodied in the stodgy pro-Democratic Party black "movement" exemplified by the NAACP. So the SWP must straddle the fence between "community control" and husing.

Thus an article on Boston in the 27 September 1974 *Militant* hid behind the call for voluntary husing:

"The SWP candidates have spoken out in defense of the right of Black students to attend any school they choose and to use husing as a tool to win better education."

"The socialist candidates have also spoken out in defense of the right of the Black community to maintain all-Black schools where it is felt that this is the road to quality education."

The article skirts the issue which drew the lines in Boston in blood: court-ordered husing. Its line is, in blackface, but a short step from the racist vigilantes' battletcry: "No forced busing!" Meanwhile, the campaign statement of Willie Mac Reid (*Militant*, 15 November 1974) dropped any mention of "community control" or other sops to the black nationalists, simply trumpeting the call for "desegregation" in the schools and throughout society.

Pearlman wisely confines himself to proving ad nauseum that the SWP is against the SL program of revolutionary integrationism, without hohering to explain what his party is really for. But he runs up against the problem again when he tries to explain why the SWP supports racially separate political units (sometimes) in the U.S. ("community control") while opposing them in South Africa (apartheid and bantustans). Why does Pearlman believe that a separate black government with its own police would be good in Harlem or Roxbury but is bad in the Transkei? "Self-determination" for America's ghettos could only produce the same conditions as in South Africa's bantustans (a compound for episodically surplus labor run by black puppets). The SWP social democrats have nothing to offer American blacks except NAACP liberalism and/or the reactionary utopian perspective of "community control" of their impoverished inner-city slums.

In embracing "consistent democracy" as the highest (read: only) principle for "socialists," the SWP rejects the elementary Marxist tenet that "right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and the cultural development conditioned thereby." In contrast, the SL fights to link the struggle for democratic rights for blacks to the material leverage of black and white workers expressed through the trade unions. It is only those, like Pearlman, who despair of the revolutionary potential of the organized workers movement mobilized around a class-struggle program, who dismiss the battle to break the unions from the racist, pro-capitalist status quo as abstract or "ahistorical."

[TO BE CONTINUED]

SL/SYL PUBLIC OFFICES

Marxist Literature

BAY AREA

Friday and Saturday 3:00-6:00 p.m.
1634 Telegraph, 3rd floor
(near 17th Street)
Oakland, California
Phone 835-1535

CHICAGO

Tuesday 4:30-8:00 p.m.
Saturday 2:00-5:30 p.m.
650 South Clark, 2nd floor
Chicago, Illinois
Phone 427-0003

NEW YORK

Monday-Friday 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Saturday 1:00-4:00 p.m.
260 West Broadway, Room 522
New York, New York
Phone 925-5665

Labor Martyrs of Capitalist "Justice"

Avenge Sacco and Vanzetti!

AUGUST 23—Fifty years ago today Sacco and Vanzetti were executed in Massachusetts. They had not robbed the payroll of the Slate-Morrill Shoe Co. or murdered in the process, as accused, but were guilty of being Italian immigrants and anarchists. They symbolized the victimizations of the 1920's—when militant workers, above all "foreigners" and radicals, were brutally witchhunted by the forces of capitalist reaction.

Liberals take comfort in the illusion that the social-chauvinist frenzy of World War I and the Palmer raids are relics of the past. Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis now acknowledges that the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti was prejudiced and this month issued a proclamation declaring their names hereafter were cleansed of "any stigma and disgrace."

Of course the spectacle of capitalist politicians, lackeys of a social class and system as corrupt in ideology as its practice is filthy, "cleansing" the names of their victims is disgusting. The names of Sacco and Vanzetti have been and will continue to be an inspiration to those fighting for the emancipation of the working class, as James P. Cannon, founder of the International Labor Defense (ILD), wrote in his eulogy, published below, the day after their murder.

The flurry of pardoning those whose lives have been long since wrecked by capitalist injustices—Scottsboro Boy Clarence Norris, "Tokyo Rose" Iva Toguri d'Aquino—even as new frame-ups are in progress, is indicative. The watchword of this post-Watergate era of "human rights" is indeed brazen hypocrisy.

Sometimes it is cowardly hypocrisy. NYC mayor Beame, for example, canceled plans to declare August 23 "Sacco and Vanzetti Day" in order to avoid controversy and confusion over his vicious call for a return to capital punishment. And Massachusetts' Dukakis carefully stopped short of declaring the obvious innocence of the two martyrs, no doubt in order to avoid ruffling too many political feathers.

