

Angry Ranks Surround UMWA Headquarters, Denounce Sellout

Miners to Miller: Shove It!



WV Photo

Miners wait for Miller outside UMWA headquarters in Washington.

FEBRUARY 14—With a mounting fury that has confounded both the coal operators and the Carter government, striking members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) have flung Miller's abominable tentative agreement with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) back in the union president's face. After a dramatic confrontation in Washington February 10, when hundreds of angry miners stormed UMWA headquarters and a frightened Arnold Miller stayed in hiding, the overwhelming 30 to 6 rejection vote by the UMWA Bargaining Council in a hurriedly called Sunday morning meeting was a foregone conclusion.

Faced with a unanimous cry of outrage from the coal fields, a rising chorus of calls for Miller's resignation and a stack of telegrams demanding rejection which one Council member said was "twelve feet high," every district president and International Executive Board (IEB) member present voted no. Only Miller, the union's vice president and secretary-treasurer and the three-man negotiating committee voted for the sellout.

The coal fields are in an uproar. The miners' unbroken determination to wage

their strike through to victory was expressed in the last week by rallies and mass meetings in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Frankfort, Kentucky; Beckley, West Virginia; Bellaire, Ohio and West Frankfort, Illinois.

Taken aback by the depth of the miners' resistance and faced with critical coal shortages as the strike passed its 70th day, big business is screaming for the federal government to do something. With utility stockpiles reaching perilously low levels, cutbacks in electric power have already begun and threaten

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FEBRUARY 14—President Carter threatened today to impose a Taft-Hartley injunction on the nation's striking coal miners.

After urging negotiators to resume bargaining Carter blustered that if this did not work, "then I will have no choice but to resort to stronger measures."

This is a bald attempt to intimidate miners into knuckling under to the demands of the BCOA. What the federal government regards as an "acceptable" settlement has already been made clear with its endorsement of Miller's preposterous pact.

Ever since it became clear that the Mine Workers membership would have no part of the Miller-BCOA swindle there has been a mounting wave of strikebreaking threats by federal and state officials:

- On February 9 federal judge James Gordon handed down a sweeping injunction prohibiting UMWA locals in western Kentucky from picketing non-union mines.

- On February 12 Carter ordered Energy Secretary Schlesinger to draw up plans to transfer coal stockpiles to nine East and Central states most affected by the coal shortage.

- Today Indiana governor Otis Bowen ordered out 350 armed National Guardsmen to help state cops ride shotgun on scab coal shipments to utilities.

- Also today Carter stated that Attorney General Griffin Bell will monitor "potential law violations" that may occur in the coal strike.

The miners must stand firm! The UMWA has a proud tradition of "No contract, No work" and has successfully defied Taft-Hartley injunctions in the past.

The Carter administration knows that its position is weak. The *Wall Street Journal* (13 February) reported a Labor Department official saying, "the major problem with Taft Hartley is that nobody will obey it." Today's *New York Times*, moreover, reports that, "Although coal is available to be carried to needy plants, little or none is now moving because of fears of violence on the part of militant U.M.W. members." Energy Department officials have conceded that it would take weeks before the necessary rail cars could be assembled to move scab coal from the West to relieve shortages in the East-Central industrial belt.

Miners must make no mistake about whose side the state is on or the limits to which it will go to defend the class interests of the bosses. Behind the three-piece-suited Labor Department negotiators stands the armed might of the army. If the capitalists' friends in the labor movement like Arnold Miller cannot get the strikers back to work and court injunctions fail to intimidate them, the government may deploy troops.

But it hesitates, knowing full well that such an act would have incendiary political repercussions, not only in the inflamed coal fields but throughout the country. For the day the troops come in could be the day the U.S. labor movement is roused in defense of its class brothers under the gun. That is the kind of short fuse the capitalists themselves are not anxious to light.

Carter claims he is placing the interests and welfare of the population above the virtue of free collective bargaining. In fact he is protecting the profits of the corporations. With the administration's energy plan calling for vastly expanded coal production he is just as interested as the coal operators in enforcing labor discipline in the mines.

The entire labor movement must take up Carter's challenge. Mass rallies and demonstrations must be held in support of the miners, demanding: "Hands off the UMWA!" All scab coal must be hot-cargoed! A call-out of federal troops or mass deployment of the National Guard must be met by coordinated protest strikes!

The miners strike is the cutting edge of the class struggle in the U.S. today. The AFL-CIO, Teamsters and UAW officialdom sit back while the miners fight alone. If this strike is lost it will be a green light for every boss and capitalist politician to step up the attacks on the working class. This strike must be won.

Hands off the miners! Hot cargo scab coal! Victory to the miners strike!

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Reporter's Notebook:

From the Strike Front

by Mark Lance

WV Reporter In the Appalachian Coal Fields

During the last week the front-page news concerning the ten-week-old nationwide coal strike focused on the miserable terms of UMWA president Arnold Miller's tentative agreement with the mine operators, the rapidly disappearing coal stockpiles at utilities plants, and frenzied appeals by coal-dependent industrialists and capitalist politicians for White House intervention to end the strike. Also featured was the rejection of Miller's pact by the UMWA Bargaining Council following the appearance of several hundred angry miners at International headquarters on Friday, February 10.

Behind all of these stories lie the determined efforts of the striking workers who dig the coal and whose refusal to swallow a disastrous contract is panicking the entire American bourgeoisie. *Workers Vanguard* reporters have covered recent miners demonstrations in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Frankfort, Kentucky and Washington, D.C. as well as the preparations for these protests in the coal-mining towns themselves. The following account records some of the daily experiences of embattled UMWA militants who by their resistance to attempts to dismantle their union gains have placed themselves at the head of the class struggle in the United States today.

INTERSTATE 64, EASTERN KENTUCKY, Wednesday, February 8—Heading toward West Virginia after a miners demonstration at the capitol building in Frankfort, there is tangible evidence of the scab coal which threatens the very existence of the UMWA and the success for the present strike. Scores of 40-ton coal trucks pass in the westbound lane, loaded with coal from non-union pits heading to eager industrial customers throughout the region. Frequently the big diesels travel in caravans for protection. Earlier today Ohio miners headed to the Frankfort rally told us that many of the "scabby bastards" carry firearms for use against militant miners.

But the scabs' and coal operators' best friend in these parts is Kentucky governor Julian Carroll, whose uniformed gun thugs of the state police are notorious across the Appalachian coal fields. Carroll's strikebreaking antics prompted the demonstration call which also spread to Ohio and West Virginia, whose UMWA militants have been harassed by Kentucky troopers on their caravans to shut down scab pits in this state.

Lois Scott, prominent militant in the 1973-74 Harlan strike and a member of



Miners at Kentucky state capitol protesting cop harassment of pickets.

the Cumberland UMWA Women's Organization told us at Frankfort:

"We've always heard that the Democratic Party was the friend of labor, but from Governor Carroll's tactics he's proven that he's anything but a friend of labor. He's proved to us that he's a friend of the coal operators."

Women's Club president Goldie Curry added, "Unless we get together and form our own party, a labor party, that's about the only hope that's left for us poor people."

A political break from the parties of big business and a struggle for a workers party by UMWA militants would be a tremendous step forward for the class struggle in the U.S. But still illusions remain. A leaflet passed out by the Harlan miners and wives stated, "We will remember those who have supported us, such as Lt. Gov. Thelma Stovall [another Democrat], and those who have attempted to defeat us."

A union lobbyist had warned the UMWA demonstrators that "the timing is wrong," fearful that their protest would anger the governor and jeopardize passage of a bill in the state legislature requiring a hearing before anti-picketing restraining orders can be issued. The miners were not deterred. "I don't care if we make him mad. I hope we make him mad," one said. Carroll finally agreed to see a seven-man delegation with no reporters present.

Carroll denied the miners' charges against the state police and asked for proof. He proceeded to give the delegation a condescending lecture on the workings of "democratic" government. He added that he hoped that the picket-line murder of 65-year-old Mack Lewis by a Kentucky mine's gun thug January 6 had taught the strikers a lesson. Carroll told Lois Scott she was "assinine" and "treated us like we didn't have enough sense to understand what we were saying," one Harlan miner reported.

CABIN CREEK, WEST VIRGINIA, Wednesday, February 8—At about 10 p.m. we're back in Cabin Creek. We pull up at the home of a District 17 militant who reports to miners there about the rally in Frankfort. But there is news in

West Virginia as well. The *Charleston Daily Mail* this morning printed the text of the summary of Miller's contract and the membership is beginning to react. Moreover, Miller showed up at District headquarters in Charleston with one of his goons who slugged Cecil Roberts, District 17 vice-president, and injured a rank-and-filer present. Roberts had given an interview to *Coal Age* which was critical of Miller.

Though Miller's thug got the worst of it before others in the building broke up the fight, local miners were taking no chances on further attacks. They had already organized a contingent to defend Roberts tomorrow in case Miller and his "International representative" showed up again. Recalling the battalion of gun thugs the UMWA president sent to Cabin Creek last summer in an effort to crush the health card wildcat, some of the men looked forward to a personal encounter with Miller. At this very moment, in fact, 40 UMWA members are searching for him in the downtown Charleston hotels.

CEDAR GROVE, WEST VIRGINIA, Thursday, February 9—This morning hundreds of miners filed through the halls of the Cedar Grove Health Clinic where union members could apply for emergency loans. We met several strikers for coffee who invited us to come along to get the ranks' opinions of Miller's agreement. After a few stops to pick up bodyguards for Roberts we drive over to the clinic.

Yesterday's attack and the proposed pact are the chief topic of conversation. Although hundreds of financially pressed miners have shown up to apply for loans, we don't hear a single favorable word about Miller or the contract. Someone had gotten hold of a xerox copy of the settlement and those who hadn't read it in the *Daily Mail* are looking it over while they wait to line. Some simply shake their heads, but many voice their opinions.

A small sampling. "Toilet tissue" "Not worth the paper it's written on" "There's no contract there. They're offering \$200 to get you to accept it." "They could have had this damn thing

two months ago." "They're going forward, we're going back." "They gave him the hall and he ran the wrong way with it, didn't he?" "I checked to see if they could stable mules in the mines." And everywhere: "It stinks!"

CABIN CREEK, WEST VIRGINIA, Thursday, February 9—This afternoon and evening plans to force the Bargaining Council to turn thumbs down are starting to gel. The informal network which is at the heart of the successive wildcat strikes, and which made possible the success of the roving pickets in shutting down scab operations during the present strike, swings into action. Miners plan to go to Washington and assemble at the International offices as the Council meets to consider the contract. Militants in District 6 (Ohio) are renting buses for 250 members. Strikers from District 31 (northern West Virginia) and District 29 (southern West Virginia) are also preparing to go.

There is a lot of anger with Miller. Recall petitions issued in the wake of his strikebreaking role in last summer's ten-week wildcat were shelved at the beginning of the contract strike December 6. Now they are circulating again. The petition charges that:

"1. Arnold Miller, the International President of the UMWA, is guilty of malfeasance in that he was in possession of certain vital information regarding the cutbacks in health care coverage to the membership of this Union; yet, he deliberately withheld this information for over one month, till June 24, 1977 [after he was re-elected to the union presidency]."

"2. Arnold Miller willfully lied to the membership when, on or about July 28, 1977, he told the International Executive Board and other members of this Union that he had no advance knowledge of the cutbacks in health coverage provided by the 1960 and 1974 Benefit Trust Fund."

We met one tireless Cabin Creek miner walking from house to house gathering signatures. He said he had no trouble whatsoever obtaining them. Even die-hard Miller supporters are offering their names. Many who had been wavering with news of a contract signed when they heard about the attack on Roberts.

In addition to anger over five years of backstabbing—the bitter payoff for those who believed that Miller's government-sponsored election and minimal democratic reforms would result in rank-and-file control of the union there is in this area a deep personal sense of betrayal. Miller worked in a mine in Cabin Creek and rose to the International leadership only to return in the company of union-paid gun thugs. Here the UMWA president is called "that son-of-a-bitch Arnold."

