

Miller, "Dissident" Bureaucrats Ram Through Sellout

Miners: Remember the Traitors

The rotten contract which the membership of the United Mine Workers of America accepted with disgust and widespread opposition in a 57-to-43 percent vote Friday represents a defeat for the 110-day-old coal strike, but the combative union membership came out of it far from defeated. Despite their exemplary militancy the hungry miners were repeatedly stabbed in the back by a UMWA president who, as a coalfield jukebox hit put it, "might as well 'been on their [the companies'] side." And as for the "dissident" bureaucrats in whom many strikers placed their hopes, when the final pact came down it was these traitors who pushed through the sellout they had voted against ("for the record") in Washington.

The contract is clearly worse than the narrowly ratified 1974 agreement which provoked three years of wildcats. After the longest miners strike since 1922, the miners still don't have the right to strike, equalized pensions or the restoration of their free health care. Though their militancy and determination managed to heat back many of the sweeping take-away demands that the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA) had insisted on when the strike started last December 6, none of the miners' key demands were satisfied.

This contract is a serious setback for the UMWA. But the miners for three and a half months fought the coal operators, gun-toting scabs, state police and court injunctions with unmatched courage and unbreakable solidarity. They defied Jimmy Carter's strike-breaking invocation of Taft-Hartley and threats of worse, rendering the government's efforts to end the strike pathetic and ineffectual. Time after time they repudiated their leadership's efforts to send them back to work on even worse terms than they have now. The miners' fight inspired and won the support of millions of unionists throughout the country.

The miners were not heated down by the bosses or intimidated by the government. They were not whipped into submission by their avowed enemies they were betrayed by their own leaders. When the miners went to their voting places last Friday, the majority voted

with the bitter and frustrated resignation that with their current set of treacherous "leaders" they were unlikely to do better no matter how long they stayed out.

One miner in Logan, West Virginia spoke for thousands when he told *WV*, "They know they lost. I don't think any of them feels that they've got a contract. They were just forced back to work. If they'd had strong leadership, they could have stayed out longer. But many miners finally decided, 'We've gone as far as we can with Miller and them. They just aren't going to give us anything else'."

Carter and the coal bosses know that they have not succeeded in their fundamental objective—to inflict a humiliating defeat on the UMWA that would discourage the miners for years to come. The coal operators are not gloating over the new pact and a worried Carter just yesterday confirmed plans to establish a blue ribbon coal commission to investigate the problems of "labor peace" and productivity in mining. The bosses and their politicians know there will be new battles in the mines. The task now for the miners is to regroup, draw the lessons of this strike and begin to forge a class-struggle leadership that can achieve victory in the future.

Arnold Miller and the UMWA International Executive Board not only kept handing the miners one stinking contract after another, but they joined the companies and government in literally trying to starve them into acquiescence. Though over \$4.5 million had been contributed to the UMWA International Miners Relief Fund, Miller refused to distribute this money in his callous determination to force through a yes vote. Instead, district offices received elaborate questionnaires asking detailed questions about how the money might be handled. While the UMWA sent around letters to other unions asking them to stop contributing to the district relief funds, the International simply sat on the money it had received—or even denied its existence. Of course, while miners were living on credit, handouts and second-hand clothing, Miller and his goons never missed a paycheck.



WV Photo

Logan County militants protest Miller's sellout contract and government strikebreaking efforts in Charleston, March 7.

On March 22, a delegation of miners from Ohio's District 6 came to Washington to confront Miller. On the steps of the UMWA headquarters, they read a statement accusing the union president of withholding the fund to "starve out the rank and file as part of his contract ratification schemes." At a news conference the next day, UMWA secretary-treasurer and Miller flunkie Willard Esselstyn read a prepared statement denying the charges, but could account for only \$2.4 million of the \$4.5 million and refused to answer questions about

how much—if any—had been distributed.

Miller's criminal withholding of relief funds added to the mounting debts and hunger and combined with the miners' complete contempt for their negotiators to swing thousands of strikers toward grudging acceptance. An AP poll of 109 UMWA local presidents right before the vote revealed the trend. "We don't like it all that much," said one official in Mullen, West Virginia, "but our people are in pretty bad shape. They're about to

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Bob Avakian

WV Photo

Behind the Split in the RCP

see page 4

Oust the Bureaucrats!

Elect Herson NMU President!



Militant-Solidarity Caucus leaflets outside NMU hall in NYC.

WV Photo

Balloting begins next week in the National Maritime Union (NMU), which is holding its first general elections for union officers since the hotly contested presidential hattle of 1973.

The only serious organized opposition to the administration of Shannon Wall in these elections is provided by the NMU Militant-Solidarity Caucus (M-SC) which is running Gene Herson for national president and Jack Heyman for national secretary-treasurer. While a relatively small group, the Caucus is widely respected in the union for its principled opposition to the policies of both the Wall regime and the liberal "reformer" Jim Morrissey. Since the evaporation of Morrissey's larger grouping, the M-SC has been the only opposition in the NMU to the retreats and defeatism of the leadership. Over the past decade the massive decline of jobs in the union has greatly weakened the NMU, and even the bureaucracy is worried that the union cannot continue to exist as an independent entity.

On the eve of the election period, a new wave of apprehension swept through the union's ranks when it learned that four out of the five of the top officials of the Wall administration—all but Wall himself—were retiring and not running for reelection! Such resignations en masse are highly unusual within American union officialdom, and certainly the NMU provides one of the more comfortable

homes for greedy trade-union bureaucrats. Although the NMU is one of the smaller industrial unions, it pays among the top salaries for trade union officials, along with lucrative officer pension and severance programs, under which the NMU's first president Joe Curran retired in 1972 with a quarter million dollars severance pay plus more than \$50,000 per year!

Speculation over the motives of the retiring bureaucrats ranged over a fairly wide area. A number of NMU bureaucrats have privately confided to members that they were worried they might lose their cushy jobs in the proposed merger with the Seafarers International Union (SIU); the union's general fund and its financial bases are greatly weakened; and the NMU bureaucracy is still wrapped in considerable litigation, including federal investigation of the officials' pension and severance deals. But the message came through clearly: the bureaucracy was bailing out and the union is in trouble.

NMU members have good reason to be worried. Once the largest and most powerful of the seagoing unions, the NMU has become a shell of its former self. Although the union's membership rolls are swollen by thousands of shoreside workers from such disparate occupations as taxi drivers and cafeteria workers, whom the bureaucracy cynically treats as voting cattle, the heart of the union remains the seamen. According to the unions' own official figures, the number of deep-sea jobs in the NMU has declined from 21,500 in 1966 to 6,500 today, a drop of more than two-thirds in little over a decade.

The Curran/Wall regimes have stood by, literally without lifting a finger, as thousands of jobs were lost as shipowners registered their fleets under Liberian, Honduran and Panamanian flags to take advantage of cheaper labor costs (today less than 10 percent of all U.S. ocean-borne commerce is carried on U.S. flag ships). The minutes of the National Office meetings recorded in the union's newspaper, the *Pilot*, regularly record the routine concurrence of the bureaucracy with cutbacks in manning scales. And the real facts surrounding the lay-up of the NMU-contract passenger fleet, in which Curran officials are alleged to have accepted massive bribes in exchange for agreement to quash any fight in the union against the massive loss of jobs involved, have still not seen the light of day.

Workers' Solidarity is Key

The decline of the U.S.-flag shipping has reduced the number of jobs in the American merchant marine to below 30,000 (including officers such as mates, engineers, and captains, as well as the unlicensed crew). The dwindling numbers of jobs are divided among as many as a dozen different unions. Faced with small unions traditionally hostile to each other, the companies have had a field day, adroitly playing off one union against another to drive down the living standards of all seamen. For example, the NMU has recently won contracts for automated tankers by agreeing to only five days a month vacation for each month worked instead of the traditional 10 to 14 and accepting manning scales of as little as 15 per ship, approximately half the norm.

The situation has clearly posed the need for trade-union unity against the bosses, and even the NMU bureaucracy now claims to stand for "unity." In October 1974 NMU officials signed a "memo of understanding" with their counterparts in the SIU, pointing

NMU Bureaucrats OK Moving Scab Coal

The Wall bureaucracy's incapacity for even the most elementary trade-union solidarity was demonstrated anew during the recent coal strike. At the December port meeting in New York the Militant-Solidarity Caucus put forward a resolution calling on the union to hot-cargo coal shipments for the duration of the strike. This was opposed by the officials on the ludicrous grounds that UMWA president Miller had supported fake-oppositionist Morrissey in the 1973 NMU vote; they also insinuated the UMWA was "racist" because it had only a minority of black members.

Thereafter the bureaucracy systematically concealed from the deep-sea membership the fact that scab coal was being shipped on barges and tugs manned by NMU crews on the rivers. But this treachery did not go undiscovered. On the morning of March 27, at a union meeting in the port of New York, the M-SC issued a leaflet nailing the scoundrels. The leaflet ("NMU Officials Permit Towing of Scab Coal!") pointed out that Caucus members had learned of this treacherous backstabbing on a recent trip to the coalfields in the Pittsburgh area. The Caucus secured *documentary evidence*, including *photographs* of NMU boats on the rivers carrying scab coal, as well as copies of official logs filed by vessels traversing the rivers and logs prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the locks on the rivers. The logs contained definitive data showing that *NMU-contract boats had moved scab coal throughout the strike.*

A Caucus spokesman told *WV* that the NMU officials had refused to allow a motion condemning their complicity in the scabbing on the floor of the NY port meeting. Nonetheless, he said, the membership was outraged to discover that the officials permitted these goings-on even after miners had demonstrated their outrage by dropping bricks on the boats from bridges and even firing at them. They were further disgusted to learn that NMU officials had *refused* to defend river boatmen from victimization by the companies when they refused to engage in this despicable strikebreaking!

The leaflet issued by the M-SC pointed to the link between the miners' struggle and that of the seamen, noting in particular that many of the oil and steel interests that dominate the mining industry are among the largest operators of ships. Drawing the key lesson of this incident, the M-SC wrote:

"This latest atrocity on the rivers shows how phony is the Wall administration's commitment to labor unity and demonstrates once again how incapable these piecarks are of building the fighting alliance of maritime and other unions necessary to defend seagoing NMU'ers against the companies and the government, as well as organizing the rivers (which are now 80 percent unorganized)."



WV Photo

Boats manned by NMU crews move coal during miners' strike.

toward a merger of the two largest unlicensed seamen's unions. Given the long history of raiding and scabbing between the two unions, this seemingly represented a major reversal in policy.

The membership, however, has been justly suspicious of the secret merger negotiations between Wall and SIU president Paul Hall. In particular, there is considerable fear that the NMU would surrender some of its superior economic benefits and racial equality in such a merger.

The conduct of the bureaucracy since the memo was signed has done nothing to allay the fears of the ranks. Hardly had the ink dried on this document when a new wave of raiding and scabbing erupted on the waterfront. In 1975, when Farrell Lines bought several ships from Pacific Far Eastern Lines, the NMU, allied with the West Coast Longshoremen (ILWU) and the Marine Cooks and Stewards, went after the jobs traditionally crewed by the Sailors Union of the Pacific (SUP) and MFOW (engine department), two West Coast seamen's unions. A short time later the SIU, to which the SUP and MFOW are affiliated, retaliated by stealing NMU jobs on the East Coast Puerto Rico TTT lines. Since then waterfront rivalries have continued unabated, and under the impact of this dog-eat-dog competition even more sweetheart contracts have been signed.