As the ILD fought for the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti on an international scale for years Cannon implored the working class to absorb the lessons of the case. He wrote in the October 1927 Labor Defender: "It is the vengeful, cruel and murderous class which the workers must fight and conquer before the regime of imprisonment, torture



Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco

and murder can be ended. This is the message from the chair of death. This is the lesson of the Sacco-Vanzetti case."

The Spartacist League as well as the Partisan Defense Committee which is founded on the principles and in the tradition of Cannon's ILD, are committed to carrying on their class-struggle defense work to prevent the victimization and legal murder of present and future Saccos and Vanzettis, as an integral part of the struggle to overthrow the capitalist system which daily produces such injustices.

Sacco and Vanzetti are dead but their names will live forever and become a shining banner for the upward striving toilers of the world. They have been murdered by the assassins of the capitalist class. Their execution was a cynically brutal defiance of the worldwide demand of the millions of people that they be liberated or at least be given a new trial to prove again their innocence. It was a legally lynching, a fiendish act of class vengeance, cunningly prepared and planned and violently consummated by the willing tools of the capitalist class.

Sacco and Vanzetti died for the working class. Like their immortal comrades of Chicago's Haymarket they died as martyrs to the cause of labor. This was known or felt by tens of millions of workers in every corner of the globe who fought bitterly to the very last moment to vindicate the two martyred labor fighters. Their admirable loyalty and devotion to labor was the only crime they were guilty of; they were innocent of the crime charged

against them by their executioners.

The last words of Vanzetti uttered a minute before the current of death silenced his voice were the echo of the deep convictions of the people:

"I wish to tell you that I am innocent and have never committed a crime, but perhaps some sins. I am innocent of all crimes, not only of this one but of all. I am an innocent man."

The Massachusetts executioners have put to death two glorious spirits. These two fighters, living for seven years in the shadow of the electric chair, unceasingly tortured by their suspension between delay and death, calmly watching the relentless net of the capitalist lynchers closing about them, showed by their heroic conduct how the revolutionary fighters of the working class can die at the hands of their class enemy.

The noble dignity and courage which sustained them throughout the seven years remained with them to the end. They went to death calmly and bravely without fear or embarrassment. It was their murderers, the governors and the judges who hid their faces in fear and shame.

Yes, their names will live forever, for the electric current that killed them has burned their names permanently into the hearts of the toilers of the world. Their miserable executioners will be buried in oblivion while the names and struggles of Sacco and Vanzetti still remain a shining guide to the masses, an inspiration to the oppressed everywhere.

They are our noble and heroic martyrs. Their conduct up to the very last moment was in that spirit. Their voices are stilled but their silence thunders around the world. The workers of America who fought to free Sacco and Vanzetti must pay tribute to their heroic memory in every section of the country. The workers must gather at memorial meetings to pledge themselves to keep alive the memory of Sacco and Vanzetti and their fight; to pour their hatred upon the heads of the murderers; to build their strength to prevent new Sacco-Vanzetti cases and to obtain freedom for the class fighters who are also victims of the frame-up and still in prison.

The International Labor Defense will continue its work for that cause in the spirit of Sacco and Vanzetti.

Honor and respect to our fallen comrades! Remember Sacco and Vanzetti! Remember labor's deathless martyrs!

Skokie...

(continued from page 4)

Moreover, at a University of Illinois debate on "Free Speech for Fascists?" held May 24, an SWP spokesman explicitly defended his party's abstention from demonstrating against Nazi provocations, labeling the April 30 Skokie rally of 500 people—many of them survivors of Nazi concentration camps—as "a bunch of leftist groups and the IDL."

SWP supporters with even a vestige of fighting spirit must be choking on the

concrete tasks of defending the "rights" of fascists, the black NSCAR member who had to attempt to stop disruption of a rabid race-baiting Klansman's speech at the University of Houston; the SWP trade-union supporter in the same city called on by the national party leadership to demand that her local take up the defense of a fascist (and non-union member) fired by the company; the SWPers in Detroit who recently had to restrain outraged communists from dealing with a handful of fascist provocateurs at a pro-abortion rally. Even the ACLU has reported massive discontent and the resignation of 1,000 members in Illinois over its defense of the fascists.