Many strikers watch the news in bars or gathered in miners' homes, cursing and hooting with every anti-strike bulletin. News reports speculating on a back-to-work order from President Carter meet a common response. A typical remark: "I'm not signing that contract and I'm not going to work under that Taft-Hartley."

By 8 p.m. the plans for Washington have taken shape. Militants from the Beckley area (District 29) will meet Cabin Creek strikers at the salt pile in Chelyao at midnight. Kentucky miners from Pike County are leaving to arrive at Chelyao at the same time. They only had enough money for a one-way trip to D.C., but collections at the rally will see them back home. In miners' homes up and down the creek phones are ringing continually as last-minute arrangements are being made with strikers from Ohio,

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Kentucky and the three West Virginia districts.

Cars are being horrified and meagre finances pooled to pay for gas. A retiree from Ohio, visiting relatives in Cabin Creek, decides to go at the last minute. He began to work underground in 1928 for \$2.97 a day and today receives \$225 a month on his pension. He wants to represent the pensioners. Finally a few sandwiches are wrapped and at 11 the Cabin Creek miners set out for the salt pile. Shortly past midnight the cars from Kentucky arrive. Greetings are exchanged and about 12:30 the caravan pulls out, crossing the Kanawha River on the Chelyan Bridge and heading east on Route 60. Their mission: stop Miller's sweetheart contract.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Friday, February 10—After driving all night the strikers assemble in front of UMWA International headquarters. The Bargaining Council meeting is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m., and the ranks are waiting to give the leadership a piece of their minds. Miners report seeing Miller's nine-passenger limousine approach the building, but it disappeared after coming within eyesight of several hundred angry demonstrators. When a police siren sounds someone calls out, "Here comes Arnold Miller." UMWA counsel Harrison Combs, a member of the hargaining team, fled the membership by commandeering a bus. Other negotiators are also heckled by the demonstrators. Eventually most of the crowd pushes inside the building where they and the Bargaining Council wait in vain for the president.

A miner close to the Council tells us that Miller has 52 bodyguards in Washington. "They've been outside the Board Room and won't let anybody in or out. They line the walls with them when they're in a meeting," Miller used the same tactics in 1974, he explains. "When they met on the first contract in '74, Miller had some people come in...48 people, and each one of them turned on the Bargaining Council and called them one dirty son-of-a-bitch after another. They had to sit there and take it and Miller just laughed."

This time it's different. "Let him bring his goddamn goons up there. We were laying for them." Eventually the ranks leave union headquarters and regroup in a park across the street. That way, says one leader, Miller can't claim he was prevented from entering the building. The recall petition is circulating briskly, and the Council's 33-to-3 straw vote against the contract in the afternoon shows the impact of the rally. The UMWA president never did show, and the miners' mission is accomplished, at least for the moment. Now it's back to the coal fields to rally more support. ■

Lowdown on the Giveaway Contract



Striking miners demonstrating in Pittsburgh February 6.

WV Photo

It looks like a proposal that the companies made up and had Miller sign. "It's awful. It's the worst I ever saw." "There's nothing in it worth a shit."

This is what scores of coal miners interviewed during the last week by *WV* are saying about Arnold Miller's disaster contract. We have, so far, been unable to find a single miner who supports it. A district official from Arkansas summed up the prevailing feeling throughout the UMWA: "All that's left to put in the contract is the ball and chain."

When Miller announced his tentative pact at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Washington February 6 he called it "an excellent agreement...the best negotiated in any major industry in the past two years." It included a hefty wage increase, he claimed, and guaranteed miners against cutbacks in medical benefits such as occurred last summer.

As Miller praised the agreement the business and government coalition which produced it was shown on nationwide TV. Behind him stood West Virginia's tycoon governor Jay Rockefeller like a string-pulling puppeteer. At the UMWA president's side was FMCS director Wayne Horowitz, who masterminded the talks every step of the way and practically pushed Miller's pen for him. Carter's Labor Secretary Ray Marshall also boosted the contract, terming it "genuinely good for both parties."

Which two parties? Miller and the coal bosses, maybe. But for the miners it is a total sellout, a sweetheart deal so bad that the union negotiators have tried to keep its contents a secret from the membership and even in specific details from the Bargaining Council itself. Last week *WV* blew the whistle on this giveaway (see "No Right to Strike, No Health Fund...It Stinks!" *WV* No. 192, 10 February). This week we can provide more of the horrifying details of this outrageous contract.

Some of this information is available from the summaries printed by the big business press. Additional specifics were obtained from Bargaining Council members. However, some of the most shocking provisions, affecting the life-and-death issue of safety, were not discovered until coal field militants visited UMWA International headquarters last week and had a look for themselves at the actual terms as they are being negotiated in secret.

Miners should carefully examine the bill of goods they are being sold. In 1974 they were not told that the new five-step grievance procedure and binding arbitration provisions eliminated their right to strike. As news of the double-dealing

began to spread the Miller contract was burned in bonfires at miners rallies and it was only narrowly ratified, with many union members unaware of what they were voting on.

Miners fought three strikes in as many years against the effects of that contract. The UMWA membership must be even more on guard this time! The coal operators are demanding even broader concessions from the union, and the terms Miller has agreed to far exceed his 1974 sellout in the damage they will do to the United Mine Workers. Here's the story:

Right to Strike

Miller not only completely dropped his campaign promise of a "limited" local right to strike; he attempted to destroy the miners' principal means of defense. Roving pickets will be summarily fired, as will also those singled out by the companies as "strike leaders" or "instigators." The proposed contract even stipulates that these firings cannot be reversed by an arbitrator! Miners who respect a picket line, the most sacred institution in the coal fields, will be suspended for 30 days.

Stiff financial penalties will also be imposed. Miners who miss work for an "unauthorized" walkout will be fined \$20 a day for the first ten days. After that they and their families will lose their medical benefits! The health of their wives and children will be used to keep the miners chained in the pits.

A related "absenteeism control" plan will impose a series of escalating suspensions for absence, followed by firing.

Health Benefits

Miller says the new contract offers miners "guaranteed" health benefits. What is "guaranteed" is that the virtually total health care provided in recent years—one of the chief gains won by the UMWA in decades of struggle—will be swept away as the union's benefit funds are dismantled. Working miners and those who retired after 1975 will go over to a commercial-carrier insurance system. Working miners will be liable for \$325 a year in deductibles for doctor visits, hospitalization and drugs.

It is not yet established how many hospitals (which are few and far between in the coal mining regions) will even participate in such a program. Costs at non-participating hospitals will be higher still. The fate of the UMWA-initiated clinics and special health programs that were subsidized in the past out of the benefit funds is in jeopardy. One UMWA local president

told *WV* that the new insurance scheme will "tear them all to hell."

Safety

Mining is the most hazardous industrial work in America. Roof-falls, cave-ins and methane gas explosions and fires are a daily reality. A series of little-publicized changes in the proposed contract will mean more death and danger in the mines.

There is currently a 90-day training period where new miners ("red hats") work together with a senior miner. This period will be cut in half, to 45 days. One local officer in Ohio explained the disastrous effect of this reduction: "After 45 days they're not going to know anything. They're going to zip them through a goddamned program, send them up to the face and start killing them right off. They're going to put them on a piece of machinery and kill them."

Another deadly change is a rewording of the "imminent danger" clause. According to the same Ohio UMWA official the existing requirement which allows miners to withdraw from a work area they believe to be abnormally dangerous has been changed to require "physical" proof. "That means you got to get covered up and your leg broken before you think the place is going to fall in," he told *WV*.

Productivity

Still another proposed clause that will mean industrial murder in the service of speed-up is the provision allowing companies to institute "incentive" productivity plans. Incentive piece-work schemes are a scourge in any industry, but in the mines, where an incautiously placed roof bolt or a slight false move can mean sudden death, such schemes are criminal.

In pursuit of more production, coal mining on Sundays will be allowed for the first time. A "rapid shift rotation" clause will mean company scheduling rights to deprive workers of consecutive days off. And the new pact establishes a "Joint UMWA-Industry Development Committee" to step up productivity. Miller has agreed to the industry and government demand: "More coal and to hell with the miners!"

Pensions

UMWA retirees will still live on poverty-level checks and the sharp inequity in payments between older miners and those more recently retired will continue. One of the most pernicious features of the 1974 contract was the creation of a two-tier pension

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Tunisia Labor Revolt



Striking workers massed in the streets of Tunis January 26.

Sunset



President Habib Bourguiba (center, dark glasses) riding in Tunis parade.

Lucas/L'Espresso

During the last week of January more than 200 people were killed and nearly a thousand more wounded as troops and tanks imposed a peace of the graveyards in the major cities of Tunisia. The north African country lies under a state of siege following the bloody suppression of a general strike called by the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) for January 26. Tapping widespread discontent among the youth, the union action quickly turned into a massive explosion of popular rage against the one-party regime of Habib Bourguiba, Tunisia's "president for life," and his Destour Socialist Party (PSD). Two thousand people were rounded up and thrown into a detention camp at Oued Ellil, on the outskirts of Tunis, and some 600 trade unionists have been jailed, including 11 out of 13 members of the UGTT executive committee and Habib Achour, the UGTT's general secretary.

The UGTT, which has organized 650,000 workers out of a labor force of 1.3 million, gives the Tunisian proletariat a social weight and capacity for organized struggle unique in Africa. Unlike so many of the "trade union" labor fronts created by the militarists and despots of the continent, the UGTT is a genuine working-class organization, although led by a pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy tied to the PSD. Given its independent class basis, the UGTT tops have sought to retain a semblance of credibility before the union ranks by criticizing the regime, sanctioning strikes and occasionally mouthing socialist rhetoric.

The call for a general strike not only expressed the militancy of the UGTT ranks but became a rallying point for large sectors of the population. Thus, when 4,000 strikers took to the streets of Tunis on the morning of the 26th and were attacked by the police, many unemployed youth and students came to their defense. As the plebeian masses battled the police in every quarter of the city, buses, cars and trains were overturned and burned, stores were looted and attempts made to build barricades. The police were showered with paving stones and other missiles not only by small roving groups in the streets, but also from the balconies and roofs in working-class areas. In some places, the police were simply overwhelmed.

Militant demonstrations and street fighting were also reported from other cities, such as Sousse and Kairouan, and the government declared a national state of emergency, the first in Tunisia's history, and mobilized the military. Tanks and armored cars patrolled the streets, and the army's rifle and machine gun fire succeeded where the police's tear gas had failed. A 6 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew was announced; its violators were to be summarily shot.

The regime charged that the revolt was instigated by Libya, Tunisia's eastern neighbor, labelling the UGTT leadership as "mercenaries" and "renegades" with "a real criminal and insurrectional intention," as prime minister Nouria, Bourguiba's designated successor, ranted. In reality, Achour and the UGTT tops are far from being even militant trade unionists much less insurrectionists. Achour, a major stockholder in a hotel and the owner of a travel agency, is a long-time labor hack who has been on the PSD central committee and political bureau for decades. He and the UGTT bureaucracy had signed a "social pact," guaranteeing a five-year wage freeze, in January 1977.

In calling the general strike, the UGTT leadership was acting under the

pressure of the militancy of the ranks, whose three-month strike wave has wrecked the "social pact." The January 22 strike call explicitly states that it is a response to "the demands of the ranks, who are beginning to lose patience before the repeated provocations against the UGTT" (*Le Monde*, 24 January). The most recent of these were the arrest of Abderrazak Ghorbal, a UGTT leader in the Sfax region, and attacks on several UGTT locals by PSD goons protected by the police.