While the NMU tops have condemned the raiding by the SIU, only the Militant-Solidarity Caucus (M-SC) has consistently opposed all raiding activities, including that perpetrated by the NMU. The M-SC has correctly pointed to the labor bureaucracy's class-collaborationist policies as the fundamental obstacle to achieving genuine unity. In fact the NMU hasn't called a real maritime strike since 1961. Unwilling to fight for more jobs at company expense—through a shorter workweek at no cut in pay (four watch system), increased vacation days (one day off for each day on) and organizing internationally to stop runaways—the bureaucrats have no choice but to squabble amongst each other for the shrinking number of jobs or to try to steal them from foreign seamen by supporting reactionary protectionist legislation.

While pointing out that even a merger carried out by the Wall and Hall leaderships could be supported if it did not cut back the economic benefits or democratic rights of either NMU or SIU seamen, the M-SC has emphasized:

"A real merger must begin with a joint organizing drive of the SIU and NMU against both U.S. and runaway-flag shipowners, and a link-up with longshoremen in a united maritime labor fight against the companies. Only a merger based on a fight against the shipowners for jobs for all maritime workers can forge a genuine unity and point the way forward.

—Beacon supplement, 26 September 1977

The M-SC further pointed out that real unity necessitates *joint strike action* of seamen and longshoremen against the companies.

Rebellion in the NMU

The Curran/Wall regime is one of the most contemptible trade-union bureaucracies in the U.S. Curran himself was a loyal supporter of the Stalinist Communist Party (CP) until after

World War II. Then, as both the AFI and CIO bureaucracies as a whole were gearing up for a major purge of the left, Curran switched sides. Using as a pretext the CP's legacy of betrayals, its abuse of union democracy and its detested hand-in-glove collaboration with the shipowners and government during the war, and enlisting the eager aid of government screening agencies like the Coast Guard and Waterfront Commission, the Curran clique drove out the Communists, socialists and independent militants from the NMU in the late '40's and early '50's.

The rapid rightward motion of the Curran bureaucracy intersected a massive decline in employment following World War II. The resulting demoralization laid the basis for one of the most venal and undemocratic bureaucracies in any of the American trade unions. Curran's anti-communist bloc partners in the leadership were eliminated one by one, while rank and filers who had the nerve to criticize the Curran clique were silenced by goon thuggery. Union conventions are now held every four years, while elections are held every five years, the minimum permitted under the Landrum-Griffin law. Its leadership draws pay higher than almost any officers of trade unions outside of the Teamsters: Shannon Wall gets \$91,000 a year.

In the mid-'60's, rebellion spread against the corrupt, class-collaborationist Curran bureaucracy. However, this movement was subordinated to the electoral appetites of Jim Morrissey, an ex-Curran bureaucrat who had earlier participated in the purge of reds from the NMU. In spite of Morrissey's endless "reform" rhetoric, programmatically he had no fundamental differences with the incumbent regime. Like Curran and Wall, Morrissey's program for jobs boiled down to subsidizing American-flag shipowners and endorsing protectionist-style legislation such as taxation of runaway fleets. He was closely linked to, supported and financed by a section of the Democratic Party.

But the most distinctive characteristic of the Morrissey opposition was his enlisting of the aid of the federal courts and the Labor Department against opponents in the bureaucracy. In that Morrissey acted identically to another "reform" movement of the same period, the Miners for Democracy headed by Arnold Miller. It was not coincidental that Miller and Morrissey were both supported by the same liberal Democrats such as Joe Rauh, nor that Miller himself endorsed Morrissey only a few months after his own election.

It is precisely by running to the courts and the Labor Department, and more generally through their willingness to subordinate the trade unions to the capitalist state and bourgeois legality, that the Morrisseys and Millers suppress the class-struggle impulses behind the rank-and-file unrest. That is what makes these fakery so valuable to the bourgeoisie: they offer a "new" face to the membership when the old leadership has become discredited, without altering in the least their subordination of the trade unions to the capitalist order.

Morrissey Deserts

In 1973 Morrissey received several thousand votes in finishing second to Shannon Wall. He swore up and down to his supporters that he would continue the battle against the NMU bureaucrats. However, shortly after a Morrissey victory in one of his numerous suits against the union—in which he was awarded \$335,500 (\$100,000 to come out of the union treasury)—the intrepid "reformer" retired. Not only did he personally howl out, but his paper, the *Call*, has not appeared in years. The opportunist Morrissey obviously despaired of getting elected to office. He just walked out, leaving hundreds of his supporters in the lurch and taking with him, in the best traditions of the venal NMU bureaucracy, a sizable hunk of the membership's money.

The demise of Morrissey, while less spectacular than that of Arnold Miller, nonetheless points to the exact same conclusion. These fakery are in no way deserving of support from the working-class movement. But unlike in the UMWA, in the NMU there is a genuine militant opposition which has for years systematically opposed not only the bureaucracy's sell-out defeatism but Morrissey's promotion of government meddling in the unions, and his reformist quackery as well. Thus, at least in the NMU the workers are given the chance to vote for candidates who have an established record of refusing to wilt under fire and capitulate to the popular road, maintaining instead their independent class-struggle program.

Militant-Solidarity Caucus candidates Gene Herson and Jack Heyman have both been active NMU members for several years, serving as shipboard union delegates many times. Herson has been sailing NMU for 14 years, Heyman for nine years. Gene Herson ran for the office of NMU president in 1973 and was elected convention delegate from the American Ace in 1976, although the NMU bureaucracy denied him his seat by fraudulent means.

Herson founded the *Beacon* in 1968, as a newspaper published by a group of NMU seamen which grew out of Morrissey's Committee for NMU Democracy. The *Beacon* broke from Morrissey because of his refusal to address himself to such key issues as a labor party, the need to oppose racism, the Vietnam war and the union's group system, which discriminates against lesser-seniority NMU members. The *Beacon* also refused to accept Morrissey's currying favor with the liberal press and taking the union to court. After breaking with Morrissey, Herson founded the Militant-Solidarity Caucus.

When the NMU-contract passenger ships were laid up, the M-SC organized protest demonstrations and called for nationalization of the shipping industry without compensation. In the same period, it organized the Group 2 Rights Committee to fight discrimination against Group 2's. Since the 1973 elections, the Caucus has actively participated in a rank-and-file campaign against "homesteading" (job trusting) and organized an effort to reject the last contract, gaining many shipboard votes.

The Caucus has consistently opposed government intervention in union affairs and court suits brought by opportunists against the union. It calls instead for a class-struggle opposition to throw out the reactionary bureaucrats. At the same time, it has forthrightly defended oppositionists, including Morrissey, against goon attacks from the bureaucracy and has denounced the officials' calling of cops against oppositionists.

The Militant-Solidarity Caucus has fought consistently for workers solidarity here and internationally. It called on the NMU to hot-cargo scab oil during the strike of Shell oil workers in 1973 and scab coal during the coal strike this year. In opposition to the NMU bureaucracy's support of the Vietnam war it demanded labor strikes against the war; it also fought for a labor boycott of military goods to reactionary regimes in Chile and South Africa.

The Caucus has consistently opposed government persecution of minorities and leftists, calling for defense of the Black Panthers, Angela Davis and Ruchell Magee. Opposing racial and sexual oppression, the M-SC called on the NMU to initiate labor/black defense squads to defend bused black schoolchildren in Boston from racist thug attacks. Bitterly opposed to the trade-union bureaucracy's support of the Democrats and Republicans, the Caucus has fought in the NMU for the unions to build a workers party to fight for a workers government.

Vote Gene Herson for NMU president and Jack Heyman for NMU secretary-treasurer! ■

Letter

22 March 1978

To the Editor:

I am writing to you about a meeting of the Bay Area Miners' Support Coalition which I attended recently in San Francisco. A trade union militant from England (but currently homeless politically), I attended this meeting to assess the trade union practice of supporters of American Trotskyist groups. It was a resolution, introduced by a member of Transit Local 1555 (Bay Area Rapid Transit Operators and Station Agents) with the support of her local, for a 24-hour work stoppage in support of the miners, which injected politics into a meeting obviously designed to permit a maximum of demagogic solidarity speeches and a minimum of action. Around this resolution the left groups were immediately polarized: the union bureaucrats, the CP and the SWP on one side; the SL on the other, supported by the SL/DC [Socialist League Democratic-Centralist].

I was appalled to find the SWP—the party of Cannon and Dobbs—putting forward a line which in England would have come from the CP or British SWP (ex-International Socialists). This "line" was, in essence: that it was much too early to be calling for strike action, that a "mass" demonstration should be the first step in mobilising support; that the Coalition was not representative enough to call strike action; and that the resolution would have the effect of isolating militants and threatening their trade union positions.

How many times I have heard these arguments in England! They are always used to head off a mobilisation of the working class which threatens to go beyond what the bureaucrats and Stalinists feel they can control. Such a practice has nothing to do with the Trotskyist conception of constructing a leadership in the working class: a dialectical process in which revolutionaries come into conflict with syndicalism, bureaucracy, backwardness and bourgeois consciousness. Trotskyists begin fighting for unity with workers by coming into conflict with bureaucrats and Stalinists, *not the other way around*, as the SWP seems to believe. That is an ABC of Trotskyism, a legacy of the granddaddies of the SWP which has been packed away in mothballs to await a more "favorable" period.

I was also struck by the general tone of the meeting. At such a meeting in England Trotskyists would have attacked much more bluntly the trade union bureaucrats—by name—than did the SL supporters; they would have insisted on the revolutionary possibilities inherent in massive strike actions supporting the miners. In other words, the interventions would have been more openly political, less trade union militant. Nevertheless, the introduction of the strike motion into this meeting represented a commendable attempt by the SL to bring a correct propaganda position into the living class struggle.

B.W.

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

WORKERS VANGUARD

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

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

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

No. 199 31 March 1978

Last month *Workers Vanguard* broke the news of a terminal faction fight in one of this country's two major Maoist organizations, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP—formerly Revolutionary Union) of Bob Avakian (see "RCP Splits," *WV* No. 190, 7 February). The issue was, of course, China after the death of Mao. Beneath a stone wall of embarrassed public silence, Avakian (a New Leftist whose Maoism derives from a romantic identification with the teenage Red Guards of the Chinese "Cultural Revolution") had stampeded the RCP Central Committee into a "secret" position that the present Hua regime was leading China down the "capitalist road." It was the fear of isolation from the bureaucratic rulers of "the socialist country" which impelled a grouping around Mickey Jarvis (a more traditional Stalinist who knows that left criticism of an incumbent Stalinist regime constitutes a dangerous flirtation with "Trotskyism") to launch a back-alley-and-corridor oppositional struggle against Avakian. The fight was conducted in the proper RCP "channels," which means that the vast majority of the membership knew nothing but vague rumors until the RCP exploded.