Meanwhile, the party press is constrained to engage in deliberate deception in order to put a credible face on the SWP's treacherous policy in defense of fascists' "rights." The "Nazi Scum" article is a typical SWP response to such pressures, a blast of hot air directed at its critics. It demonstrates that not only the Stalinists but all reformists are forced to resort to conscious falsifications to hide their numerous betrayals, big and small. ■

SPARTACIST edition française
pour toute commande s'adresser à:
Pascal Alessandri
B.P. 336
75011 Paris
FRANCE
Spartacist Publishing Co.
Box 1377 GPO
New York, N.Y. 10001
USA
3,00 F.F. S.75 US/Canada

Bomb...

(continued from page 1)

compelled to claw at one another for a new revision of the globe are rooted in the contradictions of the capitalist process of production; there are no good and bad guys among these rival capitalist classes. Today all the imperialist powers engage in increasing economic nationalism, ranging from heartlessness toward foreign labor, through the cutting off of foreign imports, to efforts to subvert and set against each other the Russian and Chinese deformed workers states. The task of Marxist revolutionaries, through two world wars and before the onset of a third, was long ago summarized by Marx: Workers of the World Unite! ■

Mine Sellout...

(continued from page 1)

known Miller supporter, ridiculed the pickets and demanded to know why he was being kept out, he was told that if the miners weren't drawing pay, neither would he!

Unable to cajole or intimidate the miners into returning to work, the UMWA tops attempted to pressure district and local officials into doing their dirty work. Following the militant miners' march in Washington August 5, some of the district officials who organized the rally, claiming that the miners had made their point in Washington, convened meetings in Districts 29 and 17 to consider back-to-work resolutions.

The ploy was successful in District 29 (southern West Virginia) where some 9,000 miners returned to the job. But it was foiled by miners in District 17. After the majority in this district voted to remain out, District 17 president Jack Perry sighed, "Again, we've attempted and failed. That's the way it is" (*Charleston Gazette*, 11 August).

District 17 miners quickly insured that West Virginia was once again shut down solid. Roving pickets were dispatched to neighboring states. Last week the total on strike swelled to 80,000, principally through the addition of Alabama miners.

The 80,000 on strike last week represented the high-water mark of the

wildcat. The strike has alternately expanded and contracted, as militant miners and strikebreaking bureaucrats have attempted to check each other's moves.

The key weakness of the strike, from its inception, has been the absence of an elected strike leadership that can authoritatively extend the wildcat nationally and counter the treacherous ploys of the strike's enemies, both inside and outside the union.

Elected committees to run strikes and other class battles are a crucial necessity for the working class. The absence of such a tradition in the UMWA is a legacy of decades of bureaucratic misrule by the Lewises, Boyles and Millers.

Without such organs, the spontaneous militancy of the workers is usually unable to withstand the superior organization of the bureaucracy. When District 17 local officials, at least some of whom sincerely wanted to extend the strike, called on the International to come to Charleston, they had no demands, no strategy and no visibly authoritative body of their own to counter the top officials. So the IEB quickly recaptured lost ground and passed over to the offensive. The rotten back-to-work maneuver was the result.

The strike is in mortal danger. Miners must regroup their ranks, elect strike committees to spread the strike nationally and reassemble under the banner, "No card, no coal." ■

AFT Convention...

(continued from page 2)

confessed that when white certified teachers in her local were laid off while some uncertified bilingual teachers were retained, she felt caught in a dilemma. As a trade unionist she wanted to defend the contract, which called for layoffs by seniority, but she also wanted to fight discrimination.

Caucus panelist Rohh Wright told her not to worry about defending the union: "Strict seniority makes sure that blacks never share in the good times." Wright added that union control was basically unimportant: "The school system in Boston is run by Judge Garrity, which I think is a good thing." Wright later offered, in an ultimate appeal to nationalism, "I have seniority over any white worker in this country, and so do all blacks and Native Americans, because they've been discriminated against since 1619."

Caucus leaders on the convention floor were equally uninterested in drawing a class line. Jeff Mackler indignantly demanded that the clause calling for "full employment" in the bureaucracy's seniority resolution be dropped. While this clause was indeed hypocritical, given the AFT hacks' toleration of mass layoffs in NYC, Philadelphia and other cities, Mackler's point was that full employment was irrelevant—what section of the working class got laid off was the issue at hand! Mackler also indicated a willingness to support Shanker's do-nothing busing resolution if it was amended to give a one-year trial period for non-busing alternatives to achieve integration.