The Tunisian workers are determined not to bear the brunt of the country's economic crisis, characterized by rampant inflation, a chronic balance of payments deficit and an unemployment rate of 12 percent. The current upsurge began with a strike in October at a textile mill at the village of Ksar Hellal against layoffs and for higher wages. When the strikers occupied the factory, they were attacked by the police in a bloody clash which became a *cause célèbre* in the country. After a reported threat on Achour's life on November 4, a series of strikes occurred in the second week of November which combined a protest against this with various economic demands. Clashes between demonstrating workers and the police were



Sunset

Youth injured in battle with cops.

reported in most of Tunisia's cities. The phosphate workers, a traditionally militant sector, struck on December 8, and an agreement was reached on December 31, after another strike was threatened. The railwaymen struck twice in December, but settled at the beginning of January; then it was the turn of the agricultural workers.

The conflict was rapidly taking on political overtones. The pages of the UGTT journal, *Al Acha'ab*, were filled with barbed attacks on the government. UGTT leaders, especially Achour, continued to deny any political implications to the strike wave and reaffirmed their links to the PSD. However, on January 10 Achour resigned from his posts in the PSD as rumors spread about the launching of a labor party. A meeting of the UGTT National Council criticized the regime's efforts at the "consolidation of a capitalist class by every means" and this Tunisian bourgeoisie's links to "exploiting foreign capital" (*Le Monde*, 12 January).

At the same time, the PSD regime was in disarray. For several years an intricate factional struggle has been underway to determine the successor to the aging Bourguiba, and several of the rivals have made bids for popular support. Thus interior minister Tahar Belkhdja, a vicious reactionary who created the "B.O.P." ("Brigades for Public Order") goon squads to suppress militant students in 1968, suddenly became the proponent of concessions to the unions. The Nouria group, which includes Bourguiba's son, decided on a hard line. In November, a rival trade union, the FOT, was proposed by

supporters of the government expelled from the UGTT.

In late December Belkhouja was sacked and temporarily replaced by Farhat, the minister of defense, while a U.S.-trained colonel was put at the head of the political police, a clear indication of the approaching confrontation. In recent years, Nouria has sought to modernize Tunisia's weak military forces supported with American credits. With helicopters and armored personnel carriers purchased from the U.S., the Tunisian military, incapable of standing up to the Algerian or Libyan armies, was able to drown the 26 January revolt in blood.

While Tunisia has often been pictured in the Western press as a beacon of democracy and stability, this view stems more from Bourguiba's staunch support

class-collaborationist politics embodied in the "social pact" of 1977.

Nor does the Tunisian left have a revolutionary Marxist program. The pro-Moscow Stalinist Communist Party (PCT) on the one hand supports the pathetic liberals of Ahmed Mestiri's Movement of Social Democrats, who call for a "national pact" based on the "constitutional legitimacy represented by Bourguiba," and who call on the "Supreme Combatant" to correct the "errors" of his subordinates. On the other, the PCT blocs with the Movement of Popular Unity, the vehicle of Ahmed Ben Salah.

Ben Salah, before he was purged from the economics ministry in 1969, had brutally demonstrated that his "socialism" was simply a variant of the statist measures often used by the colonial bourgeoisie to bolster its position. It was Ben Salah who purged the unions when they opposed the PSD's economic measures in the early 1960's, and as one young Tunisian leftist bitterly asked, "Didn't he throw the Marxist students into jail in 1968? Some of them have been there forever" (*Jeune Afrique*, 8 February 1978).

The best of these student Marxists were apparently those grouped around the journal *Perspectives*. An indication of their impulse toward working-class politics was their advocacy (apparently under the influence of the Israeli *Matzpen* group) of an alliance between the Israeli and Palestinian Arab proletariats to overthrow the Zionist state and their call for the dictatorship of the proletariat, as opposed to the Stalinist/Menshevik call for a separate bourgeois-democratic stage. However, several years ago, this grouping abandoned this position in favor of the "democratic and national revolution." It has since split into several groups, including the "Union for the Marxist-Leninist Struggle in Tunisia," the "Marxist-Leninist Group of Tunisia" and the "Democratic Movement of the Tunisian Masses," all of which call for a "two-stage" revolution.

This is but a more militant version of the PCT's reformism. The clear lesson of the last 50 years is that there is no such separate stage. The tasks of breaking the stranglehold of French and American imperialism, of giving land to the peasants or of unification of North Africa can only be carried out by the Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan proletariats leading the peasant masses to a socialist revolution.

The militant struggles waged by the Tunisian working class could have an effect reaching far beyond the national borders. To the east of Tunisia is Libya, where the Qaddafi regime prescribes the amputation of hand and foot for thieves, according to the laws of the Koran. There in the "socialist Jamahiriya" ("public") the Islamic dictator has decreed that "trade unions" set up by the Ministry of Labor need only carry out "ordinary administrative duties," for: "We do not accept intermediaries between the revolution and its working forces." To the west, Algeria has long ago put the trade unions in chains and turned workers management into an empty shell. Algerian "Islamic socialism" has only meant continued misery for the peasantry and degrading oppression for women. Tunisia may well offer the first opportunity to cut through this nationalist and Islamic "socialist" demagoguery. This, however, requires the construction of a Tunisian Trotskyist vanguard party, section of the reformed Fourth International, world party of the socialist revolution.

Down with the State of Emergency! Release the 3,000!

Down with State Control of the Press, Anti-Union Repression and the Prohibition of Left Parties!

—For Workers Revolution to Overthrow Bourgeois Rule!

—For a Socialist Federation of North Africa!

Exit the Australian Communist League

—reprinted from *Australasian Spartacist* No. 50, February 1978

SYDNEY—The swallowing of the Communist League (CL) by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) at its 8-15 January "Fusion Conference" brought to an end five years of open, often bitterly hostile squabbling between competing national affiliates of the "United Secretariat" (USec), that swampland of pseudo-Trotskyism. Rooted in the *Realpolitik* of USec factional conciliation, this unprincipled union was clearly a foregone conclusion from the start of the misnamed "fusion process."

After eight years of what amounted to a de facto international split, the U.S. SWP-led Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF) and the centrist European-based International Majority Tendency—the mentors, respectively, of the SWP and CL—have decided for the time being to bury the hatchet, usually in the political skulls of their respective expendable satellites. The ceasefire came complete with territorial adjustments and clearly demarcated spheres of influence. The English-language edition of the IMT's international organ, *Inprecor*, has been dissolved into the U.S. SWP's *Intercontinental Press*. Europe was ceded to the centrist majority, much of the rest of the English-speaking world to the reformist minority and, as always, Latin America remains a no man's land where dirty tricks galore are permitted and committed by all sides. The first of nearly a dozen national sections to split, the Australian groups were also among the last to reunite. But in this case, last was indeed least.

Despite widespread and evident distaste and disgruntlement toward the fusion on the part of the CL membership, manifested most openly through the Brisbane civil-liberties campaign [against the reactionary Queensland state government's ban on political marches] (where the SWP cowardly abstained from street marches while the CL enthusiastically tailed a confrontationist "new mass vanguard," see *Australasian Spartacist* No. 49, December 1977), the fusion breezed through with only an afternoon of debate and three votes cast in opposition at the conference. *Direct Action* (26 January) proudly crowed that, "The broad measure of political agreement achieved during the fusion process is indicated by the fact that no such [oppositional] tendency was formed" and touted the "virtual unanimity of political line" at the conference. Indeed, not one of the "oppositionalists," such as they were, opposed fusion with the SWP in principle, on the basis of its reformist politics. For to oppose the fusion on programmatic grounds would necessarily have entailed a condemnation of the USec itself as an unprincipled rotten bloc—a point noted by both pro- and anti-fusion elements—and a concomitant break with the USec.

Revulsion Without a Program

The spate of pre-conference documents by the CLers expressing their disgust with the SWP's social-democratic positions on several current key political issues thus stood as an indictment not only of the SWP's reformist politics, but equally of the cynical cowardice of the USec-loyal "oppositionalists." One such document, entitled with unintended irony "From Right Opportunism to Political Oblivion" (*Joint Discussion Bulletin* [JDB] No. 9, December 1977), charged the SWP with "a disturbing deference [sic] towards the power of bourgeois opinion" in the Brisbane events. Another attacked the SWP and CL for their criminal refusal to defend the petty-

bourgeois terrorists of the RAF against the state terror of the German bourgeoisie. Yet another denounced U.S. SWP leader Joseph Hansen's third-campist call for multilateral nuclear disarmament, echoed by the SWP/CL, for making their "position on defence of the workers states at best hazy and compromising....these are the ideas of Max Shachtman" ("From a Molehill to a Mountain," *JDB* No. 10, January 1978).

But the most scathing attack on the politics of the fusion came in a "Critique of the SWP/CL Election Manifesto" (*JDB* No. 7, December 1977), signed by fully seven members of the Sydney CL. According to the document's authors, the manifesto "represents a political adaptation to the consciousness of the masses"; "it does not deal with the question of whether if the ALP [Australian Labour Party] adopted some of these policies it would be any less of a bosses party"; it is "a capitulation to the large anti-technology, environmentalist section of the anti-uranium movement"; "it attempts to constrain our program within the limits of governmental policies, reform and legislation"; "it does not pose the question of workers democracy in any form"; "it repeatedly offers formulations about bourgeois institutions characterised by great unclarity"; it puts forward a sectoralist approach; its line of "support for a democratic, secular Palestine" posits a stagist conception of national liberation; it implies that "a government at the head of the state apparatus of an imperialist class [can] take up and implement an anti-imperialist policy." "In fact, in the absence of any statement to the effect that it is the working class we want in power, that we are opposed to parliament, the Manifesto appears to seek to implement its policies through Parliament. This is not a Trotskyist position."

No, it is not. But in following through with the fusion notwithstanding, the "oppositionalists" demonstrated they were more frightened of finding themselves outside the USec than averse to becoming conscious traitors to the revolutionary program. Exploiting this weakness, the pro-fusionists lost no opportunity to solemnly invoke the "unfortunate fate for those comrades who might choose at the conference not to fuse and to leave the new fused section of the Fourth International altogether. They will find themselves in a political desert and...inevitably...in a dead-end sect" (*JDB* No. 11, January 1978). For those not conversant with the meaning of "dead-end sect" in Pabloist jargon, CL leader Lee W. acknowledged in a backhanded way the identity of the only credible left alternative to USec tailism: "The Spartacist League [SL] is a good example of the effectiveness of 'revolutionary' resolution-mongering in trade unions and mass campaigns—no one, particularly worker militants, takes them seriously" ("How Not to Build the Anti-Uranium Movement: A Reply," *JDB* No. 12, January 1978).

Clearly the leaders of this newly fused "broad union" of social democracy take the threat of revolutionary Trotskyism more seriously than they are willing to let on to their ranks. It is no accident that the hesitant and truncated if accurate characterisations of SWP politics by the "opposition" sound like a distant and broken echo of SL politics. The SL and the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) have provided the only consistent, revolutionary programmatic alternative to the USec swamp, to both the tame reformism of the LTF and the eclectic tailism of Mandel. Dozens of

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Truck burning on Tunis street.

to U.S. imperialism and to Israel than from the realities of Tunisian politics. Membership in the PSD, the sole political party, is a legal prerequisite for being a delegate to the National Assembly. Bourguiba, the self-proclaimed "Supreme Combatant" who is fond of the saying "L'état, c'est moi," has shown no compunction about murdering his rivals. Salah Ben Youssef, an exiled leader of the Neo-Destours (predecessor of the PSD) was assassinated in Switzerland in 1961. In 1974 a scandalized Swiss government launched an inquiry into the activities of several of Bourguiba's henchmen, one of them implicated in the Ben Youssef case, who were on the trail of Ahmed Ben Salah, another exile living in Switzerland.

But the most vicious repression is reserved for students and militants of the "far left." The various ostensibly Marxist organizations have been tracked down, their militants subjected to torture in order to extract the confessions used in the regime's mass trials. The university system is riddled with government agents and every year dozens of students are expelled or arrested. The latest attempt to crush the students' independent organizations occurred in March 1977 when the PSD unleashed the B.O.P. on several student meetings. Striking students were joined by the unemployed and secondary school students in pitched battles with the police and several students were killed.