The minority, which has now emerged publicly as the Revolutionary Workers Headquarters, claims some 40 percent of the RCP membership (though Avakian continues to insist the split was nothing but a "handful" of cliquish deserters). And as we predicted, the factional line-up reflects the federated nature of the organization, always an uneasy alliance between the Avakian (West Coast) and Jarvis (East Coast) cliques. Though a certain shaking-out process continues, particularly evident in the Midwest and in some industrial fractions, the old cliquish ties are mostly holding fast; thus, while there is a certain murky left-right polarization between Avakian-Jarvis, the split lines are far from clearly political.

The leaders of the two sides are too compromised, too mired in their rotten Maoist politics—and above all too preoccupied with grabbing organizational resources and squabbling over the "real" youth organization (there are now two)—to make any coherent presentation of the political dispute. For

PART 2

the bewildered supporters of both sides, besieged with questions from the periphery, the only hope for understanding the split in their organization remains *Workers Vanguard*.

When *WV* exposed the explosion in the RCP and published lengthy excerpts from documents that only a select few had previously seen, Avakian went into a frenzy. He called down anathema on our heads, blasted our article as some kind of FBI fabrication and forbade his supporters to read it. It didn't help. The Jarvisites were manifestly pleased to see their existence acknowledged in print. And the Avakianite ranks? *WV*'s newsstand sales skyrocketed as shamefaced RCPers, risking excommunication, crept through bookstores in search of the forbidden fruit.

Thanks to *WV*—and to the fact that hundreds of ex-RCPers are no longer bound by Avakian's pronouncement that the organization's China line must be kept secret—the RCP has had to loosen up; documents are circulated and sympathizers informed of the party line. But Avakian's public response continues to be reminiscent of an ostrich. Whereas the previous *Revolution* made no mention of the split, the subsequent issue contains two articles on it but neither mentions China!

An "Editorial" in the February 1978 *Revolution* attacks *WV* for "sensational-

alist journalism" to "spice up page one" and shakes its head over "striking similarities" between our article and the gloating coverage of the RCP's main Maoist competitor, Mike Klonsky's Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) [CP(ML)]—formerly October League. Always willing to believe in a conspiracy, Avakian predictably blames the Jarvisites for the leak:

"Picture our Mensheviks, in league with the Klonskyites, running to the Spartacist League with cooked up tales and sensational 'scoops,' relying on the Trots to 'spill the beans' so that when the CP(ML) publishes 'excerpts' from those same pirated wares, our Mensheviks can point to the Trots rather than themselves as the culprits and try to hide from their misled followers the obvious fact that these Menshevik 'leaders' are negotiating with Klonsky & Co."

Demonstrating an instinct for organizational suicide, Avakian tries to push the Jarvisites into Klonsky's arms, proclaiming "You deserve each other."

Indeed the post-split motion of the Jarvis faction, despite muddle-headed political incompetence, confirms its rightist impulse toward more "mainstream" Stalinoid liberalism. But why should Avakian want to push his two substantial Maoist competitors toward a common organization to swamp his RCP? With his own followers bound together mainly by cliquish and geographical ties, schooled in an opportunism little different from what the Jarvis group will be peddling, clinging to "left" Maoist rhetoric which the RCP dares not push openly Avakian has one hope for keeping his flocks from straying into the Jarvis camp: organizational loyalty to the RCP and distrust of the so-called "careerists" of its long-time competitor, the Klonsky organization.

Avakian shrinks from confronting the China question openly. Accompanying the short editorial which wags a finger at "sensationalism" is a lengthy front-page statement entitled "RCYB Consolidates on Correct Line." This deals in detail with the bitter fight over the name of the youth organization, whose National Office has now emerged as the public Jarvisite bailiwick. The only hint that there might be

more to the conflict than a squabble over the youth is a vague phrase or two:

"As has now become clear, these people had been organized for some time as part of a revisionist headquarters within the RCP which engaged in factional opposition to the central leadership of the Party not only on the question of the communist youth organization, but many other questions as well."

"In a pitiful maneuver, their meeting also decided—based on predictably little study—to take a position on a decisive question for which they had blasted the RCP for an 'undemocratic' rush to judgment...."

And just what is this "decisive question"? Only those who recognize Jarvis' "rush to judgment" phrase—or who have read *WV*—can be sure.

The main immediate concern of both Avakian and Jarvis was the scramble to grab up the treasuries and juggle the steering committees of the various RCP front groups. The "unity" rhetoric which is the perennial stock-in-trade of the RCP's "mass organizations" is now as ludicrous as it is apolitical, as the "honest workers" and "anti-imperialist students" of the former RCP periphery watch their leaders trading blows and slanders. The charges range from embezzlement to drunkenness. The members of the RCP's National United Workers Organization (NUWO) received a circular from Jarvisite NUWO head Mike Rosen which gives the flavor of the RCP split fallout:

"I am also charged with 'stealing' the membership cards. As head of the organization how could I steal the membership list? It was entirely within my authority to ensure that they were secure. When I suspected an attempt to split the organization for narrow group interests I did this. My suspicions were confirmed by [Avakianite NUWO executive committee member John] Boyd's actions. Following the New Year when I tried to get into the NUWO office to run my normally scheduled hours from 1:30 to 4:30 I found that Boyd had changed the locks on the office with no one's knowledge...."

But the real heat has focused on the scramble to claim the "continuity" of the only front group which has any reality: the youth organization. The Cincinnati meeting where former RCP comrades dished out to each other the physical

attacks usually reserved for Trotskyists was the Avakianites' first post-split national gathering, a national youth meeting where they proclaimed themselves the "real" Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB).

Avakian's first post-split public action was to issue a pamphlet, "Communism and Revolution vs. Revisionism and Reformism in the Struggle to Build the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade," actually two counterposed documents from the struggle over changing the name of the youth organization. As we explained in our previous article, this burning question was a direct precipitant of the overt factional rupture: a shadow-boxing skirmish between the Jarvis clique and the cult leader Avakian. Jarvis was the puppet-master who pulled the strings behind the scenes as elements in the former Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB) resisted Avakian's decree that the organization change its name to incorporate the word "Communist." Following the name change to RCYB, Avakian declared war on the Jarvisites for their lèse majesté.

The present youth pamphlet made the RCP split public through a one-page "Introduction":

"... a number of those who held this line have persisted in their revisionism and gone still further. A small but arrogant little clique of these people have made a futile effort to use their leading positions in the RCYB to turn this organization into a pawn in the struggle against the Party and its line.... Such reactionary pulled-up but puny efforts are being clearly repudiated by the Party and by the masses of members of the RCYB around the country...."

The Jarvis "headquarters" responded with an issue of something called the *Young Communist*, which denounces Avakian's "attempts to pimp off the name and experience of the RSB." In articles titled "Counterfeit Crew Unmasked: The Real RSB Stands Up!" and "Open Letter to Pipsqueak Avakian: What You Couldn't Organize, You Can't Steal!" the paper lays claim to the youth organization:

"We condemn your attempts to split our organization. We condemn your attempts to hijack our organization for

BEHIND THE SPLIT IN THE RCP



RCP's November 1976 Conference on the International Situation.

your own purposes. We condemn your cowardly attacks on our members and our national office. . . . Brigade members under your influence attempted to organize secret Brigade meetings. Individuals representing your Central Committee have come to our meetings and declared them 'illegal'. . . . Since then you have released a pamphlet that claims the majority of the Brigade and the Brigade as an organization supports you. This is an outright lie. There is not one chapter on the East Coast that supports you. . . . You don't own our organization. Nor will you be allowed to steal it. We are the proud inheritors of the traditions of the RSB. . . ."

The paper disavows the name change to RCYB, announcing that "in order to consolidate our past successes and move to even greater victories" the group will return to the old RSB name.

The RCP majority, of course, promptly launched another youth paper, featuring a half-page box listing Avakian-loyal youth chapters. Dubbed *Revolutionary Communist Youth*, the paper rivals its competitor in unreadable "mass" format, mindless "fight-back" line and reliance on infantile insult. As the Jarvisites chortle over a caricature of Avakian with the caption "This short person's got no reason to live," so the Avakianites swell with pride over lines like "They began a downward exit so low it wouldn't be possible to slither under a snake with a top hat on." The main visible difference between the two is that the Jarvisite rag alternates nativist pulp journalism with fulsome salutes to the Chinese (including a picture caption saluting the eradication of "illiteracy" [sic] in China) while the Avakianite rag avoids the China question like the plague. Whereas the Jarvis article on the split lays out the group's China-loyal liberal line about as clearly as its muddled politics will permit, the Avakian paper restricts any attempt at a systematic polemic to a rebuttal of the Jarvisites' movie review of "Saturday Night Fever!"

Jim Crow Maoism

Avakian and Jarvis have a limitless supply of epithets to hurl at each other (the Jarvisite "headquarters" is charged by Avakian with being simultaneously sectarian, careerist, empiricist, pragmatist, maneuverist, factionalist, arrogant, narrow, departmentalist, abstractionist, absolutist, macho and hostile), but there is precious little in the way of political counterposition. While the antagonists unintentionally reveal a lot about the wretched politics shared by both factions, most of the mud-slinging has about as much political significance as a divorce hearing. "It's all your fault," cry Avakian and Jarvis as they "sum up" the RCP's founding trade-union work, the great NUWO boondoggle, the rightist drift of the youth organization, the pathetic state of internal "education," the cynical abuse of cadres, and so forth.

Indeed, in all these areas there is plenty of room for criticism. But the hundreds of pages do not even begin to

scratch the surface, and in no case do they rise above the level of tactical complaints. Never mentioned are the RCP's real crimes against the interests of the working masses: the RCP's bloc with racist vigilantes on the streets of Boston and Louisville; its bloc with Anita Bryant to have homosexual teachers thrown out of the schools; its electoral support for strikebreaking trade-union bureaucrats like Arnold Miller; its gyrations on behalf of government union-busting schemes; its gangsterism against opponents within the workers movement—to say nothing of its silent squirming acceptance of China's alliance with U.S. imperialism from Angola to Iran. On all basic questions, both wings of the RCP are united in workerist backwardness and Stalinist class treason.

Of all the RCP's betrayals on the American terrain, what remains most shocking is how a "left" organization could get itself into an action bloc with rampaging racism. To explain it in terms of the RCP's particular unstable combination of black nationalist sympathies and workerist adaptationism is not sufficient. For other equally workerist outfits with a similar anti-integrationist line did not end up on the other side of the barricades. Much of the New Left tailed the radical black separatist mood into an anti-integrationist "separate but equal" line on education. But when the busing battle in Boston had clearly become a referendum on racism, these groups recoiled before the implications of their positions and either took no action or marched half-heartedly in the liberal anti-racist demonstrations.