The CP-supported United Action Caucus (UAC) managed to run a slate for AFL-CIO delegates, and put out a position paper on all the resolutions that were considered. However, the politics of the UAC were identical to those of the SWP-backed Caucus on Desegregation. It also capitulated to the AFT Black Caucus, and decided to support Simons, who ran on Shanker's slate but was endorsed by the Black Caucus.

But the slimiest action of the UAC

was the letter in its convention newsletter addressed to "Dear President Carter." Complaining of cutbacks in education, it whined, "You must give strong leadership to bring our country out of this depression." The UAC went on to praise Carter for opposing the B-I bomber and urged him to support a palmy \$3 hour minimum wage and the Conyers Bill for a 35-hour workweek at 40 hours pay. This disgusting piece of reformist, social-patriotic garbage was signed, "Respectfully, United Action Caucus (AFT)."

"Human Rights"...for the CIA

From the beginning of the conference to the end, the Shanker bureaucracy gave maximum publicity to its virulent anti-communism and its close ties with the likes of CIA hack Irving Brown, a co-member with Shanker in the right-wing Social Democrats U.S.A. There were three showings of the "Voice of Freedom," a documentary starring reactionary Soviet emigré Solzhenitsyn. The AFT bureaucrats rammed through the pro-Matos resolution as well as a "human rights resolution" which condemned "totalitarian Communist regimes" and commended President Carter for his efforts "to promote and achieve basic human rights."

The fake left gave backhanded support to Carter's human rights campaign, claiming only that he ought to pay more attention to "human rights at home." SWP supporters told *WV* that they supported a resolution to that effect submitted by the Hayward local, which was silent on the defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism and urged the AFT to continue its "agitation for freedom for Russian and Chilean dissidents," thus liquidating the fundamental class distinction between these regimes. The CP-backed UAC opposed both human rights resolutions but promised only that it would issue a position paper criticizing the lack of human rights in the U.S. and propounding the need to "lessen tensions worldwide." Of the numerous "socialists" present, most of whom claimed to recognize the Soviet Union as some kind of workers state, not a single one took a stand in defense of the Soviet Union and Cuba against American imperialism.

The racial insensitivity and social conservatism of the Shanker administration have long made it a target of the just hatred of a substantial minority of teachers. But the liberal moralism of the fake left, which seeks only to redistribute the burdens of capitalist decay, is no alternative. The reformists not only capitulate to the same imperialist politicians as Shanker, but fundamentally share the same pro-capitalist viewpoint. It is not accidental that the SWP and the CP have served as loyal lieutenants to the labor bureaucracy whenever sentiment has arisen within the labor movement to address municipal cutbacks through militant strike action. The fake left, along with the reactionary business unionists, must be rejected as part of the battle to forge a class-struggle leadership. ■

Detroit CWA Operators...

(continued from page 5)

conspired to split the united traffic and plant local in order to break militant opposition to the 1968 contract settlement. While this act of bureaucratic fiat has reinforced the divisions within the workforce and has crippled solidarity to date, many phone workers still talk of that militant period in the union's history.

Operators on the picket lines at the Bell Building told *WV* that they objected to "the way the operators are always treated like stepchildren." AT&T has, of course, refined to a science the exploitation of the particular characteristics of women's oppression and the horror stories which routinely come out of the traffic department sound like something out of a Dickens novel. But the operators were referring to more than company policy.

The CWA bureaucracy has historically run the union like a private job trust for the skilled crafts, refusing to fight for the upgrading of women, blacks and other minorities or to narrow the wage gap between traffic and craft. This craven betrayal of the female workforce is one main reason why many women in phone now mistakenly look to government union-busting affirmative action programs at the road forward to their advancement.

After years of betrayal, cynicism in the union runs deep. Why the CWA is now commonly referred to as "Company Wins Again" could be seen from the local bureaucracy's determined effort to break the wildcat. Ann Welch, president of Local 4000, tried to get her members back into line by the following message on the union tape: "These illegal picket lines have never proved or gained anything.... Many members are under the impression that their wildcat strike will gain them some power to renegotiate the contract.... The only power you have is to vote on ratification.... I urge all members to return to work and use that power."

Moreover, veiled references to "outside agitators and false rumors" abounded as the strike went on. When operators put up picket lines at one garage, a craft Local 4001 shop steward tried to disperse them by accusing picketers of not being Bell employees and urging craftsmen to cross the lines. The red-hating was aimed particularly at supporters of *Spark*, an economist-syndicalist outfit.