But it is the Tunisian working class which is the regime's potential gravedigger. The great impact of the UGTT's general strike call is a confirmation of the Trotskyist theory of the permanent revolution, which holds that only the proletariat of the economically backward capitalist countries, even where it is but a small fraction of the population, can lead the exploited masses of the colonial world to overthrow their oppressors. The UGTT has already demonstrated that it can serve as the pole of attraction for the students, unemployed and peasants of Tunisia. What it lacks is a revolutionary leadership which can lead these masses in a struggle for a workers and peasants government. Should the UGTT bureaucrats of the Achour stripe ever split from their bourgeois PSD patrons, it will not be to fight for such a program. Rather, they will simply deliver more of the

For Labor-Led Strikes to Topple Nicaraguan Dictatorship! Down with the Somoza Dynasty!

The general strike which shut down 80 percent of Nicaragua's industry and business and lasted 17 days ended February 7 with President Anastasio Somoza Debayle still clinging to power. The strike was supported by all opposition political parties, labor, most businessmen, university students, the Catholic Church and some 2,000 government workers.

The political crisis in this Central American fiefdom of the Somoza family has not been resolved, however, and with the desertion of its two traditional props—private business and the United States government—the corrupt dictatorship cannot expect to hold on much longer. No doubt "Tacho" Somoza and the rest of the clan are avidly filling up their Swiss bank accounts and purchasing plane tickets to Miami.

The nationwide strike began January 23 in response to the slaying of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro, head of the bourgeois opposition coalition, the Democratic Union for Liberation (UDEI). As publisher of *La Prensa*, Nicaragua's only opposition newspaper, he was increasingly critical of Somoza's personal rule. Chamorro was murdered in Managua on January 10 when three men forced his car to the curb and shot him 18 times. While the government has denied any involvement in Chamorro's death, this has convinced no one: the Somoza regime's obvious complicity was underlined by revelations that the crime was carried out by Cuban *gusano* assassins.

Within a few days the strike turned into a demand for the ouster of Somoza. The Conservative Party, the only legal opposition to Somoza and his "National Liberation Party," called for his resignation. The UDEI demanded resignation as well. Rafael Córdova Rivas, Chamorro's successor as president of the "moderate" coalition, called off a "dialogue" between the opposition and the government, declaring, "This is the end of the civic struggle. It's not that we favor violence, but we're no longer interested in talking to Somoza" (*New York Times*, 29 January 1978).

The bourgeois opposition has merely read the handwriting on the wall: Carter is ready to dump Somoza. As a *New York Times* (5 February) headline put it, "U.S. Neutrality Heartens Nicaragua Rebels." But it is even more than neutrality: Washington has been sending out signals left and right. The U.S. ambassador has demonstrably kept his distance from Somoza, while Terence Todman, Undersecretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, called off a scheduled meeting with officials in Managua when the general strike began, and didn't say when he was coming back! On February 9 the State Department annual report on "human rights" gave the Somoza regime a low rating, and it was announced at the same time that military aid to Nicaragua will be heavily reduced in next year's budget.

The strike was accompanied by the activities of masses of demonstrators who built barricades, strewed nails in the streets to blow out the tires of army jeeps, set bonfires in the streets and sacked and burned several buildings. In the two southern cities of Granada and Rivas members of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) carried out attacks on National Guard command posts which resulted in the deaths of six guardsmen and eight guerrillas.

Somoza responded by invoking emergency powers, forbidding the broadcast of any news of the strike and unleashing

his private army, the National Guard. All major cities were in a virtual state of siege with guardsmen patrolling the streets, searching for guerrillas and quelling the demonstration. The dictator seems to have accurately gauged the weak resolve of his bourgeois opponents, for after some days of heavy repression the businessmen of Managua folded and called off the strike. However, according to news accounts workers are continuing to hold out.

The Sandinista Front

With the faltering of the strike anti-government activity has lulled, but the movement against Somoza is continuing to grow. Until recently the main overt oppositional activity was by the Sandinista Front. Born in the wake of the Cuban revolution, the FSLN was founded in 1962 by Castroite students in Managua. It was named after Augusto César Sandino, a nationalist leader who fought the United States expeditionary forces and the Somoza family in the 1930's and was assassinated by the



Wladir Dupont

Anastasio Somoza Debayle



Women demonstrating against Somoza regime in front of UN building in Managua.

National Guard in 1934. The Front caught international headlines in December 1974 when the guerrillas kidnapped a group of 13 prominent politicians and businessmen. To free the hostages Somoza released 14 members of the FSLN then in jail, allowed them to fly to Cuba and paid \$1 million in ransom.

The kidnapping gave the dictatorship a pretext for unleashing a reign of terror. Martial law was declared with all constitutional guarantees suspended indefinitely and arrests without warrant or explanation permitted. Boss Somoza ordered the creation of a special counterinsurgency unit of the National Guard to quash the guerrilla movement. Using "search and destroy" techniques employed by the U.S. in the Vietnam war, the National Guard rounded up all those suspected of aiding or being in sympathy with the guerrillas, then tortured and executed them en masse. Whole villages in the hilly northern regions became deserted as the population fled the National Guard which routinely killed or tortured the men, raped the women, burned homes, stole crops and property. In November 1976 FSLN leader Carlos Fonseca Amador and his top aide, Eduardo Contreras Escobar, were killed on successive days.

After a period of relative inactivity the Sandinista Front launched a major offensive against the government last

October. For the first time the actions of the FSLN were greeted with the support of the "moderate" opposition and even of liberal imperialist spokesmen. With this growth of popularity the Sandinistas now can boast of the approval of conservative politicians, the Catholic Church and some wealthy businessmen. From the beginning a petty-bourgeois nationalist movement with a limited program of democratic reforms, the FSLN, having expelled its left wing, has dropped all pretense to being a Marxist organization. There are now three rival groupings which, while working independently, all bear the same name and claim to be the real continuity of the original group. The faction which advocated a classical guerrilla line of "prolonged people's war" now favors instead a civic uprising. One of its leaders, Plutarco Elías Hernández, told the *New York Times*:

"We must pass through the stage of democracy because socialism cannot be built overnight. Those who think we'll be going straight to Communism are wrong. Our basic program is not Communist. It is a threat to no one who favors a just society."

New York Times,
26 October 1977

The aims of the UDEI and the FSLN are now indistinguishable: to oust Somoza through pressuring the U.S. government. Last October FSLN leader Hernández stated:

"President Carter gives us hope that progressive American groups will help

define American policy toward Nicaragua. Carter has spoken out against all dictatorships including that of Somoza, but American arms continue to be supplied to the National Guard. The United States must understand that Nicaragua is a kidnapped country and that the National Guard is Somoza's private army."

When the recent general strike failed to topple Somoza UDEI president Rafael Rivas remarked, "If Somoza does not fall from power after the combined opposition in Nicaragua demonstrated strength, capacity, order and control, the Carter doctrine will go up in smoke" (*New York Times*, 8 February 1978).

Somoza Inc.

The stance of the United States is, in fact, key, since Nicaragua has been completely subjugated to the dictates of Washington since the beginning of the 20th century. Even the *New York Times* (4 February) refers to "The prevailing view that the United States still controls Nicaraguan politics...." Although the country more closely resembles a giant cattle ranch than a plantation, Nicaragua could be the prototype of the Central American "banana republic."

While freewheeling Yankee filibusters (adventurers) came and went during the 19th century, the American government took a serious interest in Nicaragua only as plans for a canal across the Central American isthmus became serious. When the government of José Zelaya opposed U.S. attempts to obtain rights to a canal route across Nicaragua the U.S. openly supported an insurrection against him in 1909. United Fruit Company steamers shipped arms to Zelaya's opponents with the aid of State Department representatives in Central America, and when it seemed that government troops had regained control, the U.S. Marine Corps landed and helped the insurgents seize power.

The U.S. then agreed to recognize the new government only if it agreed to permit American control of elections and to take out a loan to be guaranteed by a certain percentage of the customs receipts. Thus, after 1912, one Colonel Clifford D. Ham, chosen by the Brown Brothers and Seligman banking firms, collected the entire customs duties of Nicaragua! When the unpopular government faced resistance in 1912 U.S. Marines again landed and the U.S. Navy bombarded Managua, forcing surrender of the rebel army and some rebel gunboats. The Nicaraguan economy was subsequently subjugated to U.S. control through a network of loans while a generation of puppet rulers maintained themselves in power only because of U.S. backing.

In 1926 2,000 Marines landed once more to protect the "dependable" Conservative leaders against the attacks of the "irresponsible" Liberals, and a marionette president was installed once more. The regular army was disbanded and replaced with a constabulary trained for five years by the U.S. occupying force. The elections of 1928 and 1932 were supervised by the Marines and when it was deemed that Nicaragua's new National Guard was in a position to keep all would-be dissenters in line, the U.S. finally withdrew in 1933.

In 1936 General Anastasio Somoza García (father of the current president), who had been left in charge of the National Guard, ousted the Liberal incumbent and assumed the presidency. Since then Nicaragua has been run as the private estate of the Somoza family, policed by the National Guard, and with

the full approval and military support of the United States. When General Somoza was assassinated in 1956 he was first succeeded by his eldest son Luis, who died of natural causes in 1967, and then by his second son, Anastasio. An illegitimate son, José, is currently commander of the National Guard.

Under the Somozas Nicaragua is run in the strong-arm authoritarian style of the nineteenth-century caudillos. The elder Somoza maintained order by keeping the loyalty of the National Guard through material rewards and used his monopoly of the means of violence to promote the interests of the family. Through systematic graft he accumulated vast commercial and agricultural holdings which made the Somozas one of the wealthiest families in the Americas.

Family property now includes the "national" air and shipping lines, the newspaper *Novedades*, a television station, construction companies, banks, farms, mines, a brewery and a hotel. Elections are rigged and Congress no more than a rubber stamp. The press is censored, opposition parties are outlawed and trade unionism prohibited.

Somoza's sons carried on the tradition. When large amounts of



Augusto César Sandino

foreign aid poured into Nicaragua to help the victims of the 1972 earthquake and assist in reconstruction, the money was blatantly stolen by the National Guard. And in the recent campaign against the FSLN this personal army did not balk at the widespread use of torture and summary executions. The Somoza clan went about its looting and murdering secure in the knowledge that if they ever got in trouble Uncle Sam would hail them out as a bulwark against the red menace in the Caribbean.

An Expendable Tyrant

Now the trade winds have shifted and Somoza has become expendable, just as occurred with another U.S. favorite, General Trujillo of the Dominican Republic, in the early 1960's. The United States is now willing to dump Nicaragua's dictator as a token proof of Carter's "moral" concern for "human rights." The new administration began to pressure Somoza by warning him that military aid would be suspended if "human rights violations" were not curbed. In apparent response Somoza ended martial law and restored freedom of the press last September 19, just three weeks before the start of the FSLN's recent offensive.

The United States is hardly so piously concerned about the blood stains on Somoza's hands. An apparent change of policy is simply recognition that U.S. imperialism does not need Somoza to patrol the Caribbean when it can make deals with nationalist demagogues like General Torrijos of Panama. If the alternative to Somoza were to be another Cuba, Washington would never allow it, no matter how repulsive his "excesses." But the opposition to Somoza is safely bourgeois and has indicated that it is ready to cooperate with the

U.S., which would prefer to have a policeman with a more palatable image as long as the job continues to get done.

Invoking the "human rights" issue in Nicaragua again shows up the hypocrisy of Carter's crusade, which is actually a cover for increased anti-Sovietism and a build-up of the American war machine. Of the 105 countries that receive American aid or buy American weapons Nicaragua was the *only* nation to suffer a reduction in aid. State Department officials admitted that this was because of "political and strategic considerations" (*New York Times*, 10 February 1978). In Nicaragua it does not matter whether or not the dictator is deposed; in Iran, South Korea or the Philippines it does.