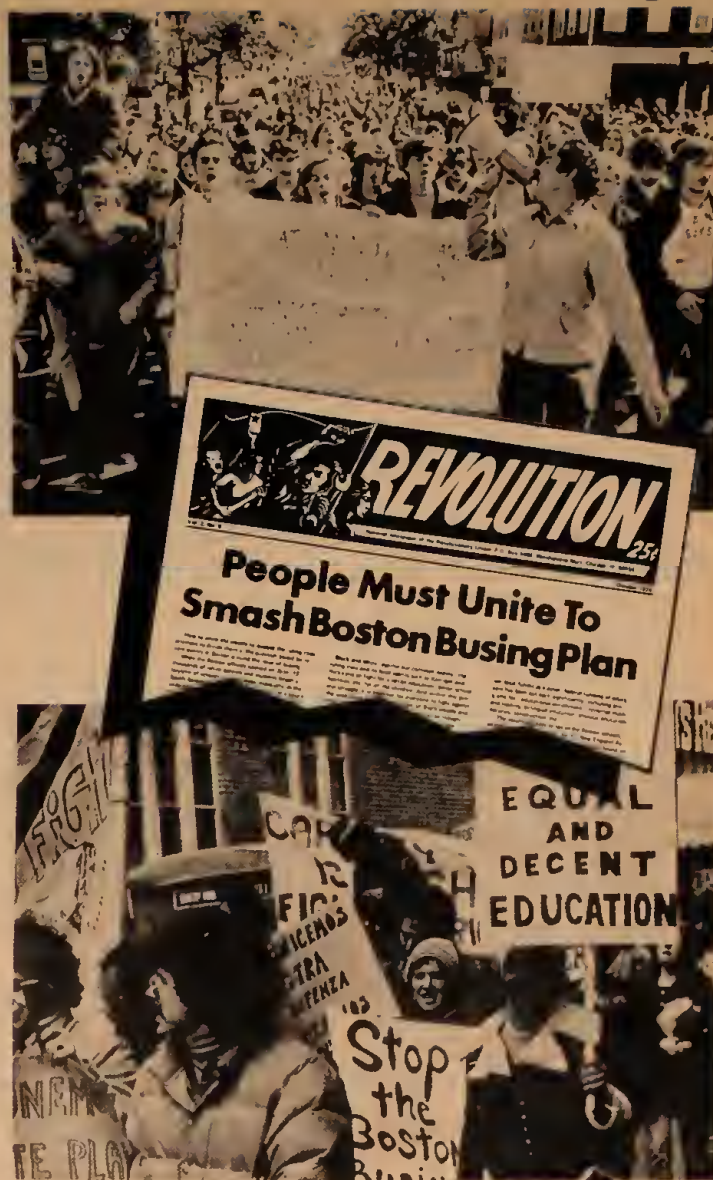
Alone on the left, the RCP actually sided openly with the racists who were fighting street battles against the oppressed black masses. In Louisville, Kentucky in 1975 the RCP praised the "fightback" of Klan-led anti-busing mobs. For a while in Boston in 1974, the RCP's Committee for a Decent Education picked up the ROAR insignia (a hexagonal "Stop" sign which read "Stop Busing") for use on its own leaflets. And on the first day of school in 1975, they were out on the streets chanting "Stop Phase 2 any way we can."

This episode starkly demonstrates irreparable corruption of revolutionary-minded activists who embraced "Marxism-Leninism" in its Maoist Stalinist perversion. Many of Avakian's West Coast founding cadres were drawn from the Peace and Freedom Party, formed largely as a support group for the Panthers. And some of Jarvis' red-diaper babies had served jail terms for participation in the civil rights movement.

The scandalous anti-busing line coincided with the Revolutionary Union's transformation into the RCP. In "Avakian's New Clothes, RCP: Jim Crow Maoism" we said:

"The single sharpest refutation of

Support to China's nationalist military confrontations with the Soviet Union (below) went along with the R.U.'s shameless apologies for China's alliance with U.S. imperialism.



Boston 1974: the RCP in an action bloc with racism.

Avakian's grandiose claims is his courtship of the racist anti-busing movement. What kind of "general staff" is it whose "overall battle plan" amounts to competing with the Ku Klux Klan for leadership of the lynch mobs that surge through the streets of Boston and Louisville? Certainly not the vanguard of the working class! "The RU/RCP's desire to win a niche as the 'left' wing of the racist movement is crystal clear in its description (in *Revolution*, October 1975) of the KKK-led anti-busing riots in Kentucky: 'When school opened in Louisville under a new court-imposed busing plan, the spontaneous fight back was tremendous—a powerful school boycott, street demonstrations, a first day protest strike at several area plants and determined resistance to police attack'."

—WV No. 81, 17 October 1975

A watershed on the race question for the Avakian group was the 1974 collapse of the National Liaison Committee (NLC), the "fusion" vehicle set up between the RU, the Black Workers Congress and the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (former Young Lords), a year before the RCP founding conference. Avakian had hoped to merge the three groups and proclaim the birth of a "multinational party of a new type," greatly enhancing his appeal in "Third World" circles.

The discussions were bogged down for months over the question of which leaders of which groups would keep what in the new organization. When Avakian tried to ram his "party-building" proposal down the NLC's throat, the discussions broke down completely. When the RU representative to the commission went over to the BWC, the affair took on the aspect of a raid; indeed, most of the RU's black members went out with the BWC. Many RU members, kept in the dark as usual, never knew the NLC existed, learning of

the negotiations and their collapse from the BWC on its way out the door.

The RCP subsequently churned out many pages to refute "the dogmatist invention that the RU in particular and the NLC in general placed Party building on the back burner until one day the RU decided to get the jump on the opportunists and issued a Party building proposal" (*The Communist*, Fall/Winter 1977). In fact, so long as the black nationalists were willing to play footsie with the RU in high-level negotiations, Avakian's line had little to distinguish it from that later dubbed "Bundism." Though polemicizing against the "white skin privilege" line so popular in SDS, the RU/RCP has been all over the map on the black question—sometimes sympathetic to the "black belt" theory, sometimes terming U.S. blacks a "nation of a new type," and sometimes (as in the RCP *Programme*) avoiding the question altogether.

Stung by the collapse of his ultimatum maneuver, Avakian propelled the organization into a campaign against "Bundism" (black nationalism) which was as shrill as it was sudden. At an earlier period Progressive Labor had also sharply broken from nationalism, jumping over the question of the special oppression of the black masses into an abstract "black and white, unite and fight" line. But the RCP jumped further, into an ugly alliance with white racism which was to take on programmatic expression over busing in a matter of months.

What ties the RU/RCP's flips to its flops is a method of cynical tailism so grotesque as to allow for accommodation to the most virulent manifestations of racism. The RU was not the only

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RCP...

(continued from page 5)

petty-bourgeois New Left tendency to replace "student power" impressionism with philistine workerism. But when the wave of radical black nationalism ebbed, the RU simply threw itself into the most vulgar adulation of the working class as it is under capitalism, emulating the bourgeois consciousness of even the most backward workers. This organization—which once admonished its VVAW (veterans' front group) activists in print on the importance of conducting their discussions in bars, being sure to drink beer like "regular" guys—possesses such profound contempt for the working class that it can embrace as natural such supposedly "proletarian" qualities as racism, male chauvinism, anti-homosexual bigotry and anti-intellectualism.

As the Jarvisites slide from self-isolating RCP "leftism" toward mainstream Stalinism, they will certainly do away with some of the more repulsive aspects of the RCP (opposition to busing, frequent recourse to physical gangsterism, and its anti-Equal Rights Amendment stance) which alienate their natural liberal huffdolls. But any who look to Jarvis for a principled exposure of the RCP's flagrant capitulation to racism will be disappointed. In the reams of Jarvisite factional documentation, the word "busing" is mentioned precisely once ("We even held a demonstration that had something to do with busing which to this day hardly anybody understands"). Even as he was bursting out of the RCP on a trajectory which will make a "rectification" on busing mandatory, Jarvis had nothing to say about this most shocking excrement of the RCP's domestic "work." A Stalinist must duck real political questions as the devil flinches from holy water.

Jam the Unions, Job the Workers

Avoidance of substantive programmatic questions extends to the disputes over trade-union work. Both sides can agree that the RCP's "struggle" at "the center of gravity" (the working class at the point of production) is mired in hopeless economist sludge. But for Avakian/Jarvis the only interesting question is who is accountable for landing it there. All the charges of "economism" remain personal attacks; even on the most pragmatic level, we find not one word about the particular functioning of any RCP faction in any industry, whether steel plant or garment sweatshop. It would seem that the warring leaders have wisely decided not to encourage any speculation about the grotesque oscillations between craven reformism and "militant" adventurism which constitute the RCP's "tactics." And it goes without saying that neither side can even obliquely address the basic questions of program and strategy which must direct the trade-union work of any serious socialist organization.

Thus both sides stand proudly on page 109 of the *RCP Programme* outlining the so-called "single spark method" of trade-union work—that classic New Left formulation for limiting propaganda to the most minimal struggles over bathroom hygiene and cafeteria rubber mats as the way to win friends and influence people in the plants. Through page after page of debate over the relationship of the RCP's "Intermediate Worker Organizations" to the working class, the only difference which emerges is Jarvis' fight against Avakian at the Founding Conference to delete the word "mainly" from the phrase: "While these organizations must be based mainly in the plants and other work places, their overall role is to apply the single-spark method..."

What the "single spark" method seems to hoil down to in practice is wearing your NUWO t-shirt whenever

you engage in your meaningless two-hit reformist "militancy." This is supposed to solve the problem of how the organization's minimum-program economism "links up" with a broader "political" formation—if not the RCP then at least its IWOs, UWOs and NUWOs, its "Fight Backs," "Final Warnings" and "Breakouts." These Potemkin Village "mass" organizations constitute the core of RCP trade-union policy, a grotesquely sub-reformist content animating a formally left-Stalinist dual unionist schema. The RCP apes PL's endless flip-flops between going around the unions or capitulating slavishly to the existing labor bureaucrats, between adventurist actions which result only in blowing its supporters out of the plants and "left-center coalitions" with out-bureaucrats.

The problem underlying all RCP trade-union work is the inability to distinguish between a working-class institution and a pro-capitalist leadership. If the "two lines" for all Stalinists toward the deformed workers states are either adulation of the bureaucrats in power or writing off the "revisionist" countries as "capitalist" and "fascist," this methodology applies equally badly in the labor movement. The RCP simply cannot decide the class nature of the trade unions. Behind the incapacity to defend the historic gains of the working class embodied in the trade unions (as in the nationalized property forms of the USSR) lies the Stalinist identification of the class character of an institution with the policies of its bureaucracy. If the RCP can't get in with the labor bureaucrats, then the unions are "bourgeois" and the bureaucracy and the company are a "two-headed monster." Thus it oscillates between sucking up to "left"-talking out-bureaucrats (and in-bureaucrats) and flatly anti-union "jam the unions" campaigns.

Even when they are at their most visibly and vituperatively "leftist," the RCP trade unionists (most of whom seem to be sticking with Avakian in the present split) can never separate themselves programmatically from the pro-capitalist bureaucratic "reformers." Thus when the RCP burned I.W. Ahelin effigy outside the national Steelworkers convention in Atlantic City, they were expressing their tailism of Sadlowski. At Fremont General Motors in California, the RCP supporters who crawled out of the discredited Brotherhood caucus in 1974 took a year to "sum up" their previous enthusiasm for the Brotherhood bureaucrats. Last April, RCP supporters at Fremont again testified to their muddle-headed incapacity when they "summed up" the local strike with a "two-line struggle" in their own leaflet, hilariously titled, "Strike Makes Great Gains (Despite Some Setbacks)."