Union members must denounce such red-hating tactics, which will be used as a club against all who dare to criticize the bureaucracy. Moreover, while the company has agreed that no one involved in the wildcat will be fired for participating, union members who honored picket lines of other locals have been written up for this in the past. And while the operator arrested on the lines may well be acquitted, it is company policy to fire anyone who gets arrested, whether the charges can be made to stick

or not. Militants must insist that no reprisals or discipline whatsoever be taken, and that all charges against the operators be dropped.

The strike of southeastern Michigan operators is an index of the militancy and capacity for struggle of the CWA membership. But the mobilization of phone workers' enormous potential power is what the Watts bureaucracy fears most, for it would instantly loosen the International's hold on the ranks and cancel its cozy relationship with management. For the CWA to cease being known as "Company Wins Again," the present bureaucratic misleaders must be ousted and replaced by a class-struggle alternative. ■

Gay Rights Demos...

(continued from page 5)

grounds that they were not qualitatively worse than the various flag-waving Gay Christians or "Gays for Carter," Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF), which had managed to stomach a march which was merely anti-Soviet, walked out when it became explicitly anti-Cuban as well. YAWF also managed a limp denunciation of the *gusanos* for being "arrogant and divisive" and for "daring to counterpose Cuba to the U.S." on the issue of gay oppression.

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which had a hand in the various multi-coalitions which planned the August 20 demonstrations, had no such problem with pesky scruples. Absolutely without peer in its capacity to grovel before anyone or anything, the SWP sailed right through the New York demonstration without a qualm—shoulder to shoulder with the *gusano* filth! When YAWF proposed that the *gusanos* be excluded, the SWP refused. A heated exchange between the two groups led finally to the YAWF walkout.

The SWP will no doubt protest that the urgent cause of gay liberation demands the most "broad-based" movement (even when the base consists of the foremost enemies of the working class). But in Boston, when a homosexual lobbying group called Gay Legislation threatened to denounce the demonstration which was being planned there (on the grounds that it might jeopardize its lobbying efforts with the government), the SWP immediately agreed to call off the proposed demonstration.

The Spartacist League fights to defend and extend the democratic rights of homosexuals. We likewise stand for the rights of homosexuals in the degenerated/deformed workers states, including Castro's Cuba, when they are persecuted by reactionary Stalinist bureaucrats. However, it should be obvious that this fight can never be advanced by embracing the "democratic" hypocrisy of U.S. imperialism's chief warmonger, whose "human rights" rhetoric is simply a code word for anti-Communism. While the SWP was busy setting this dangerous trap for gay activists, the Spartacist League took a modest step toward the construction of the proletarian vanguard party required to lead the working class in the decisive fight against all oppression, as we fused with the Red Flag Union, a former gay liberation group won solidly to the authentic program of Trotskyism. ■

SPARTACIST LEAGUE FORUM

**No Platform for Fascists!
For Labor/Black Defense to
Smash Racist Terror!**

Speaker:
ED JARVIS
Spartacist League

Saturday, August 27 at 7:30 p.m.
Quaker House
5615 South Woodlawn
CHICAGO

For more information call: 427-0003

Building the Leninist Vanguard—

From the Gay Left to Trotskyism

Spartacist
League/
Red Flag Union
Fusion Forum

The Red Flag Union, formerly the Lavender & Red Union, and the Spartacist League U.S. announce the principles behind the program of revolutionary Trotskyism.

For the RFLU fusion is the culmination of two years of political struggle and reorientation which brought it from being a "gay liberation communist" organization sympathetic to Maoism to a definitive break

both with sectoralism and with the Stalinist theory of "socialism in one country."

The fusion exemplifies the process by which the vanguard communist party will be built

and underscores the role of the party as the tribune of all the oppressed.

As one RFLU spokesman stated: "I am a communist who happens to be a homosexual. I have one and only one political identity—as a fighter for the proletarian revolution."

- Permanent Revolution vs. Socialism in One Country
- The "Russian Question" and Jimmy Carter's "Human Rights" Crusade
- A Marxist Analysis of the Struggle for Democratic Rights for Homosexuals
- The Leninist Party & the Specially Oppressed

Thursday, August 25
California State University
LOS ANGELES

Wednesday, September 7
San Francisco State
SAN FRANCISCO

Call (415) 835-1535 for information.

National Front March...

(continued from page 12)

ment in Britain, the National Front eschews the swastika in favour of the Union Jack.