The Somoza dynasty has milked the country dry. So thorough is their rapacious rule that a large part of the local bourgeoisie has now rebelled. Communists of course would join in any popular struggle against the dictatorship and would fight alongside the bourgeois opposition and petty-bourgeois nationalist guerrillas to overthrow a tyrant whose regime is perpetuated by brutal terror. However, revolutionary socialists must not mix their banners with the "democratic" exploiters and must at all times fight for the independence of the workers movement. If the recent general strike had been waged under proletarian leadership it would not have been so easily worn down.

Unlike the FSLN, revolutionary socialists seek to mobilize the workers and peasants on a class basis, maintaining complete organizational independence from the bourgeois opposition. The FSLN can be given no political support whatsoever. It was founded for the central purpose of guerrilla struggle against the Somoza regime and has explicitly abandoned any pretense it once had toward preparing for socialist revolution.

The guerrillas now call for a bloc with the bourgeois opposition, i.e., subservience to the anti-Somoza wing of the capitalist class. In multi-class coalitions it is always the politics of the bourgeois element which dominates. The Nicaraguan Stalinists of the PSN (Nicaraguan Socialist Party) are buried under the Christian Democrats and Conservatives in the UDEL even though the PSN is the UDEL's largest component. As for the self-styled Trotskyists of the United Secretariat, their most prominent Latin American representatives, the Moreniste faction, call for "the broadest and most energetic solidarity with the Sandinista Front" and propose a program limited to democratic demands which are or could easily be raised by both the FSLN and the UDEL (*Revista de América*, November 1977).

What is needed today is the crystallization of an authentic Trotskyist party which would be able to win subjectively revolutionary and heroic young rebels who have seen no alternative but to join the FSLN, along with advanced working-class militants, around a revolutionary program. Such a party, while fighting to mobilize the workers and peasants on the basis of democratic demands such as agrarian revolution, freedom of the press, trade-union liberty, the right to free assembly and association, would also seek to break the imperialist chains and overthrow the native capitalists through socialist revolution. ■

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Release Sami Esmail!

Sami Esmail, a 23-year-old New York-born Palestinian Arab and U.S. citizen, is being tortured in an Israeli jail. Esmail, a graduate engineering student at Michigan State University (MSU), had flown to Israel to visit his dying father. He was arrested on December 21 as he disembarked at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport and was immediately "lost" by Israeli authorities who denied any knowledge of his whereabouts while he was being beaten and questioned at a local police station.

Only after a full week of this brutal treatment had extracted a signed "confession" was it officially acknowledged that he was being held and was his lawyer finally allowed to see him. And the "confession" was dictated and written in Hebrew, of which Esmail knows not one word! On January 19, charges were finally lodged against Esmail, accusing him of membership in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and having contacts with "terrorists." Under the terms of a draconian Israeli law which makes it a crime for anyone, anywhere in the world, by word or deed, to engage in activities against the state of Israel, the Begin regime intends to railroad Esmail. The international workers movement must be mobilized to defend this victim of Zionist repression and demand his immediate freedom.

The blatant frame-up of Esmail has led to the mobilization of significant support in his defense. At MSU the case has caused great outrage. Several mass meetings have been held to denounce Esmail's persecution, one of which was attended by over 250 people. Endorsers of the campaign include Daniel and Philip Berrigan, Noam Chomsky, Leonard Weinglass, Abdeen Jabara, a prominent Palestinian nationalist attorney, and the mayor of East Lansing, Michigan. Also, Israeli civil rights activist Israel Shahak has been directly assisting Esmail's defense.

The persecution of Esmail by the Israeli secret police has demonstrably exposed their sinister methods of operation. His real "crimes" in the eyes of his torturers are his outspoken defense of the right of Palestinians to self-determination and his militant opposition to the racist, Zionist state. For the purpose of jailing and beating Palestinians in Israel, however, all that is required is a pretext to support later prosecution.

Initially the Israeli authorities' story was a "spying and terrorism mission" upon which Esmail was supposedly embarked. However, the death of his father on January 5—Esmail had only been permitted to see him for ten minutes before his death, and by then his father had lapsed into a coma—made such charges too ridiculous for even the Israeli police to maintain.

The publicity which Esmail received when he attended the funeral—chained hand and foot, tied around the neck and accompanied by seven armed guards—caused the prosecution to raise the new charge of PFLP membership and simultaneously bar public access to the proceedings. Esmail's lawyer, Felicia Langer, was placed under a "gag" order and could not publicly discuss the case. Even the International Red Cross was prohibited from seeing him. Although the proceedings have now been made public, fears continue for Esmail's safety.

One need not be a Palestinian to suffer victimization at the hands of Zionist "democracy." Terry Fleener, a 23-year-old Texas woman, was recently sentenced to five years in prison for "anti-Israeli activities." She was convicted in a secret trial for allegedly "taking photographs for Palestinian guerrillas" while touring through Israel (*Newsweek*, 23 January 1978). The heavy sentence meted out to Fleener



Sami Esmail

Newsweek

increases the urgency of international protest on behalf of Esmail.

For her role as one of the foremost defenders of victimized Palestinians Felicia Langer was barred last February from practicing before military tribunals which in Israel have jurisdiction over all Arabs who are not citizens of the Zionist state. This ban, based upon unsupported allegations that Langer was a "security risk," has deprived many jailed Palestinians of legal defense. Although she was granted permission to act as counsel to both Fleener and Esmail, Langer's status means that a military court can exclude her from the courtroom during Esmail's trial if "sensitive material" is used as evidence!

Two U.S. citizens have now been subjected to the "norm" of Zionist terror usually reserved for defenseless Palestinians. This provocative victimization is no slip-up. No Israeli government locks up American citizens without weighing the consequences. The Zionist rulers, however, are bent on asserting their "right" to oppress Palestinians even where it means a slap in the face of Israel's main benefactor. And the Esmail case certainly gives an indication of the treatment Israel offers "its own" Arabs.

Mass round-ups, torture and denial of elementary democratic rights of Palestinians are the systematic practice of the Israeli authorities. Zionist expansionist designs for a "Greater Israel" mean the annexation not only of huge tracts of land but also of ever greater numbers of Arabs who populate those lands. For the Israeli bourgeoisie, impoverished Palestinians provide a ready supply of cheap, unskilled labor available for super-exploitation, but they are also potential "subversives." The labor force is useful only insofar as it can be kept disciplined and disorganized through terror. For this the Israeli army and police are well-equipped, and Israel's courts will "take care of" even "U.S. Arabs."

An international working-class de-
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Victory to the McDonnell-Douglas Strike!

LOS ANGELES Eight thousand United Auto Workers (UAW) members are entering the sixth week of a strike against McDonnell-Douglas Aircraft plants in California, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The union is demanding merely the meager 13 percent wage increase over three years established by an earlier strike at industry pacesetter Boeing, pension increases and retirement after 30 years of company service. But even these small-scale demands are being resisted by the company, bolstered in its determination by the almost unbelievable record of inter-union backstabbing between the UAW and the International Association of Machinists (IAM), who together represent the bulk of organized aerospace workers.

The McDonnell-Douglas walkout is only the latest in a series of strikes against the aerospace corporations. These strikes have been so badly led that it surprised even the *Wall Street Journal*. Though the contracts at Boeing, Lockheed, McDonnell-Douglas and Rockwell International all expired last October, the IAM and UAW bureaucrats divided their strength and took on corporations one-by-one in a situation that cried out for a joint industry-wide strike.

The IAM hit Boeing for 45 days last fall and Lockheed for 84 days in a walkout that ended January 2. Meanwhile, the UAW kept working at McDonnell-Douglas and Rockwell, whose employees are still on the job, over four months after their contract expiration.

Now, even worse, UAW members at McDonnell-Douglas, concentrated at the huge Long Beach, California facility, are striking while 4,800 IAM members are working at McDonnell-Douglas plants in southern California. Two hundred of them cross the UAW's picket lines daily in Long Beach. IAM members at the McDonnell-Douglas plant in St. Louis also continue working.

"It would have been great," one McDonnell-Douglas picket told *WFLA*, "if all the unions had gone out together, but the unions didn't want it." Despite an overwhelming strike vote by McDonnell-Douglas IAM members, they have been ordered to continue to work by their union "leaders," one of whom told the *Los Angeles Times* (20 January) that the strike threat was postponed "in hope that it might resolve some pressure from the negotiations." A tentative IAM agreement with McDonnell-Douglas was voted down at a tumultuous mass meeting in L.A. January 29, with union members shouting down local officers. But still IAM members have not been called out.

The UAW leadership is just as guilty as the IAM for this treacherous divisiveness. At the January 29 IAM meeting, UAW tops distributed a leaflet urging the IAM members *not* to strike. And three years ago, the UAW worked at McDonnell-Douglas while the IAM struck.

Instead of a joint industry-wide strike, where the power of the two unions could be combined, the UAW and IAM bureaucrats have chosen the self-defeating "one-at-a-time" strategy, while scabbing on each other's strikes. The isolation of each of the aerospace strikes has already spelled disaster, for the unions, but still the myopic misleaders refuse to learn the most elementary lessons of labor solidarity.



UAW pickets outside Long Beach Douglas Aircraft plant.

The Boeing strike was hamstrung from the outset by the IAM's refusal to halt the nearly 10,000 engineering, design and machine tool scabs who crossed the picket lines of 18,000 IAM members at Boeing's Seattle plant. The nearly three-month-long IAM strike against Lockheed fizzled out in disarray in early January when IAM locals in Los Angeles and Georgia broke ranks to return to work.

Leaders of L.A. IAM Lodge 508, who settled separately with Lockheed against International IAM orders, were removed from office and then returned by court order. This government intervention in the selection of union representatives must be laid squarely at the feet of both the Local officials who scabbed and the International IAM officers who masterminded the scabbering situation.

After the L.A. strikers returned to work, the IAM strike collapsed. The Georgia strikers returned to work the next week and the remaining L.A. IAM members voted to go back in the face of a disintegrating strike. The union lost important seniority rights and an "open shop" was imposed which allowed scabs and non-union members on the job.

Aerospace workers have been hard hit by massive cutbacks in aircraft production since the end of the Vietnam war. Over half a million jobs have been lost in the industry. UAW president Doug Fraser and IAM chief William Winpisinger pose as the "left wing" of the American labor movement while both endorse more military spending and sanction mass scabbing against their own strikes.

UAW and IAM militants must demand an end to these simultaneously pro-imperialist and defeatist strategies. For a joint UAW-IAM industry-wide strike! For mass picketing to shut down all the aerospace plants! Expropriate the military profiteers without compensation! Jobs for all through a shorter workweek with no loss in pay!

Spartacist League Class Series

Building the Revolutionary Party

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LOS ANGELES

Exit Communist League...

(continued from page 5)

subjectively revolutionary USec militants in a number of countries, including Australia, repelled by the USec's cynical masquerade, have been won over to the genuine Trotskyism of the iSt.

Thus despite all protestations to the contrary the SWP leadership itself is compelled in its own way to take the SL "seriously," as revealed in the only eventful moment of the dreary week-long conference. When, shortly before the conference proceedings began, SWP national secretary Jim Percy discovered that the SL had rented a room in the same public facilities, adjacent to the conference [site], in order to make Trotskyist literature available to conference participants, he went into a livid rage and proceeded to [finger] the SL supporters to the facility administrator and his security cop (see "Letter to the SWP," *ASP* No. 50, February 1978!).

The first order of business at the conference was an announcement that "the administration has been informed of their [the SL's] motives [?] for being here...[and] they have now been removed." When a long-time fellow traveller of the CL, Betty Hounslow, had moments earlier attempted to register a protest against this unabashedly open violation of workers democracy, she was peremptorily *disinvited* to the conference! But not one member of the SWP/CL rose from the floor to demand an accounting from Percy for calling in the cops against another working-class tendency. More than any of the documents or discussion, this one incident demonstrated both the thoroughly social-democratic character of the fusion and the timid nature of the opposition.