ILWU: RCP Tails Bureaucrats, Fights "Trotskyites"

In the Bay Area ILWU (longshore/warehouse) the RCP supporters have amply proved their cynical willingness to even attack workers' struggles in order to cozy up to the bureaucrats. Naturally they have voted against every immediate demand put forward in the ILWU by "Trotskyites"—from "30 for 40" through elimination of the probation period to a decent pension. During the Handyman warehouse strike in August 1976, when the ILWU Local 6 leadership called for consumer boycotts, RCP supporters voted time and again against motions by the Militant Caucus for "hot-cargoing" scab goods and for sympathy strikes. Moreover, at the January East Bay Local 6 membership meeting, RCP supporters raised only the meekest protest about the bureaucrats' overturn of a \$100 union donation voted for defense of four RCP supporters busted at a demonstration. They sat on the sidelines while the "Trotskyites" fought on their behalf. Defend the working class against the hosses? The RCP will not defend even itself when it means going up against "progressive" bureaucrats.

Jarvis Accepts WV's "Correct Verdicts"?

"...the RCP decided to throw all its resources into building NUWO (National United Workers Organization) hoping that some flashy, phony, 'mass work' would bolster morale inside the party and make up for losses on the international scene. So it was with all the cheers, foot-stomping and 'fightback' hoopla these Maoist workerists could muster that the New RCP front group was launched in Chicago over the Labor Day Weekend.... "A Stalinist outfit in the process of losing its 'socialist fatherland,' the RCP today looks a lot like Progressive Labor (PL) at the time of its break with China in the late 1960's. NUWO itself resembles nothing so much as the happily defunct Workers Action Movement (WAM) launched by PL at that time. Like PL/WAM, the RCP is banking on recruiting raw workers to its NUWO on the basis of militant economism and thereby warding off the dismal prospect of becoming a sect of apologists for 'socialism in one country'—without a country."

—WV No. 176, 7 October 1977

"...What was built in Chicago was not an organization but a big meeting.... because of the left idealist line the campaign should be re-named 'The Campaign of the Four No's.' That is: 1) No line on why form the organization at this time. 2) No line developed to build it. 3) No line and leadership at the convention. 4) No reason why the cadre should be criticized for the way the convention came out."

—Revolutionary Workers Headquarters, "China Advances..."

RCP supporters in the ILWU are a classic horrible example of Stalinist sectarianism. The fight around the bureaucracy's motion to censure Boh Mandel, a Local 6 General Executive Board member and leader of the Militant Caucus, is a textbook case. In 1975, in the wake of a crushing ILWU defeat by southern California Boron, heralded by *Fortune* magazine as a model of successful seab-herding, the KNC glass company mobilized to do the same. With the Local 6 bureaucrats sitting back on their haunches and the KNC workers helpless before hordes of scabs, the strike was heading for sure defeat. But a leaflet initiated by Mandel mobilized hundreds of ILWU members for mass picketing at KNC which turned back the scabs. Not only did the RCP abstain from the struggle, but when KNC obtained an anti-picketing injunction, they helped the Local stewards' council table a motion to defy the strike-breaking order. Nevertheless the aroused union ranks went ahead to defy the injunction, the company backed down, the KNC strike was won and the Militant Caucus was forged.

A few days later a furious Local 6 executive board voted to censure Mandel for "provocative actions." Militant Caucus supporters scoured the Local, gained the overwhelming support of the KNC strikers and won the vote at the membership meeting to overturn the bureaucracy's censure. And where were the RCP supporters? Not once throughout the entire KNC struggle did they make a squeak about the bureaucracy's efforts to sabotage the strike. They refused to join in a united front to defend Mandel against the bureaucrats' scapegoating witchhunt. Under enormous pressure, they finally voted against the censure—a creditable act which is surely viewed as a crime by their RCP mentors.

The more political the issue, the more the RCP line prescribes betrayal. In September 1974 a two-day worldwide work stoppage and boycott of all goods to Chile was called to protest the first anniversary of the Pinochet coup. While many U.S. unions ignored the protest, it was successful in ILWU Local 10 (Bay Area longshore) primarily due to the work of supporters of the "Longshore Militant," a class-struggle newsletter in the Local. Of course, RCP supporters had nothing to do with the struggle. Why? Because the Chinese Maoists supported Pinochet. During the coup, Peking had even closed the doors of its

Santiago embassy to Chilean militants seeking sanctuary against the junta's terror. For the same reasons, RCP supporters refused to say one word in support of the class-struggle militants' struggle for an ILWU boycott of cargo bound for South Africa and Rhodesia following the suppression of the 1976 Soweto rebellion. When the Spartacist League subsequently initiated picket lines and dockside demonstrations, the RCP supporters refused to participate.

Everywhere the record is the same: craven subservience to the bureaucrats in the trade unions and in Peking, the substitution of lace-saving nickel-and-dime reformist schemes for real struggles, sporadic adventurism to camouflage abstention from the fight to build a programmatically based alternative leadership within the unions. It is no wonder that Avakian and Jarvis can only bandy epithets of "economism" and Mao-talk formulae devoid of content. They are united in reformist betrayal of the real interests of the working people.

"Democratic Centralism"?

The wretched politics of the RCP have their concomitant expression on the organizational plane. Even among Stalinist organizations, the RCP is notable for its repulsive cultism. The tinpot despot who refers to himself loftily as "the Chair" has indulged in every high-handed abuse of his comrades. But the responsibility for the den of bureaucratic filth which is the RCP does not rest with Avakian alone. The Jarvis "headquarters" has run its operations with the same cynical contempt for the ranks. "Political struggle" Jarvis-style has always meant simply counter-cliquism: back slapping in the meetings and intrigue in the corridors, gearing up junior comrades to fight the Avakian line on secondary questions and then turning hatchet-man to smash them, rumor-mongering and invidious personalist gossip. All wings of the RCP leadership have always understood that their primary function was to gear up the ranks for more work and seal them off from politics.

But like any other bureaucrat abruptly ousted from the seat of power, Jarvis has recently begun to squeal about Avakian's abuse of the RCP membership. While his indictment of the RCP center's autocratic contempt for the ranks is revealing and often downright funny ("Does anybody know if the 'War and Revolution' campaign is over?" Jarvis inquires), his new-found

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concern for the members' political development is transparently self-serving. Only the Jarvisites' purge from their leading positions and the subsequent suspension of their power-base from membership pending "re-registration" could have propelled Jarvis to break from the only real "unity" the RCP has ever known—the "unity" of the clique-leaders to keep the ranks in ignorance.

For authentic Leninists, looking at the RCP's internal functioning is like observing creatures from another planet. There are no less than eight levels of membership; the labyrinthine structure is both federated and brutally hierarchical. The formal structure is so complicated that even we do not fully understand it. Certainly many RCP members have only the fuzziest notion who their "elected" leadership is, what the functions of the various bodies are (or even what bodies there are) and which are "higher" than others, how many members the organization has and where they are, and so forth. They do know that the question of "security" is invoked as the reason why discussions are held in tiny cell meetings where there is no possibility of hearing a reasonable sampling of party opinions, why members are forbidden to visit or communicate with comrades in other branches, why the allocation of particular personnel and resources is shrouded in secrecy. They also know that debate is conducted through rigidly enforced "channels." "Channels"—for the RCP the essence of "democratic centralism"—mean that discussion starts at the leadership level—and ends there.

In the ordinary course of events, this structure is designed to promote political sterility, theoretical illiteracy, parochialism and helpless dependence upon the decisions of a leadership whose deliberations are never subjected to membership scrutiny and criticism. But it is only under factional conditions that one can really see what this whole anti-consciousness conspiracy is all about. Jarvis unwittingly reveals the anti-Leninist core of the RCP's "channels" when he defends himself against accusations of undisciplined functioning thus:



Shah Riza Pahlavi, notorious Iranian butcher, welcomes Chinese delegation.

"And the fact that almost all cadre were shocked that this line struggle was going on is proof that this struggle was going on in the regular channels." It could not be more simply stated: the "channels" are working properly when full-blown factional conflict among the leaders is a secret from the membership!

Jarvis is suddenly screaming bloody murder that the China fight is being "resolved organizationally first," before full discussion of the counterposed lines:

"There is a world of difference between how this struggle has gone down and the past practice. The way in which the line was taken proves this. The purge of half the Party leadership [was] the same. The way in which the entire district and all its bodies have been declared illegal is not the practice of the RCP, but instead smacks of the AFL-CIO leadership. In many districts cadre haven't even received the bulletin so that Avakian can contain the rebellion to certain areas and crush resistance in others. Cadre across the country are being told that leadership will be visiting their houses to collect the pro-China paper and they are not allowed to

read it. But there is a more fundamental question than this.

"The only way the question can be struggle[d] around is with several complete positions.... The way in which this struggle is brought to a head is through unleashing the masses of cadre, including holding congresses. Any other approach is an attempt to first organizationally consolidate people into their channels and branches and then to use the entire weight of the current Central Committee to crush resistance politically."

—"It's Right to Rebel," by the New York/New Jersey District Committee

Certainly this is not democratic centralism. But is there really "a world of difference" between this "struggle" and the RCP's "past practice"? The only significant difference we can see between this "discussion" and the garden-variety operation of RCP "channels" is that Jarvis and his bailiwick have been purged—in other words, in this case there has been a split.

What is not different is the essentials: Avakian establishes the line, then the organization proceeds to "discuss" it. Minority documents can be submitted—to the leadership. Dissident positions are not presented by their leading advocates; they must be deduced from the center's attacks. Factions are disloyal, "revisionist," "bourgeois." Congresses are almost never held, and certainly are not the mechanism for resolving serious disputes.

But the key is the matter of "channels." The Bolshevik principle that leading comrades have the responsibility to debate their views first in the Central Committee has nothing in common with the RCP's "channels"; in this Stalinist sewer of bureaucratic privilege, minority leaders conduct their "struggles" behind the closed doors of "higher bodies"—and then must carry the majority line into the "lower bodies," under discipline to smash any who resist "the line" of "the Center." Thus the only RCP member who can ever criticize the politics dictated by Avakian is a rank-and-filer who has heard no debate among the leadership and knows in advance that every authoritative cadre is duty-bound to smash him. Now Jarvis, predictably making his bid to become an "RCP with a human face," is busily decrying the anti-democratic implementation of the China discussion as out of step with "past practice."

Life in the RCP is worse than stultifying; it is degrading. The dismal failure of the "self-study" campaign is attributed to the sluggishness of the membership rather than to the cynical leadership of a Stalinist organization which ordains that members will have political contact only with the handful of people in their cell. Those who want to know what is going on in their own organization are reduced to swapping rumors and horror stories. Political

debate is the preserve of the chosen few; the rest are voting cattle, to be seen and not heard, to feed the egos of the Avakians and Jarvises. The "bottom line" front group is the RCP itself. Consciousness is the enemy. The logical conclusion of the RCP's hideous travesty of "democratic centralism" is the physical gangsterism practiced against working-class opponents and now against supporters of the competing factions.