Fascism and the Death Agony of British Imperialism

The recent growth of fascist influence in England must be seen in the context of the acute crisis of British imperialism. There is the *beginning* of a felt realisation throughout all classes that none of the usual "solutions" proffered by either Labour or the Tories can offer the prospect of lasting social stability. The situation in Britain is not, at this point, like Germany 1929. But both the material reality and the popular consciousness of the present economic situation are palpably different from most other industrialised countries which have also seen a growth of fascist influence recently.

The first strongholds of the National Front were in the industrial towns of the Midlands—dreary cities long immortalised for their "dark satanic mills"—which had seen a certain concentration of immigration from the former colonies of the British empire. There has been racial conflict in such areas for over a decade now. International attention was drawn to this in 1964 when the foreign secretary-designate of the incoming Labour government was defeated in Birmingham by an openly racist Tory campaign ("If you want a nigger for a neighbour, vote Labour" said the stickers).

The growth of support for the National Front and its strident scapegoating has come primarily from Britain's decaying inner cities. Compared to Watts or the south Bronx, Britain's inner cities are almost liveable: the streets of Deptford are clean, the schools of Finsbury Park relatively orderly, the crime rate is still very low, and while old-age pensioners regularly freeze to death in winter in unheated flats (this is politely referred to as "hypothermia" in the bourgeois press), even the housing is relatively adequate. However, the population of these areas in Britain have experienced a steady *deterioration* in urban amenities (accelerated by the sharp cuts in social services accompanying the Labour government's Social Contract), and suffer most acutely the effects of a rate of inflation which is presently officially estimated at almost 20 percent per year. Real wages are declining markedly as unemployment soars.

The intense racism of a certain sector of "frayed white collar" workers and unorganised or backward workers generally, with the addition of some more articulate, rabidly right-wing petty bourgeois, is partly a product of and certainly a recruiting ground for the fascists who exploit the capitalist crisis by pointing a finger at the dark-skinned immigrants. Despite the fact that non-

whites in Britain constitute less than 3 percent of the total population, the fascists depict them as the first wave of a massive influx which is flooding what was once a "green and pleasant land."

The fascist theme is hardly sophisticated it is "they" (immigrants) who are taking all the public housing; "they" are taking jobs from Englishmen, etc., etc. The National Front et al simply capitalise on the racist hysteria stirred up by the bourgeois press about supposed hordes of East Indians arriving by the plane-load, to be put up at rate-payers' expense at four-star hotels while others on the dple are holidaying in Spain. The demoralisation of large sectors of the "lower middle class" in Britain, who are saddled with mortgages and are largely defenseless against runaway inflation, and increasing lumpenisation of working-class youth due to rising unemployment constitute

march provocatively into London's predominantly Jewish East End, the massive response of the working class to the call of the centrist Independent Labour Party effectively blocked the fascists' path.

Despite hours of fighting, 6,000 foot police and the entire Metropolitan London mounted police were unable to clear a path for the fascists through the approximately 250,000 demonstrators. Attempting to lead the fascists down Cable Street, the police were met with massive street barricades and were driven back by showers of stones and bricks from the rooftops. Finally, the police were forced to tell Mosley's vermin that they could not go through, and the fascists had to crawl back to the empty streets of the West End to disperse. It was not the last attempt by Mosley to storm the East End, and it did not stop the BUF immediately, but it



Racist propaganda of the National Party

John Sturrock/Report

the potential social base for a mass fascist movement.

While most of the recent activity of the National Front has centred on cultivating racism and promoting "send them back" as the solution to the crisis of British capitalism, this by no means exhausts the fascists' stock of social issues. Many articles in the National Front's *Spearhead* are clearly modelled on the Nazis' fake-radical social programme in appealing to the increasingly desperate middle class. Thus the NF calls for better housing programmes, improved urban services, full employment, and in local election literature last spring it began to attack the power of the hanks.

Militancy vs. Adventurism in Combating Fascists

The recent round of battles between the radical left and fascist thugs is by no means unprecedented in Britain—in fact, the slogan of "no platform for fascists" is traditionally widely accepted by trade-union militants and in the workers movement as a whole since the 1930's. In 1936, when the blackshirted thousands of Mosley's BUF tried to

was a giant blow for the working class.

All of the various left groups pay lip service to the "spirit of Cable Street." But a group like the Socialist Workers Party (SWP, formerly International Socialists), which does not understand the difference between leading four to five thousand and leading 250,000 will never rise to lead a quarter million workers. Cable Street *should* be an inspiration, but it is necessary to understand that the same military tactics cannot be rigidly applied regardless of the political situation and the balance of forces.