The Opposition's Whimpering Retreat

Overall, the opposition within the CL was a pale (and rather farcical) reflection of the "Principled Fusion Tendency" which arose within the Canadian Mandeliste Revolutionary Marxist Group in opposition to the reformist fusion there earlier last year. But the pathetic CL dissidents were incapable even of organising themselves into a tendency, confessing an inability "to clarify our areas of political agreement and disagreement" ("Call for the Formation of a Caucus," *JDB* No. 9, December 1977). By its refusal to base itself firmly on a *programmatic* struggle against the SWP and the reformist fusion, the opposition proved not only to be completely ineffectual, but wide open to cynical attacks for its unprincipled cowardice. CL top Ron P. hypocritically pontificated that, "It would be a serious mistake on the part of those hesitant about or opposed to the present course of fusion if any organisational question...was seized upon to regroup people into any oppositional current. What is needed is clarity on the political issues through a stated position on the fusion" ("A Reply to David F.," *JDB* No. 7, December 1977).

Among the oppositionists, only one, David F., made even a lame attempt to characterise the SWP. "I once held that they were reformist. Now I'm not sure and I think that they're centrist..." ("Two Weights, Two Measures?" *JDB* No. 3, November 1977). Chiding David F. for his hashfulness in characterising the SWP after years of observation, a reply to his document presented him with convincing "proof" that the SWP could not be reformist. "A study of the history of the FI will reveal that it is not at all inclined to tolerate reformist organisations in its midst.... The fact that no one is proposing to expel the SWP from the International may therefore be taken as evidence of the SWP's credentials"

("Use the Other Eye, Nelson," *JDB* No. 3, November 1977). Determined not to be cornered into so "foolhardy" a position as denouncing the USec, the harried David F. vehemently denied that he considers the SWP reformist and, besides, "Even if [!] the SWP is centrist, since when has it been 'unprincipled' to fuse with such formations?" ("Shadow Boxing as an Art: the Politics of Allen M. and Ron P.," *JDB* No. 8, December 1977).

While the central CL leadership lauded the fusion to the skies, more trepidatious elements expressed the "need to discuss not only tendency rights but also faction rights and...to be quite clear on what sort of airing the politics of the FI [i.e., the USec majority] would receive" ("On Fusion," *JDB* No. 2, November 1977). Finally, the real "intransigents" supported the "caucus," whose sole basis of existence was to plead for another six-month stay of execution. Accused of attempting to postpone the fusion interminably, they replied by proclaiming undying support for a "principled fusion" and unflinching commitment to a "united section."

Refusing to transcend their ingrained Pabloist opportunism and thus unwilling to break from the big-time (on a small scale) USec, the anti-fusion elements were reduced to arguing a pathetic series of organisational gripes about the "fusion process" and laying out petty, procedural criteria for what in their eyes would constitute a "principled fusion" between these two patently *unprincipled* organisations. Needless to say, the bloc of three arrayed against them—the SWP leadership, the CL leadership and the SWP ranks—was scarcely sympathetic to their appeals. Indeed, by the time of the conference the two leaderships were virtually indistinguishable politically.

The question of postponing the fusion never even came to a vote. The few remaining dissidents made their last stand: attempting merely to have the SWP constitution amended so as to clearly specify that the newly fused organisation would abide by the international decisions of the USec and allow for factional rights outside pre-conference discussion. However such elementary Leninist norms as democratic centralism and factional rights have no relevance to the federalist, anti-Leninist USec and an infuriated Jim Percy denounced them as the worst amendments ever put before the party!

Build a Trotskyist Party, Not the SWP!

A serious struggle against the fusion would have required a critical examination and repudiation of the politics not only of the SWP, but also of the no less opportunist CL. The SWP's staid reformism expressed its appetite to become the "left wing" of mainstream social democracy, itself a conduit to the liberal bourgeoisie. But the at times "militant" centrism of the Mandeliste CL never got further than a difference in adaptation, attempting instead to pressure a politically undifferentiated "new mass vanguard" momentarily and empirically estranged from the mass party of reformism. The ease with which much of the ex-CL, "oppositionists" included, came to repudiate the original 1972 split from the then Socialist Workers League itself underscored the CL's failure to pose a revolutionary alternative. The CL dissidents thus found themselves in the unenviable position of fighting a thankless (and toothless) rearguard action for Mandelism, with Mandel poised against them.

The proletarian revolution will not be led by those who reject programmatic clarity and political honesty in favour of short-term expediency. The SWP and the USec can build only obstacles to the creation of a revolutionary workers party in Australia and to a genuine, reformed Fourth International. The SL's intransigent adherence to Trotskyist principles is the only road to that goal. ■

Shove It...

(continued from page 1)

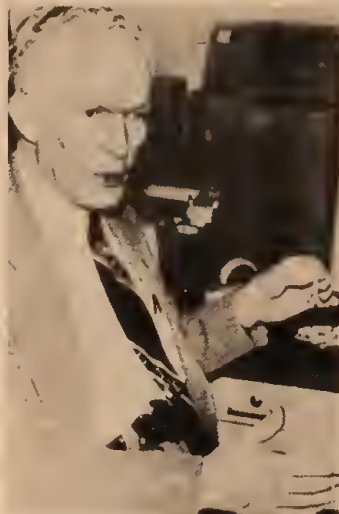
within days to force industrial shut-downs and power cutbacks.

Utility executives are demanding police and National Guard protection for shipments of scab coal and capitalist politicians are stepping up their demands for a forcible ending of the strike. The governors of Indiana and Ohio have already called for Carter to invoke the strikebreaking Taft-Hartley Act. The coal strike has clearly become a national crisis for the bourgeoisie.

Miners Reject Sellout

The biggest problem for the coal operators, big business, the capitalist government and Arnold Miller is that they cannot figure how to get the miners back to work. Militant actions over the last week have made clear the miners' resolve to continue their strike until they get what they want. What they clearly don't want is anything remotely resembling Miller's disaster contract.

On February 6, over 600 miners and strike supporters rallied in Pittsburgh outside the headquarters of U.S. Steel—a major coal producer and consumer—and marched to the offices of Consolidation Coal, one of the nation's biggest coal companies. On the way they



Weisblat/Charleston Daily Mail

Pistol-packing Arnold Miller. Who is this man afraid of?

demonstrated at Duquesne Light, an electric company which also operates mines. The crowd chanted "Scab coal will not roll!" in reference to Duquesne's request to the Pennsylvania governor for police escorts on scab coal trucks. The march also hit the *Pittsburgh Press* and TV station KDKA for their anti-miner coverage of the strike.

With the announcement of the tentative settlement later that day, and as its provisions became known in the coal-

mining regions, miners' protest meetings began to mushroom. A February 8 rally in Frankfort, Kentucky had been called to protest state troopers who have arrested nearly 500 miners during the strike. But in the wake of Miller's settlement, the miners also turned their wrath on Miller. One black retiree who spoke denounced Miller: "Any man who would sign a contract or negotiate one like he did in '74 or even now, there's got to be something wrong with him. It seems to me that he crawled into bed with the operators."

This sentiment was shared by the presidents of 52 out of 53 locals in Ohio's District 6 who met the next day and voted to reject Miller's pact. In West Frankfort, Illinois officials from 23 UMWA locals demanded Miller's immediate resignation. And on Saturday, February 11, 3,000 angry miners met in Beckley, West Virginia and overwhelmingly voted down the proposed agreement. Meanwhile petitions demanding Miller's resignation are sweeping the coal fields and it's hard to find a miner who won't sign.

Miller, knowing he is hated and alone, began carrying a pistol, surrounded himself with well-paid bodyguards and went into hiding. He grew increasingly bitter and hysterical at any criticism. On February 8, Miller appeared at the District 17 headquarters in Charleston to confront district vice president Cecil Roberts.

One of Miller's thugs assaulted Roberts in his office and another miner was also jumped. Reportedly, the fight was broken up by miners in the building who rushed to Roberts' aid. When Miller's guard began reaching into his coat pocket, he was told not to pull it out if he wanted to leave the building under his own power.

"That's how this union democracy gave us works," one Charleston-area miner bitterly told *WV*. Later that night a group of 40 angry miners scoured the city's hotels looking for Miller. But the UMWA chief was not to be found.

When Miller announced plans for a February 11 meeting of the Bargaining Council in Washington, it was like waving a red cape at the furious miners. Hundreds of miners from Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky boarded buses and car caravans and headed for UMWA headquarters.

When they arrived, the miners occupied the UMWA building, tore a portrait of Miller from the wall and hung a picture of John L. Lewis in the Council's meeting room for what one miner called "inspirational purposes" (*Charleston Gazette*, 11 February). Two to three hundred miners waited inside the building and across the street in a park, holding hand-made signs denouncing the contract and waiting for Miller's Cadillac limousine to arrive. They cleared the building when one district official suggested the Bargaining Council might be afraid to meet in their

presence, but Miller never showed up.

"The thing that makes me ill is that yesterday he said the bargaining council had a responsibility to pass on this contract to the membership so they could vote on it," one council member told the *New York Times* (12 February). "Then when the membership showed up, he didn't have the courage to face them." Miller telephoned in, cancelling the meeting and maliciously denounced the "anarchy of a small irresponsible group."

But the miners in Washington knew they had the backing of their union brothers in the coal fields. And their presence had an effect: a straw vote held that day in Miller's absence went 33 to 3 against the contract and foretold the formal vote two days later. As one militant on the scene told *WV*, "The guys that were voting for it at the start, by God, they changed their minds after we got up there."

The miners' rally in Washington had a powerful impact. It also notified the bourgeoisie that the miners were not going to be easily driven back to work. The determined miners are now in an exceptionally strong bargaining position, in spite of their "leaders" abject betrayal. While Miller has holed up with coal operators and federal officials, trying to figure out how to end the strike, coal miners have launched wave after wave of roving pickets to shut down scab mines and choke off the supplies which threaten their union.

They have been successful to a degree that few business or government leaders expected. Production of non-union coal, which had risen to nearly 50 percent of the U.S. total before the strike began December 6, has been cut in half. And the determination and militancy of the miners has kept huge mountains of stockpiled coal from moving, with scab truck drivers afraid to run their rigs on the highways.

Utility and industrial stockpiles in nine coal-dependent states are nearing critical levels and will soon be exhausted. West Virginia and Indiana today ordered the first mandatory cutbacks in electricity and widespread curtailments are expected any day in Pennsylvania,

Kentucky, Virginia, Michigan, Tennessee and Maryland. Major industries dependent on products produced in these states are warning of nationwide layoffs if their supplies of energy sources are cut back. Chrysler Corporation predicted February 13 a total shutdown by March 1 due to shortages of crucial parts from plants threatened with electricity shortages in Ohio.

The bosses are feeling the squeeze of the miners strike and are running scared. The miners show no weakening in their resolve to stay out till they get a contract that meets their needs. On February 3, a thousand Alabama miners trapped seven scabs near a non-union mine and shot it out with state police and National Guard troops who were rushed to rescue the strikebreakers. Caravans continue to reinforce Kentucky miners in their efforts to shut down scab mines.

This strike can be won! What is crucially needed is effective, militant leadership. This has been provided neither by Miller nor the UMWA Bargaining Council, which is composed of district presidents, IEB representatives and national officers.

It would be a mistake for miners to rely on the Bargaining Council as an effective guarantee against a contract sellout. The "no" vote by the Council was, in itself, a cheap gesture. The massive uproar in the coal fields made it clear that any district official who supported this atrocious deal would lose all credibility before the rank and file.

But district officials have exercised no leadership in this strike. For the most part, they have had no part in the militant picketing that shut down the scab mines; nor have they even championed such demands as the unlimited right to strike. Thus, Jack Perry, president of District 17 in the heart of West Virginia and a vocal opponent of Miller, stated that financial penalties against wildcaters might be acceptable "if we had the limited right to strike" (*Charleston Gazette*, 11 February).