Stalinism: Syphilis of the Workers Movement

The frictions and recriminations over the RCP's domestic disasters might have remained indefinitely submerged in the Avakian-Jarvis marriage of convenience which has always been the RCP's "principle of unity." But the death of Mao and the resulting turmoil among Maoist sycophants trying to pick the winner among the warring cliques of the Chinese bureaucracy severely exacerbated the RCP's internal tensions. And when the RCP's arch-rival Mike Klonsky clinked glasses with Hua Kuofeng in Peking, celebrating the awarding of the Chinese imprimatur to Klonsky's CP(ML), it was the beginning of the end for the RCP. The detonation of Hua's explosives—the split which is now spewing shards of RCP trade-union fractions, youth chapters and assorted front groups all over the political map—was really only a matter of time. As we forecast:

"Klonsky's getting the Chinese 'franchise' represents a watershed for the American Maoist movement. For years rival Maoist groups in this country—in particular the October League [now CP(ML)] of Klonsky and the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) led by Bob Avakian—have been able to claim the mantle of Maoist orthodoxy for their divergent lines and pronouncements on an entire range of political issues.

"But the game is over. Peking has picked its flunkies. And the big loser is Avakian.... No matter where it might turn, the RCP cannot escape a deep political crisis."

—Young Spartacus, September 1977

Stalinism without a country is an unhappy and deeply unstable phenomenon. For a Maoist, "socialism" equals China and the defense of China equals the policies of the incumbent bureaucratic regime. How that regime could then back Klonsky's organization as the leadership which all American "progressives" must support is a question for which the RCP can have no answer.

Indeed, it is not likely that there remain many individuals in either wing of the fractured RCP with sufficient political backbone, critical intelligence and residual subjective revolutionary will to confront the real political issues which have brought them to their present crisis. Whatever subjective revolutionary fibre some members may have possessed when they joined has been worn away by years of class collaboration and apology for Stalinist betrayal. In the hundreds of pages of split documents, politics is buried under a mountain of brain-rotting Mao-thought and practiced indifference to elementary revolutionary principle.

When the New Left/Maoist tendency developed in the 1960's it embodied a certain primitive hatred for U.S. imperialism, particularly for the liberal bourgeoisie who waged war against the workers and peasants of Indochina. But these petty-bourgeois radicals' adoption of "Third World" nationalism and Maoist Stalinism set them on a collision course with their decent instincts. As followers of Mao and his adolescent flatters in the U.S.—Avakian, Klonsky and the rest—the New Leftists learned to operate in the political sewer system of Stalinism.

The Maoists learned to justify every reactionary twist and turn of Chinese policy. They learned to dress up the narrow nationalist interests of the Peking bureaucrats in a rhetoric of

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"Two-Line Struggle" in the RCP?

Excerpts from Avakian's internal *Bulletin*, Vol. 3 No. 2 [post-split, undated]

"Excerpts from the Self-Criticisms given by the Menshevik [Jarvisite] Leaders at the CC Meeting"

"The Criticism that we have disdain for cadre is true.... It won't do no good to vote against the resolution."

"We, the faction, don't know shit about China. We need to say we don't give a shit...."

"It's wrong to say it wasn't an organized faction. It doesn't matter if you don't have faction meetings. It's the line. I have voted wrong with the faction on all questions recently.... Mickey, that's what you do, use people."

"The threat to split was bullshit because it's not based on anything, it's over personal loyalty, it's alleged to be over the line, but it's not, because the line of the faction sucks...."

"Testimony by a Former Member of the Anti-Party Group Centered in the Chicago Area"

"They treated the Chairman's wife as contradictions between the working class and the enemy, primarily to focus stuff heavy on the Chairman's wife, even do things to try to freak her out, to try to get her to blow up. And within this it was put forward by the leaders of the faction... that the Chairman was subjective about his wife and was acting like her defense lawyer. The goal of the faction then was to force the Chairman to back down on line questions by forcing his wife to freak out.... And Mickey Jarvis then spread outrageous lies about the Chairman's wife, implying that she was threatening to betray the party. At this time especially the faction figured out how to attack the Chairman's wife all over the place, including in the area of work where it was concentrated and she had responsibility. Also xxx and his wife yyy suggested people should call the Chairman's wife in the middle of the night and write her name and the Chairman's along with their phone numbers on bathroom walls...."

RCP...

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praise for "socialist China." On this basis they swallowed China's support for two-bit butchers and big-time dictators: Bandaranaike of Ceylon, Ayub Khan of Pakistan, the Shah of Iran, Chile's Pinochet. If Mao sought a bloc with Nixon, then the U.S. Maoists prated about "openings in the West" and the "strategy against the two superpowers." The Chinese Stalinists want a stronger NATO, so American Maoists must discover that their own bourgeoisie—which the New Left had once grasped was the most deadly force of monstrous reaction against the colonial peoples—could be "used" by the "bastion of socialism" against the "main enemy," "Soviet social-imperialism."

It was an education on a small scale not unlike the one received by an earlier generation of Stalinists, who learned about the "People's Front" with the "progressive" Roosevelt. It was an education in forgetting the elementary Leninist principle—doubly important for revolutionists in the citadel of world imperialism—that the main enemy is your "own" bourgeoisie.

So when South African military forces backed up by U.S. imperialism confronted African nationalists and Cuban troops in Angola, U.S. Maoists were ready. They blasted Cuba as the "capitalist" shock troops for "Soviet social-imperialism." This was a crucial lesson in betrayal for the RCP, many of whose cadres had come to politics inspired by the example of the Cuban revolution, some of whom had even helped cut sugar cane with Cuban comrades in the early New Left expeditions. Now they had come full circle, abandoning the defense of the gains of the Cuban revolution to the "social-imperialists"—and, of course, to the Trotskyists.

One of the most important lessons learned in the Stalinist training ground for betrayal is the anti-Trotskyist reflex. Both clique leaders understand that the only truly left challenge comes from Trotskyist opposition to Stalinism. And Jarvis uses the standard technique. First, lie about what Trotskyism is and what Trotsky said. Then invoke the ghost of Stalin to denounce your opponents and "Trotskyites." Hua denounced the "Gang" as "Trotskyites." The CP(ML) denounces the RCP as "Trotskyites." Avakian denounces Progressive Labor as "crypto-Trots." Now Jarvis denounces Avakian as "Trotskyite" because he says "socialism failed" in China. Tomorrow Avakian may turn around and charge that Jarvis and Teng are "Trotskyites" because they are "for modernization." And so it goes.

Jarvis: Right in Form, Right in Essence

What is going on in the RCP is more than the usual Trotsky-baiting. The charge of "Trotskyism" is the Jarvis clique's central political characterization of Avakian. In the time-tested Stalinist tradition, any criticism of the ruling bureaucracy of the "socialist country" is "Trotskyism." The great fear is that even Avakian's shamefaced step back from adulation of the infallible rulers of the Chinese "fatherland" opens the road to PL-land:

"Shall we, who as the RU exposed PL as Trotskyite counterrevolutionaries follow their footsteps down the road to help... Shall we join the Trotskyite anti-China chorus, do the job of the bourgeoisie from the left?..."

"While the battle to resist this trend away from working class concentration, towards a safe but harmful left idealism and Trotskyite interventionism has been going on for quite a while inside the party, it has not been general knowledge among the cadre, although many cadre have resisted and protested. But it has come to a head over the China question, and as such has both concentrated a trend into a gallop, and has demanded that we make common cause with PL, WVO [Workers Viewpoint

Organization], Spartacists and other Trots.

"On the basis of the correct stand of those who opposed the frantic head-over-heels rush to catch up with the Sparts, all opposing have been removed from their posts."

—"China Advances..."

The absolute identification of the interests of the international proletariat with the policies of the bureaucracy is central to Stalinist ideology. For Jarvis, only one "proof" of the "revolutionary" nature of the Hua regime is required: it is in power in China. And the "counterrevolutionary" character of the "Gang" is the inescapable conclusion from the fact that it went "from very big to very small very fast." Jarvis quotes Avakian's allegation that "the followers of the Four... number at least in the tens of millions" and makes a most revealing reply:

"His faith is touching, but it is no substitute for evidence on this question. Even if his fondest dreams are true, in China this is a mere handful. It takes 45 million just to give you 5 percent of the people."

—"China Advances..."

Jarvis' recourse to the numbers game is more than just pragmatism. The line that "900 million Chinese can't be wrong" is a central Stalinist argument. Since the status quo is basically immutable, just label it "revolutionary"—after all, you don't want to be a "Trotskyite pessimist." Of course, one could argue with about the same degree of correctness that 13 million U.S. workers organized in the AFL-CIO can't be wrong when their "leaders" organize CIA trade unionism in Latin America!

For a Stalinist, the only source of satisfaction is indeed the smug assurance that one's presumed co-thinkers are lording it over the masses somewhere in the world. It is certainly true that the revolutionary optimism of Trotskyism, based on the Marxist analysis of the revolutionary capacity of the international proletariat, has nothing to do with the Stalinist "optimism" that magically transforms bloody betrayals into "victories" with a wave of the pen.

According to Jarvis' attempts at "theory," the core of "Trotskyite despair" is Trotsky's insistence that socialism cannot be built in a single country. This was not only Trotsky's position. Lenin explained that "Socialism means the abolition of classes. And classes still remain and will remain in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat" (*Economics and Politics in the Era of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*). Thus socialism—the classless society—could be established only on an international scale based on an international division of labor. Lenin and Trotsky understood that if the dictatorship of the proletariat—a workers state—were established in Russia, it would be a transition to socialism only if the revolution were internationalized through the victory of proletarian revolution in the West.

Stalin's "Socialism in One Country" was precisely the ideology of despair. With the defeat of the German revolution, a consolidating Stalinist bureaucracy propounded "Socialism in One Country" as the justification for its parasitic existence and for its reactionary policies aimed at ensuring that new revolutionary upheavals would not arise to threaten its détente with world imperialism.

The trajectory of the Jarvis grouping as it flees the so-called "high road" of Avakian's RCP is clearly to the right. Pulling back from Avakianite ultimatism, pushing for an ever more economist "mass line" in the front groups, holding high the horrible example of "leftism" PL style, shrinking from the word "communist" in the mindless-activist youth organization, decrying the RCP's "isolation"—Jarvis seems to have at least a fuzzy idea of what he doesn't want.

But the great bugaboo of "isolation" cuts two ways for an American Maoist. If Jarvis wants to avoid "isolation" from the Chinese regime, he must do some-

thing far more difficult for him than dumping his residual hesitations about the Maoist line that "Soviet social-imperialism" is a greater danger than the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie. Something more distasteful than doing a deal with Klonsky. He must accept isolation from the left-liberals and soft-core Stalinists of the U.S. rad-lib milieu—the old New Lefters, the professional fellow travelers of the *Guardian* "critical Maoists," the "anti-dogmatic" Stalinoids whose outlook most closely dovetails with his domestic political line.