While the slogan "No platform for fascists" remains relatively popular among the more militant layers of the working class, the important question is how this is to be carried out. The leaderships of the trade unions and the Labour Party, as well as the still significant Stalinists, characteristically rely on pray-ins and appeals to the local authorities (particularly if they have a majority of Labour councillors) to ban the fascists.

The major ostensible revolutionary groupings, on the other hand, notably the reformist-syndicalist SWP and the pseudo-Trotskyist International Marxist Group (IMG), attempt to substitute "lar-left" physical confrontations with the fascists and the police who protect them for the hard fight within the ranks of the trade-union movement to establish the basis for mass class action to smash the fascist scum. Especially in the case of the IMG, this physical confrontationism goes hand-in-hand with pleas to the bourgeois state to ban fascist marches and meetings.

It is not necessarily adventurist for a few thousand leftists to attempt to take on a few hundred fascists. For example, Martin Walker of the National Front concedes that the 1962 Mosley campaign was "hammered into the ground" by successful leftist mobilisations. The point is to successfully *break up* attempted fascist mobilisations, not to engage in a string of inconclusive hawls. However, given the demonstrat-

ed determination of the state to protect the National Front in all these recent skirmishes with the left, most such attempts will only result in head-on confrontations with the police. In the absence of a mass working-class base for their activities, the attempt of even several thousand leftists to "take on" the cops of the bourgeois state will inevitably result in the victimisation of those subjectively revolutionary militants who engage in such confrontations.

Today it is the responsibility of revolutionaries to attempt to initiate the broadest possible class united front of all working-class organisations to combat the fascist provocations. The SWP, the largest group to the left of the Communist Party, does not attempt to initiate such mobilisations, preferring instead to act on its own in order to gain notoriety in the mass media. This publicity and posturing as a mass party cannot stop the fascists and only succeeds in effectively isolating the "far left" from the mass of Labour Party and trade-union militants.

The only criticisms which the IMG makes of the SWP role in the fight against the National Front are from the right: it attacks the SWP's "sectarian" desire to build its own group. The IMG proposal is essentially that all of the "far left" get together into a single all-encompassing swamp and carry out the same dead-end substitutionist policies that the SWP is pursuing in its own name today. This was the adventurist tack the IMG took in the June 1974 fiasco at Red Lion Square, where hundreds were beaten and one demonstrator was killed by the cops when protesters against a National Front march tried to break through police lines (see "Fascism: How Not to Fight It," *WV* No. 70, 6 June 1975).

The centrist-economists of the Workers Socialist League (WSL) who like to posture as a "real" working-class organisation in contradistinction to the other supposedly petty-bourgeois groups, fail to seriously raise the questions of the fight against racism and fascism in the one place where they have a real base (the Cowley car factory near Oxford), preferring to limit themselves to agitation around higher wages and other simple shop-floor issues. The flip side of the WSL's parochial economism is an all-sided political capitulation to social-democratic reformism.

If in the death agony of British capitalism the National Front or some other continuator of Mosley *does* succeed in finding a route to the ever-growing masses of the discontented, it will require a genuinely Bolshevik party to crush the contemporary Blackshirts. The Labour Party and its panoply of fake-Trotskyist satellites, the local "Eurocommunists," the hardline Stalinists as well as the syndicalist-reformist posturers of the SWP will all, in the final analysis, prove to be roadblocks to the victory of the proletarian revolution. And when the threat of fascism is posed in a more immediate way than it was in Britain in the 1930's, proletarian revolution will be the only alternative. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
includes SPARTACIST
☐ Enclosed is \$5 for 48 issues (1 year)
☐ Enclosed is \$2 for 16 issues (4 months)—INTRODUCTORY sub
order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co./Box 1377 GPO/NY, NY 10001
INTERNATIONAL RATES 48 issues—\$20 airmail/\$5 seamail 16 introductory issues—\$5 airmail

170

Young Spartacus

MONTHLY NEWSPAPER OF THE
SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE
Make checks payable/mail to:
Spartacus Youth Publishing Co.,
Box 825, Canal Street Station,
New York, N.Y. 10013
Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

170

SUBSCRIBE NOW!
\$2/10 issues

British Cops Protect Fascist National Front March

LONDON, 19 August For the past week the attention of the British media has been rivetted on two significant confrontations pitting thousands of leftists and immigrants against police defending the "right" of the fascist National Front (NF) to stage provocations by marching or assembling in heavily non-white communities.