Even after Sunday's vote to reject, the Bargaining Council adopted a formal resolution recommending the 1974 pact as a guide for the future negotiations with the BCOA. But it was the provisions of the last contract—and in particular the absence of the right to strike—that led to three massive wildcats in three years—strikes which the International leadership, including the IEB, opposed.

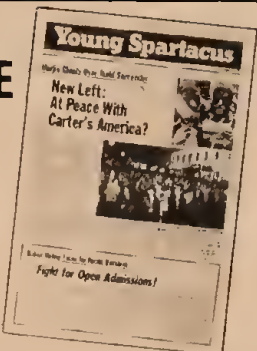
The conduct of the strike must be taken out of the hands of the discredited Miller and the bureaucrats. District-level strike committees must be elected to organize and extend picketing efforts against all production and shipment of coal, and to approach transport, steel and power station workers to hot-cargo scab coal. A special bargaining convention must be elected now. The elected delegates to such a convention must formulate clear, powerful strike demands: for the unlimited right to strike, full funding of the health benefit fund, a big wage boost, full cost-of-living protection, equal pensions for all at the highest levels, extend the contract to and bring into the union the unorganized miners. ■

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Company Gun Thug Murders Cleveland Striker

CLEVELAND, February 3—The Cleveland labor movement was stunned this week by the point-blank murder of a black striker at an East Side metal shop by a company-hired gun thug. On January 30 Thomas Moss Jr., a member of Upholsterers Union Local 48, was shot as he picketed in front of the Bargar Metal Fabricating Co., which has been struck since January 23.

According to an eyewitness, Moss, who picketed almost daily, was gunned down by William Hargrays, an employee of the National Investigation Bureau (NIB) which Bargar retained as professional strikebreakers late last month. At 10 p.m. on the night of the murder two guards arrived at a picket shack to frisk the strikers. When Moss asked them for their identification he was thrown against a car and shot in the face. The guards then fled into the plant.

The cold-blooded executioner later claimed that he fired in self-defense when Moss pulled a gun. This obvious lie has been exposed by the testimony of the other strikers present and the fact that the victim was unarmed ten minutes earlier when searched by another plant guard. Hargrays has now been legally charged with the murder of Moss and three other NIB employees, including its president Samuel Hendricks, have been charged with complicity.

The murderous NIB is part of a growing "industry" of private cops who help companies maintain a "union-free environment" by breaking strikes, organizing scabbing, intimidating union organizers and even murdering strikers. In recent years rent-a-cop corporations have mushroomed from a \$1 billion-a-year business to more than \$12 billion annual income, employing numbers totalling twice that of all official police forces across the nation. Besides the established strikebreaking and labor spy companies—Pinkerton, Burns and Wackenhut—scores of new agencies have been formed which market their "professional services" in carrying out the bosses' dirty work.

NIB and other private "security" forces are hired to do the work otherwise performed by the regular police force. (Many companies routinely hire off-duty cops to beat up picketers during strikes.) Often, in order to make the point that they are better "watch-dogs" for the bosses than the official badge-toting enforcers of capitalist "law and order," these anti-labor gangsters are more zealous in their anti-union violence. Hargrays is typical of the scum that is recruited to such outfits. He has been convicted for burglary and unlawful use of a weapon in the state of Illinois.

Since NIB was hired to beef up Bargar's guards, pickets from the 120-man workforce have been subjected to constant physical abuse, including attacks with clubs, sticks and electric cattle prods. Local 48 president Ben Shouse told *WV* that strikers have been hit by cars as well. A few hours prior to Moss's murder another worker was hospitalized after suffering a brutal picket-line beating by one of the company's armed goons.

The response of the Cleveland labor bureaucracy to this outrageous crime has been shameful tokenism. Although this city is heavily unionized, only 200 turned out for a memorial service



WV Photo

Upholsterers Local 48 memorial for striker killed by company gun thug.

February 2 at the Bargar plant gates. The Ohio AFL-CIO pledged \$1,000 to a fund for Moss's four orphaned children, and the sum was matched by the Carpenters Union. At the picket site meeting the small crowd heard UAW Region 2 director Bill Casstevens describe the struck firm as "Bargar Murder Fabricated," but none of the labor fakers even hinted at the one clear way to put a stop to this murderous thuggery—by a massive mobilization of unionists to shut the struck factory down tight.

Instead, several pickets told *WV* that truck drivers from one Cleveland Teamsters local repeatedly drove past the picket lines. NIB was recommended to Bargar on the basis of its performance during a steel strike last year at the A.M. Castle Company in Bedford Heights, Ohio. There its goons harassed Steelworkers members with guns, often firing

cops are often the backbone of these private armies. The entire labor movement must reject any reliance on the armed enforcers of the capitalist state.

There must also be no illusions that the rapidly expanding "security" industry is a minor nuisance that can simply be brushed aside by labor. Because private armies like the NIB make union-busting violence their business they are a natural source of recruits for fascist terror squads. As Leon Trotsky pointed out in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International, written in 1938:

"The bourgeoisie is nowhere satisfied with official police and army. In the United States even during 'peaceful' times, the bourgeoisie maintains militarized battalions of scabs and privately armed thugs in factories. To this must now be added the various groups of American Nazis."

Trotsky called for mass workers defense against this bourgeois terror. While others prayed for help from the "democratic" state he warned against such ultimately suicidal reliance on the class enemy:

"The struggle against fascism does not start in the liberal editorial office but in the factory—and ends in the street. Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army."

It is only the fact that organized fascists today have so little social weight in the U.S. that prevents these armed scabherders from finding their political hanner of the swastika and skull-and-crossbones.

Thomas Moss's death will not be avenged by union leaders who keep the working class on its knees, nor by the hypocritical sympathy of bourgeois politicians whose official cops are ever-ready to strike down more militants. A fitting tribute to this martyr, who gave his life to the union cause, must be mass picketing to shut down Bargar and a massive demonstration organized by the giants of Cleveland labor—the UAW, Steelworkers and Teamsters demanding. Victory to the Bargar strikers! No reliance on cops, city hall or federal "investigations"! Smash NIB! ■

The Partisan Defense Committee has contributed to the relief fund for the family of the murdered Bargar Co. striker and urges the readers of *Workers Vanguard* to send contributions to:
The Thomas Moss Jr. Family Fund
c/o United Labor Agency
3100 Euclid Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44115

at them in an attempt to intimidate the strikers. Yet neither district nor national USWA tops lifted a finger to mobilize the thousands of steel workers in Cleveland's industrial flats and surrounding areas.

The labor skates and their Democratic Party "friends" are now promising more city police instead of the "unreliable" rented cops. But city police are simply the hired guns of the bosses' state, whose job is also to break strikes and herd scabs. Cleveland cops will make sure that enraged Local 48 members do not avenge Moss's death on Bargar's murderous guards and also prevent the strikers from effectively sealing off the plant. Out-of-uniform

Lowdown...

(continued from page 3)

system, which gave miners who retired before 1975 much lower payments (from the "1950 fund") than those who retired after that date (the "1974 fund").

Not only will this disparity continue, but both groups are being offered pittance that will not even begin to keep up with inflation. Pre-1975 retirees will receive a miserable \$275 a month by the end of the proposed three-year agreement, and those on disability pensions will get a miserable \$137.50.

Under the proposed contract the 1974 fund will be dissolved and each company will carry its own pension plan. Moreover, the minimum number of hours worked per year to qualify for a full year of "service credit" for pension purposes has been jacked up by nearly 50 percent, from 1,000 hours to 1,450.

Grievance Procedure

The main result of Miller's cumbersome, time-consuming grievance procedure introduced in the last contract was to encourage the operators to ignore miners' complaints. "Don't like it? File a grievance," was the bosses' standard response, knowing full well that months would pass before grievances were heard and, even then, arbitrators would usually rule in their favor.

Miller proposes to increase the operators' arrogance. Armed with broad powers to fire and dock miners' paychecks, the companies can take a hardline position with less fear of an "unauthorized" strike in retaliation.

In addition, an individual employer and UMWA district officials can bypass the district arbitration panel by going to a separate arbitrator which can dispense with hearings. To cut down the backlog of grievances at the final stage, the Arbitration Review Board, the Board will be replaced by a single arbitrator, and the existing accumulated grievances will be shucked off to an "interim arbitrator"; that is to say, they will essentially be junked.

Wages

Miller's only conceivable selling point for his giveaway contract is the \$2.35 wage increase over three years. He boasts that the 37-percent increase in wages and fringe benefits compares favorably with contracts in auto, steel and rubber. What he does not mention is that the 30 percent wage increase is far less than the 50 percent-plus the miners

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got in the last contract. He also "forgets" that he bargained away the miners' automatic cost-of-living escalator clause, previously hailed as a first-ever gain in the 1974 contract. A 7 percent annual inflation rate is "anticipated" and included in the wage increases, which means the miners will actually receive only about 3 percent a year after inflation! And if inflation should rise more than that, miners will actually lose money!

Union Rights

One might think that there would be little else for Miller to give away. But adding insult to injury, he also threw out two of the union's long-standing rights.

No longer will every miner in a UMW mine be a union member. For the first time new miners will have a 30-day probation period without union rights or protection. This will be an enormous boon to the companies in weeding out militants. Moreover, the rising use of non-union coal—a threat to the existence of the UMW—will be encouraged by the repeal of a clause requiring companies that bought cheaper non-union coal for resale to pay a tonnage royalty into the union benefit funds. Arnold Miller has opened one more door to the scab operators. ■

Esmail...

(continued from page 7)

fense campaign to free Sami Esmail should not only be carried out in the United States but in particular should be directed at the Hebrew-speaking working class of Israel. Such cases could become a basis for Jewish-Arab working-class solidarity against their common oppressors. But unfortunately the U.S. group defending Esmail has tied the defense to classless civil-libertarianism and propaganda feeding Jimmy Carter's "human rights" crusade. The main strategy of the "National Committee for the Defense of the Human Rights of Sami Esmail" has been to make the State Department fight for Esmail's democratic rights.

American imperialism has shown that far from protecting the "rights" of the oppressed, all the current talk about "human rights" is really a propaganda blitz against the Soviet Union. Instead of aiding Esmail, the State Department has strenuously avoided assisting him in any fashion. When Esmail's brother contacted the U.S. consulate he learned from a vice consul that Sami had undergone torture. The official who spilled the beans was then quickly replaced, and the consulate now refuses to admit any knowledge of "mistreatment" of Esmail.

While the defense of Esmail must demand that his democratic rights be respected and pressure the U.S. government to demand release of this American citizen being held in a blatant frame-up on trumped-up charges, there can be no reliance on such "democratic" processes. No Palestinian Arab can get a "fair trial" in the Zionist state or fair treatment from the U.S. imperialist government.

The Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) demands the immediate freedom of Esmail and all victims of Zionist repression. An international defense that does not rely on the "enlightened" imperialists and their courts must be built to defend the democratic rights of the exploited and oppressed with the methods of the class struggle. ■

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Smash Detroit Nazis...

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In contrast to the UAW bureaucracy's belated pacifistic efforts in the face of the fascist threat, a concrete action proposal put forward at the meeting by Frank Hicks, a Local 600 militant, laid out the basis for a genuine united-front mobilization. While the bureaucrats' motion talked of mass action without ever naming the time, place and purpose, Hicks' motion read:

"That this meeting call for a mass united-front demonstration and picket line at the Nazi headquarters in two weeks based on the slogan 'Smash the Detroit Nazi threat':

"That all organizations that support this proposal take action to mobilize their own memberships as well as other labor, socialist, black, Jewish and other minority organizations in Detroit;

"That this demonstration be open to all individuals and organizations who support the above slogans and guarantee the right of all these participants to carry their own signs and slogans and distribute their own literature."