Jarvis' most serious immediate problem will be to hold his own supporters. Deeply discredited by his maneuverism and his collusion in the RCP's deliberate conspiracy of silence against its own membership, Jarvis' authority has suffered a catastrophic erosion and could be recouped only by the elaboration of some kind of political perspective to arm his demoralized ranks. This is precisely what the "Revolutionary Workers Headquarters" cannot provide. Its political life-span will be however long the Jarvisite cadres' vengeful hatred of Avakian suffices to prod them into political activity.

Avakian in Dangerous Waters

Bob Avakian is not a Trotskyist, not even a "shamefaced" one. He is not moving toward Trotskyism. He is not even PL, which for a period moved into an eclectic, idealist leftism which we termed "Trotskyism with a pre-frontal lobotomy." He is simply trying to find an explanation within the framework of Maothought Stalinism for China's selection of Klonsky rather than Avakian as its U.S. running dog. But in raising any question that the Chinese leadership has deviated in any way from "Marxism-Leninism," Avakian is drifting through dangerous waters.

Avakian's method is pure Maothought: if his clique is not ensconced in the Forbidden Palace, then "socialism" has failed, the Constitution is "fascist," and so forth. Even this simple-minded substitution of moralist impressionism for materialist analysis raises more questions than it "answers." And for Maoists it poses a defeatist imperative. Avakian is faced with the deduction that China has gone the way of Russia; sooner or later, the necessary conclusion must be that China should not be defended against U.S. imperialism. That really does raise the spectre of PL.

Avakian is trying desperately, with ludicrous attempts at secrecy and mostly with political evasion, to stave off this development. But for a Stalinist the revolutionary alternative is even scarier. To make fundamental criticism of the policies of the ruling bureaucracy while defending the gains of the revolution against imperialism (and if in China, why not in Russia?) comes much too close to real Trotskyism.

What Trotskyists defend in the USSR (and China) is not those platitudinous exhortations which pose as "ideas" but the material conquests of the revolution: the socialized (collectivized) property forms, the economic basis for the transition to socialism. And this, no matter which bureaucratic clique is

running the show. Because the Stalinist bureaucracy usurped political power from the proletariat as part of a political counterrevolution, while resting upon the property forms suited to proletarian rule, it has a dual and contradictory character. On the one hand, it will defend in a limited way the economic basis upon which its parasitic privilege rests; on the other, it seeks the most dangerous accommodation with imperialism, from "peaceful coexistence" frauds to support for NATO.

The Trotskyist program calls for the unconditional defense of the collectivized property forms of all the degenerated and deformed workers states against counterrevolution and imperialist attack. The restoration of capitalism in the USSR would be a historic defeat for the international proletariat. For a true Leninist, the defense of the USSR and its socialist property forms is inseparable from the revolutionary struggle to oust the anti-working-class regime which dismantled the soviet democracy of Lenin and Trotsky, which turned the Communist International into an instrument of counterrevolution, and which daily undermines the defense of the revolution by disorganizing the economy, fostering nationalist divisions among the working people, oppressing every stratum of the masses and feeding the restorationist lusts of imperialism. Only this proletarian political revolution can bring about the united front of the workers states against imperialism.

Neither Avakianites nor Jarvisites can distinguish between defending "socialism" and supporting the treacherous bureaucrats in Peking against the working class. Similarly, neither can draw the class line in the U.S., where both politically support the union bureaucrats while refusing to defend the unions from the capitalist state's union-busting. As we said to the members of the RCP at the time of their youth conference last November:

"In the past the Stalinist predecessors of the RCP attacked Trotskyism for its refusal to hail Stalin's Russia as a 'workers paradise.' But in the name of upholding the Stalin tradition the Maoists have written off the gains of the October Revolution and have attacked Trotskyism for supporting so-called 'Soviet social-imperialism.' 'Likewise, until recently the RCP has scrambled to be loyal apologists for the

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Maoist bureaucracy in China. Given the present political trajectory of the Avakian tendency, we may soon find ourselves attacked by these Maoists of yesterday for our unconditional military defense of the gains of the Chinese revolution."

Young Spartacus.
December 1977-January 1978

Are there any members of any wing of the RCP prepared to confront the fundamental question that split the Communist movement: "socialism in one country" vs. revolutionary internationalism? Jarvis has grabbed for the Hua regime, with its pro-NATO foreign policy, as his political calling card. If some ember of hatred for the U.S. bourgeoisie still burns in some RCP'er, that spark would most likely be found in the Avakian wing. But to find them might take a bit of looking. Maoists who swallowed Angola may choke before they allow the words "Mao's counterrevolutionary foreign policy" to escape their lips. Certainly Jarvis has Avakian's number when he says of the RCP majority:

"They have said in private for the past year that China's foreign policy under Hua is, if anything, a little better in its handling of the two superpowers. Now, when Peking Review 45 comes out with not one new and significant difference from the foreign policy for the past many years, they call it a marked departure from Mao..."

"China Advances..."

After Angola, few RCPers can be expected to have the political courage to re-examine the Stalin-Trotsky split. But this is their only chance for survival in revolutionary politics. This was the course undertaken by the Communist Working Collective (CWC), the Buffalo Marxist Caucus and many other former Maoists whose efforts to confront the crucial questions facing Marxists led them to the revolutionary Trotskyism of the Spartacist League. In his "Letter to a Maoist," a CWC spokesman described the barrier his group had to break through before they could even ask these questions:

"We have all floundered about for three years now seeking in Mao Tse Tung Thought a revolutionary alternative to the revisionists..."

"We had to work against our prejudices when we began to examine Lenin's *Collected Works*. We, quite literally, had lost the ability to read what was on the printed page..."

"The attempts that we made to sum up the Third International or the Russian experience never even reviewed the most comprehensive critique of that experience extant—the writings of Leon Trotsky. A Great Wall had been erected through a generation of Stalinists through terror, slander and falsification to turn Trotskyism into a no man's land where travelers proceeded only at grave peril..."

"...On the mental screen of Stalinism our turn toward Trotskyism will simply confirm the worst imaginings and predictions of the opportunists. The ideological struggle, complete with 'splitting and wrecking', has ended up in the swamp of Trotskyism only one step removed from the bourgeoisie, disillusionment, or even police agency—so the story goes *ad nauseum*. Stalin did his work well. He mined and booby-trapped the path toward Marxism and then annihilated those who stumbled reaching it..."

"Our collective fought a key fight with the Dogmatic Tradition which proved to be the main methodological obstacle to even an investigation. We did so without knowing where it would lead us..."

"From Maoism to Trotskyism," *Marxist Bulletin* No. 10

But it appears to be too late for the Avakianites, and hopeless for the Jarvisites. The former are drifting into PL-land and economist obscurity, in the no-win situation of trying to recruit to their China line in guilty whispers. And the latter must either gravitate toward Klonsky, lose themselves in the swamp of "critical Maoist" dilettantes or drop out of politics altogether. Mainly, these rotten reformist formations will split and split again. And as they cannot confront and reach the revolutionary politics of Trotskyism represented by the Spartacist League, their disintegration is, as the homiletic Mao might say, not a bad thing but a good thing. ■

Remember the Traitors...

(continued from page 1)

lose their homes, lose their cars, lose everything they've got." "If it's approved it won't be because it's a good contract, but because the men have been out so long and they feel like they're beating their heads against the wall," said a Virginia president. "The men in Washington have lost contact with the men here."

Though hundreds of locals and some districts still voted heavily against the contract, the weariness was evident in traditional strongholds of UMWA militancy. Districts 17 and 29 in the heart of West Virginia have led the mines in massive strikes for the right to strike, against court injunctions and for restoration of their full health benefits. Many of these West Virginia miners have been out of work for 180 out of the last 270 days, leaving them financially strapped and tired. These historically militant areas swung in favor of the new contract because their hopes for better could no longer sustain them.

Purge the Traitors!

Arnold Miller may have finally gotten a contract, but he has earned the burning hatred of 160,000 coal miners. Afraid to venture out of his Washington, D.C. office without a cluster of bodyguards in his nine-passenger Cadillac limousine and a .38 tucked in his belt, the silver-haired Judas is trying to fend off a recall effort and mounting demands for his resignation. Miller swears he will stay in office despite the unanimous animosity of the UMWA ranks but has turned over almost all of his day-to-day duties to vice-president Sam Church, the former Boyleite who is becoming known as "Miller's Halde-man." Church is an ambitious bootlicker, but his association with Miller has made him as despised as his boss.

In an exercise of bureaucratic gall, Miller is reportedly planning on calling a special union convention later this year to ask for a dues increase to bolster the union's nearly depleted treasury. The infuriated miners would rather give Miller a coffin than a dues hike. But "dissidents" within the UMWA hierarchy are reportedly planning on trying to force Miller's resignation by submitting a motion to reduce his salary from \$45,000 a year to \$1, which would still leave him overpaid.

Miller may continue for some time to cling to the privileges of the UMWA presidency, but he is politically a dead man in the union. His repeated betrayals have become so colossal that there is no chance of his regaining credibility with the ranks. With Miller on the skids, there are sure to be a host of seekers for the throne. Chief among these will be members of the union's Bargaining Council, composed of district presidents and International Executive Board representatives.

In the fierce jockeying for position now likely to go on in the UMWA officialdom, miners should beware of those so-called dissidents who will find it easy and cheap to pot-shot at Miller. Over half the Bargaining Council backed both Miller's last two contract proposals. And where were the rest of them when the UMWA ranks were standing solid and crying out for leadership? Not one member of the Bargaining Council found the courage to defy Miller's orders to recommend ratification of the latest pact. Not one called for a special convention to replace Miller when it could have affected the outcome of the strike. Not one mounted a concerted campaign against ratification that would have strengthened the miners' resolve and defeated the contract.

The UMWA ranks certainly need to give their union a thorough housecleaning. But Arnold Miller should not be their only target. A West Virginia miner

hit the mark when he told *WK*, "Miller's got to go but there's a hell of a lot more that's got to go with him. We're going to have to make a clear sweep." While they are regrouping their forces and preparing for new battles, the miners should clean out the dead wood in their International and district offices, picking new leaders willing to stand up to the coal barons, the Democrats and Republicans and the courts. Only with a leadership pledged to a consistent policy of class struggle will the miners be able to make real gains.

The new UMWA/BCOA contract comes in the middle of a tremendous expansion of the U.S. coal industry. The

Carter administration is pushing a coal-oriented energy policy that projects doubling U.S. production by 1985 and adding at least 150,000 miners to the payrolls. Already 50,000 young miners have joined the workforce just since 1973 and the average age of UMWA members has fallen to 31 years old. The boom in coal production should strengthen the UMWA, bolstering its clout and bargaining strength. But it is precisely in the area of organizing new miners that the new contract threatens to be most inadequate.

Even under the 1974 contract, the UMWA's hold on the industry had been

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NCLC Provocateurs Call for Jailing Miners



10 March 1978 New Solidarity

In the midst of the coal miners' heroic 110-day struggle to defend their livelihoods and their union against the profit-gouging coal companies and the government, the bizarre sect known as the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) or the U.S. Labor Party (USLP) demanded, "Let the Coal Move!" Then, shortly after Carter invoked the Taft-Hartley slave labor law, the NCLC/USLP's *New Solidarity* (10 March) ran a banner headline, "Jail Terrorists to Stop Coal Crisis!" These front-page assaults, which depicted militant coal miners as terroristic agents of the Washington D.C. Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and of Energy Secretary James Schlesinger, must not be dismissed as simply a lunatic-fringe sideshow.