Last Saturday (13 August), some 5,000 anti-fascist demonstrators battled 4,000 police (a quarter of the entire Metropolitan London police force) in an attempt to break up a march of 500 NFers through Lewisham, a largely Asian and West Indian neighbourhood in South London. This confrontation resulted in 214 arrests and 110 people hospitalized (including 55 cops), as police, equipped with riot equipment for the first time in England (although it is standard fare in Northern Ireland), successfully defended the National Front march.

Two days later in the Ladywood district of Birmingham a crowd of 2,000 leftists attempting to break up an election rally of 120 fascists was repulsed by hundreds of police in riot gear defending the meeting hall. The cops also repelled a subsequent attempt by the demonstrators to storm a local police station to release arrested militants.

These events parallel another large-scale confrontation in London last April when thousands of leftists unsuccessfully attempted to block a march of 1,000 fascists through a North London suburb. Thus far, all of these confrontations have been three-way standoffs: the left has consistently outmobilised the fascists, the police have successfully defended the National Front marches/meetings, and the fascist vermin have asserted their "right" to openly mobilise in working-class and immigrant districts of Britain's cities.

Despite the fact that the NF is still unable to defeat the "far left" in direct street confrontations, the past five years have seen the emergence of organised fascism as a serious, although still marginal, factor in British politics. The pre-eminent organisation of British fascism, the National Front, and a variety of smaller competing ultra-right sects have not grown dramatically in membership. However, since 1972 the NF has recorded a series of significant electoral successes (e.g., a total of 250,000 votes in last spring's round of municipal elections), in some contests outpolling the Liberal Party, traditionally the second bourgeois party in Britain.

In a 1976 parliamentary by-election in one district of Lewisham, the combined vote of the National Front and the National Party (a 1975 split from the NF), was 44.4 percent, more than the victorious Labour candidate. However, despite the sizeable number of National Front votes and the clear danger that this poses of the possible emergence of a mass fascist movement, these votes do not at this stage represent hard political



Mantle/Mercury

National Front, defended by one fourth of London police force, begins provocative march through Lewisham



Sunday Express [London]

London cops lead away anti-fascist protestor.

support for the fascists. Rather they are predominantly "backlash" votes. Thus the various leftist groups, who generally have only a fraction of the electoral support of the NF, are consistently able to outnumber the fascists in the streets.

Origins of the National Front

While the National Front has emerged as a significant factor at the polls over the past several years, it is not primarily a legalistic, electoralist party. The central activity of the NF is recruiting white lumpens and petty bourgeois through provocation and intimidating marches in neighbour-

hoods with a large non-white immigrant population. Another favorite activity by these reactionary thugs is to attack left-wing newspaper salesmen by throwing ammonia in their eyes. A recent wave of firebombings of left and immigrant community bookstores is doubtless also the work of the Front or one of its smaller fascist satellites.

Despite their marginal impact on British politics as a whole, the fascist spectrum is a clear and present danger to the radical left and its ability to function. To ignore this threat is to invite disaster.

The National Front was founded in

the mid-1960's as a fusion of a number of smaller fascist sects. A good portion of the central leadership and key local personnel of the NF (and of the National Party, now disintegrating) has a history of activity in groups which were or are openly fascist and "national socialist." This is possible in part because British fascism has a certain continuity and cohesiveness deriving from its origins in and inspiration from Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists (BUF), whose Blackshirts marched in the early 1930's and who, for a brief period, actually received significant bourgeois support.

Both National Front *Führer* John Tyndall and Martin Webster, its national activities organiser, belonged to Colin Jordan's National Socialist Movement in the early 1960's. Colin Jordan, in turn, was trained by the Mosleyites. In trial proceedings in 1962, Tyndall was quoted as saying that, "I am convinced that a peaceful social revolution as set out in *Mein Kampf* is what Britain requires to carry her back to the place in the world I believe to be hers" (quoted in Martin Walker, *The National Front*).

Today the NF leadership disavows all such explicit public identification with Hitler and the Nazis, explaining remarks like the one quoted above as simple "youthful exuberance." Tyndall, Webster, et al., today are older and intelligent enough to realize that it is extremely unlikely that a British nationalist organisation can have a mass appeal if it is tarred with the Nazi brush. Anti-German British chauvinism (largely the legacy of two world wars) remains much too strong. In line with its appetites to build a mass fascist move-

continued on page 11