Since the bookstore was opened militant auto workers in several Detroit plants have been fighting for Solidarity House and all UAW and other unions in the area to build massive anti-fascist demonstrations. In a leaflet to a January 17 Local 600 unit membership meeting, for instance, Frank Hicks pointed to the dangers of reliance on Coleman Young and the government to smash the Nazis:

"Neither can we call on Coleman Young's cops (who are currently guarding the Nazi headquarters) or the courts to stop the Nazi threat. A government which produced the murderous STRESS squads and convicted the Trenton 7, which consistently harasses and assaults minority and labor organizations cannot be trusted to protect us from fascist thugs."

Both at Rouge and in other UAW locals such as Dodge Truck Local 140 the bureaucrats have consistently tried to sidestep such calls for immediate action.

From Marquette Park to San Francisco to Boston and now in Detroit, the Spartacist League has been unique on the left in putting forward a strategy of labor/black defense to effectively smash the fascists. In contrast, the rest of the left has had nothing to offer but endless small anti-Nazi demonstrations. What is needed is the action of thousands of unionists and blacks to close down the Nazi "bookstore" and teach the fascists a lesson they will remember. While SL contingents have participated in several of these protest pickets we have constantly pointed out the necessity of bringing the big battalions of organized labor into the struggle. Otherwise the end result of the repeated small demonstrations will be to embolden the Nazis.

This danger was brought out February 11 in a demonstration called by the I.S. and RSL at the bookstore which nearly ended in disaster. With a turnout of less than 100 leftists and a large contingent of cops to protect the fascists, the Nazis were not cowed by the demonstration. Precisely the opposite. More provocative than they have been on any recent occasion here, throughout the demonstration the Nazis shouted out the windows while giving the fascist salute, showered their racist leaflets on the demonstrations and emerged from the "bookstore" in full Nazi regalia.

While the I.S. and RSL continue with their non-strategy of small left demonstrations, as soon as the union bureaucracy feels pressured to undertake some face-saving action they are quick to capitulate to the labor fakers. In the 13 February *Workers' Power*, for example, the article "Detroit Labor Coalition Demands: Nazis Out" glowed about the meeting at Sammy's. The fascist provocation there was turned inside out to whitewash the bureaucrats' role in helping the cops protect the Nazis from the enraged crowd.

Meanwhile the Communist Party and the CLP continue to push for a ban of the fascists by Coleman Young. Even



Detroit cops guarding Nazi office last Saturday.

WV Photo

more damning, on 4 February the *Detroit News* published a letter by the CLP's creature, the Detroit Equal Rights Committee (ERC) to the Detroit Police Officers Association asking for its "support in condemning" the Nazis. Since "the DPOA must form one of the community's front lines of defense" the writers asked the cops to pass anti-fascist resolutions and to invite ERC members to its meeting to obtain signatures for its anti-Nazi petitions!

For its part, the reformist fake-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP) until two weeks ago maintained a complete silence on the Nazi threat in Detroit, only then resurrecting its local SCAR (Student Coalition Against Racism) chapter to call a "Speak Out in Response to the Nazi Threat." The following week at the February 6 Community Labor Committee meeting they presented no proposals and simply sat on their hands, perhaps embarrassed to find that even hidebound bureaucrats like Boatini opposed the Nazis' "right to free speech."

Indeed the SWP has lately become somewhat embarrassed by its earlier wholehearted defense of Nazi "rights." In the 10 February *Militant* Fred Feldman attempts to take a bit more militant tone and writes "the civil liberties of the Nazis are not the real issue in Skokie, Camp Pendleton, or anywhere else these vermin raise their heads." In practice nothing has changed. At the January 30 "Speak Out" SWP Detroit organizer Mack Warren defended the right of the Nazis to attend and speak at the meeting, if only they followed the procedural rules!

In recent weeks in Detroit, in addition to the action by the Local 600 General Council, anti-Nazi motions have been passed in Local 600 Tool and Die Unit, Locals 15 and 140 of the UAW, USWA Local 1299 and AFSCME Local 140. But the pro-capitalist labor bureaucrats have demonstrated they are still more afraid of upsetting their relations with capitalist politicians like Coleman Young and his boss Henry Ford than they are of the threat posed by the Nazis to the labor movement and minority populations.

Rinaldi at the February 6 meeting compared the present struggle to the UAW fight in the 1930's against the fascist Black Legions. It was precisely

the auto magnates like Henry Ford I who backed and made use of such anti-labor terrorist organizations. From 1933 to 1936 the Black Legion was responsible in Michigan for the deaths of over 50 union organizers and blacks as well as flogging, night-riding and strikebreaking. It was widely known at the time that the Legion had influential supporters among many corporate managements and government alike, including the mayor of Highland Park and the head of Ford's personnel division.

Forty years ago the UAW and the Detroit labor movement knew well how to take care of the Black Legions and a



WV Photo

Mike Rinaldi, Local 600 president.

whole slew of fascist vermin of every variety. In the late 1930's and 1940's UAW locals and their Flying Squadrons took the lead in running groups like the Silver Shirts and Black Legion out of town. They haven't dared raise their heads until now when the economic decline and rightward drift in the U.S. political climate, together with the total abandonment by the Meany/Fraser labor bureaucracy of any defense of democratic rights of minorities, has emboldened them once again.

Now is the time to break the pattern of inaction and return to the fighting traditions that built the UAW and made Detroit a union town. Not appeals to the bosses' state, which protects these reactionary thugs, but organized mass action to put the Nazis out of action! Bring out Detroit labor to smash the fascist threat! ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Labor Must Smash Detroit Nazis

UAW Holds Anti-Fascist Meeting

DETROIT Last week the labor movement finally added its voice to the mounting protests here against the provocative presence of a Nazi recruiting office in this largely black and union town. Opened in January under the guise of a "white power" bookstore, the stormtrooper office has triggered repeated demonstrations and public meetings as well as appeals to Mayor Coleman Young to close it down and a court suit to evict the Nazi tenants. At the same time the fascists' success in maintaining their foothold as the weeks go by has emboldened these scum to increasingly provocative actions.

Faced with left-wing anti-Nazi demonstrations and the growing concern of a number of civil rights and religious organizations, the powerful United Auto Workers (UAW) has been under considerable pressure to take action. Moreover the location of the bookstore less than a mile from the giant River Rouge, Cadillac and Fleetwood plants has been an additional spur. Thus last week the UAW bureaucracy saw the chance to dust off its "socially concerned" image and for the first time in three decades called a meeting of Detroit labor to organize opposition to the fascist threat.

Initiated by the General Council of UAW Local 600 (Ford River Rouge), a "Community Labor Committee" meeting was endorsed by over 30 union locals and minority organizations. More than 200 trade unionists, leftists and community residents attended the meeting held February 6 at Sammy's Pizza Hall, among them representatives of the United Steelworkers, the Teamsters and AFSCME as well as spokesmen from several UAW locals. Virtually every socialist organization active in Detroit was present as well.

Since the fight to close the Nazi "bookstore" did not immediately threaten their relationship to the auto companies, the UAW tops felt relatively safe at the meeting in indulging in some nostalgia for the union's old fighting spirit. Local 600 president Mike Rinaldi compared the present need for labor action against the fascist scum to the union's fight in the 1930's against the Black Legions. And Committee chairman Paul Boatin, former UAW unit chairman in the Rouge engine plant, brought cheers from the crowd when he held up the filthy Nazi propaganda, demanding it could not be tolerated and that no one who read it could believe in "free speech" for such vermin Hank Wilson, Local 600 unit chairman of the Dearborn Assembly Plant, had on his most left face for the occasion, urging the unionists to "kick the hell out of them and get them out of here."

The meeting overwhelmingly voted up the Local 600 General Council-backed "Anti-Nazi Community Action Program" which opened with the statement that:

"This February 6 meeting against the Nazis sends us a mandate to the coming steering committee the duty to organize and lead massive public opposition to the Nazis... that special effort be made to get the thousands of members of organized labor to play a leading role."



Demonstration outside Nazi "bookstore" in January.

WV Photo

And while the program was filled with thoroughly reformist proposals, it ended on the resounding note that:

"the coming steering committee hereby be given full backing of this meeting in planning its activities including peaceful picketing. That this meeting serve notice that there can be no room in this community, in this city, in this state, in this whole country for the Nazis."

If the UAW bureaucracy really meant business, the meeting could have been the kickoff point for a powerful anti-fascist campaign. For the meeting brought together leaders and representatives of UAW local memberships numbering in the tens of thousands, with Local 600 counting 33,000 members alone. A show of this kind of force would immediately sweep the Nazis from Detroit and set a fighting example to the labor movement and beleaguered minority communities facing anti-busing mobs in Boston, "white power" riots in Marquette Park and Nazi marches in Skokie. Union militants must demand that the talk of mass mobilizations against the fascist threat be immediately put into action. Placing no faith in the labor fakers to carry out

these proposals they must demand instead a delegated steering committee to insure the widest coordination and implementation of the campaign!

The February 6 meeting alone provided plenty of reasons why there must be no trust in the labor bureaucracy. Number one is the Local 600 program itself, which although front-and-back-loaded with tough-talking language, attempts to make concessions to demands for militant action while at the same time proclaiming continued loyalty to the local Democratic machine. Some of the program's demands were simply absurd, such as the proposal directing the media to publish photographs of youngsters recruited by the Nazis so that their parents could punish them. But others were far more treacherous.

In particular the confused passage on mass action left unspecified what the purpose of these actions would be. While there was, for instance, a call for the "full mobilizations of all the people," the motion calls not on the labor movement but on the "city, county and state agencies, legislatures and councils" to carry this out. Thus in reality the

motion appeals to the capitalist government to drive out the Nazis. And what about the "peaceful picketing"? Is this to be in front of the brownshirts' lair for the purpose of shutting it down, or (as the rest of motion suggests) in front of city hall to demand that Coleman Young make this "a city of democracy, progress and peace"? There is a world of difference between these alternatives.

Moreover, from start to finish the meeting was a bureaucratic affair with the chairman—when not preoccupied with delivering glowing hosannas to the "guts, the fortitude, the foresight" of "my president Mike Rinaldi" hushy shoving all other action proposals under the table. To begin with the UAW leaders made no effort to turn out their ranks to the meeting, making a mockery of their stated intention to build "massive opposition." Rinaldi began his keynote speech by paying homage to Young and thanking the cops (who have been protecting the Nazis all along) for "keeping the peace" and ended with "outside agitator" baiting anyone who would advocate the necessary militant action against the Nazi threats:

"This [discussion and decision] ought to be dovetailed into one steering committee so we don't have organizations from way out on the outside coming in and causing violence."

And, in one of the most disgusting displays of the evening, Rinaldi equated Nazi terror tactics with the attempts of the black population to militantly defend itself against police attacks during the "black power" years of the 1960's.

But the most graphic demonstration of the labor fakers' real intentions was a highly significant incident which occurred at the end of the evening. The formal part of the meeting ended when Rinaldi and Boatin high-handedly pushed through Local 600's "action program," tabling all other proposals to the steering committee. A vote on adjournment was called and the bureaucrats and their hangers-on headed for the free pizza and coffee provided by Local 600. As the meeting was breaking up it was discovered that two Nazis had been inside the pizza parlor throughout the meeting.

To drive them out, Spartacist League (SL) supporters initiated the chants "Nazis Out" and "No Platform for Genocide." While the Communist Labor Party (CLP) refused to participate, supporters of Progressive Labor, the International Socialists (I.S.), its youth group Red Tide and the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSI) joined in the chants and a crowd began to gather. As more militants surrounded the Nazis, a bureaucratic hack and eight cops came up to defend them. The fascists were allowed to stay and finish their dinner with Mike Rinaldi telling a *BB* reporter, "They have the right to be here as long as they don't disrupt." Rinaldi's action, letting the cowardly racist bullies get away with their provocations speaks volumes about the "gutsy" union bureaucrats' resolve to drive out the fascists.

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