Although these ravings are obviously the grotesque product of seriously unbalanced minds, the NCLC/USLP has shown that it is prepared to back up its viciously anti-working-class propaganda with government informing and thug attacks. Thus the 7 March issue of *New Solidarity* boasts with regard to its crackpot assertion that the IPS is responsible for violence in the coalfields:

"This week, the U.S. Labor Party took those charges to the Federal law enforcement authorities, submitting evidence to Attorney General Griffin Bell and U.S. Attorneys in several cities. Sources on Capitol Hill report that the Justice Department is preparing to act on the evidence and begin an investigation of the charges."

Singling out the "Miners Right to Strike Committee" (and mentioning several members by name as key components of "IPS terrorism"), *New Solidarity* is pushing a poisonous mixture of insane conspiracy theories and vicious anti-communism to aid the bourgeoisie's onslaught against the miners union.

For some time now the NCLC has been acting as an organization of

conscious provocateurs and informants for the government. Under the leadership of self-styled "philosopher-king" Lyndon LaRouche, Jr. (aka Lyn Marcus), the NCLC from the time of its New Left origins on has always displayed eccentric technocratic tendencies. Its politics have been characterized by wildly erratic and rapidly changing conspiracy theories (the evil Nelson Rockefeller has been superseded in NCLC demonology by the satanic British financial establishment) and by brutal and sadistic "deprogramming" purges of its own membership. Explosions of violence against other left organizations, particularly the Communist Party, essentially scaled off the NCLC into the increasingly unreal world of Marcus. The putrid cult created around this madman's delusions today, pursues its aims through attempted alliances with the most reactionary elements of big business, industry and government.

After decisive evidence of the Labor Committee's role as an agent of ruling-class repression came to light last spring, the Fifth National Conference of the Spartacist League, meeting over the July 4 weekend, approved a resolution which characterized the NCLC/USLP as "a willfully provocative anti-working-class counterrevolutionary organization without significant internal contradictions."

NCLC provocations in the coalfields will undoubtedly serve their filthy purpose in the capitalist courts, which are itching to crush the miners' militancy, still seething despite the reluctantly accepted recent coal settlement. We warn workers in the coalfields and elsewhere that the NCLC/USLP has nothing in common with the left or working-class movement. Its members are vicious and dangerous government informers and provocateurs who should be avoided and excluded from trade-union activities. ■

Remember the Traitors...

(continued from page 9)

drastically slipping. Union coal fell from over 70 percent in 1974 to less than 50 percent today. Companies opening up huge strip mines in the West have proved almost impervious to UMWA organizing attempts. In the East, the coal union has launched only a few new organizing drives and these have been long and agonizing affairs. The Brookside strike, immortalized in the film "Harlan County, U.S.A." took 13 months and a national five-day "memorial shutdown" strike to win. An organizing strike in Stearns, Kentucky has been going on since July 1976 with no sign of a contract in sight. During the just-concluded strike, dozens of scab mines were shut down for the duration but the limp UMWA leadership made no attempt to organize and bring these non-union miners under the new contract.

In order to keep the UMWA out, scab operators often pay higher wage rates than required by the union contract. Such anti-union bribes would, of

course, evaporate overnight if the UMWA were decisively broken. But the union's main drawing card has been its health and pension funds. While most scab operators offer a Blue Cross-type insurance system, the pride of the UMWA for 30 years was the miners' union-controlled, company-paid, total health coverage. But thanks to the treachery of the UMWA tops the health fund has now been abandoned and 93 percent of the union's pensioners, those who retired before 1976, will receive a miserable \$275 a month. The union will now offer a commercial insurance health system not much different than that sponsored by many scab operators with \$200 deductibles that the March 21 *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* reported were insisted on by UMWA negotiator Harry Huge, in order to "cut down on excessive health care utilization". The health-fund-subsidized coalfield clinics and hospitals will now die.

In the last week, literally dozens of miners repeated the same statement to *WV* reporters. "How can we organize anything with this thing?" The new contract will definitely prove a hindrance to organizing. But thousands upon thousands of non-union miners know that, despite the UMWA's mis-



Charleston Gazette

Boston U. Students Storm Trustees Meeting



WV Photo

BOSTON, March 16—Over 1,500 Boston University students turned out today to rally against a proposed \$550-a-year tuition increase. Not satisfied with the peaceful demonstration planned by student government "leaders," at least 500 militant protesters stormed the George Sherman Union demanding entrance to a BU Board of Trustees meeting and a confrontation with University president John R. Silber.

Silber has been active in harassing all left and even many liberal groups (including a student radio station and newspaper) on campus and attempting to stifle all dissent. He has also tried to smash organizing drives for faculty and campus workers.

Not surprisingly, the opportunist and careerist rally organizers have attempted to dissociate themselves from the "violent" attack on the Board meeting (nine persons were injured) by blaming it on "outside agitators," particularly the Spartacus Youth League (SYL) and the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB). Silber, moreover, is trying to use this incident as a pretext to arrest militants on trumped-up charges of thievery, incitement to riot and malicious destruction of property. Already, one person has been arrested for disorderly conduct although neither he nor the SYL nor the RCYB had anything to do with the alleged attack.

Not only a raging reactionary, Silber is also involved in corruption up to his ears. The March 1978 issue of *B.U. Exposure*, a campus radical newspaper, quoted transcripts from a 1973 Board of Trustees meeting proving that Silber as well as at least one other Board member have been selling admissions to medical school with the chosen parents' subsequent "contributions" to the school running as high as \$50,000 apiece!

In today's demonstration the interventions of the RCYB and the SYL were strikingly counterposed. The Maoists simply opposed the tuition hike without challenging the existence of tuition, for fear of alienating the average BU student. The SYL, on the contrary, raised the central issues of nationalization of private universities, open admissions, the abolition of tuition, state stipends available to all and worker/student/teacher control of the universities.

leadership at the top, the union's ranks are militant and determined to protect their rights on the job, regardless of what their contract says. The power of the mine safety committees is highly regarded in an industry where hundreds die every year in methane gas explosions, roof falls and cave-ins.

UMWA miners can tap this respect, if they drive out their do-nothing International officials and forge a militant leadership that can throw off the shackles of the current contract and appeal to non-union miners with a program for really stopping the bosses. And there is no reason to wait four years to take action. Any contract is nothing but a truce in the class struggle, which the bosses will rip up when they can—and which the miners should go beyond as soon as they are prepared to fight and win.

Constructing such a leadership is the UMWA ranks' urgent, overwhelming need in the wake of their strike. Their current "leaders" stand exposed as traitors, incompetents and weaklings. Careerist bureaucrats will now try to exploit the miners' discontent, but the 1977-78 coal strike has conclusively shown that simply being a militant trade unionist will not answer the challenges of the coal operators and the government. Miller and the Bargaining Council "dissidents" betrayed the miners fundamentally because they were tied to the same profit-protecting policies pursued by the coal companies and the government. Bureaucrats who were boosted to power by the grace of the federal government's intervention in their union, as Miller was in 1972, and who continually look to the good graces of the government instead of appealing to the rest of the trade union movement for militant support, will never be able to lead the miners in confrontations with the capitalist state.

While competing bureaucrats squabble, the key task for the miners is to begin building a new leadership truly capable of leading them to victory. The first steps down this road can begin right now, with militant miners joining to build a class-struggle opposition to fight against the policies of betrayal they have witnessed over and over from the Arnold Millers to the Lee Roy Pattersons.

Such movements towards the beginning of a new leadership for the UMWA must be based on a program that draws the lessons of the just-concluded strike, and above all the fundamental political lessons of the government's intervention into and manipulation of the miners union. For until the ranks of the UMWA have leaders who understand that the capitalists, their political parties and their government must be combated, defeated and replaced with the

power of a workers government, the miners will be sold out by fakers who talk militant only to end up capitulating to the "logic" of the capitalists.

Essential points for the cohering of a new leadership in the UMWA must include:

- 1) For the unlimited right to strike—down with pro-company arbitrators.
- 2) For total UMWA control over safety—no faith in the government's inspectors.
- 3) For a shorter workweek with no loss in pay and a full cost-of-living escalator clause: eliminate overtime and create jobs through less hours underground.
- 4) No government intervention in the union's affairs. No more Labor Department-supervised elections or "guardianship" of the union.
- 5) Down with all anti-labor legislation: repeal the Taft-Hartley Act and all laws limiting the powers of the unions.
- 6) End racial and sexual discrimination: no union can stand united if it allows blacks, other minorities and women to suffer the insidious effects of prejudice.
- 7) End the parasitic monopolies' domination of basic natural resources: expropriate the mines and the entire energy industry without compensation. For workers control.
- 8) No support to the strikebreaking Democratic and Republican parties of big business. Oust the bureaucrats and build a workers party, based on the unions, to fight for a workers government that will expropriate all the capitalists and run society in the interests of the working people. ■



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NYC Transit...

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In the negotiations the main issue is wages, with transit workers having seen their real earnings cut by 17.8 percent over the last four years. Now the T.A. is insisting that any raise be linked to productivity clauses or traded for such "givebacks" as elimination of night differential pay and paid lunch and wash-up times. In addition transit management is making noises about part-timing employees. A subsidiary but equally hot issue is the recent crack-down on alleged "absence abuse." TWU members report they get harassed each time they are out sick, that it is already nearly impossible to collect sick pay and that the "heakies" (private T.A. snoops) are on the warpath.

Each time the contract comes up Guinan can be counted on to pull his traditional stunts—holding media rallies, referring to strike action running full-page ads in the papers demanding free transit and then doing nothing more about it. Like clockwork, each Sunday before the contract expires Guinan holds a transit rally, talking about how the TWU is going to "take action" if the T.A. doesn't come across with some money. The transit workers are supposed to dutifully chorus, "strike, strike, strike" for the benefit of the TV cameras, and then the show is over. Two years ago when he went through this routine, even after Carey threw the transit contract out the window declaring its cost-of-living clause "illegal," still Guinan would not call a strike, making a mockery of the TWU's stated commitment to, "No contract, no work." Militant TWU members must understand that if they don't strike now, they may see the last "emergency" settlement turned into a pattern for years to come. To rely on Guinan & Co. is asking for a defeat—the ranks must take the initiative this time and *force* a strike. To make sure that the same people who sold them out in 1969, 1972 and 1975 don't do it again, the TWU membership must elect a strike committee responsible to the ranks of the union.

Koch: "Hang 'em High" Liberal

In the early '60's when he was running against Tammany Hall boss Carmine De Sapio for district leader, Ed Koch was the epitome of a reform Democrat—proving only that yesterday's "progressive" liberal is today's liberal strikebreaker. The quick rise of the relatively unknown silk stocking district Congressman in the 1977 mayoral race was largely attributed to his racist call to reinstitute the death penalty in the wake of last summer's blackout looting and his rabid campaign commercials calling for "getting tough" with the municipal unions. In the three months since his inauguration, Koch's non-stop attacks on city workers and the ghetto poor have further accelerated New York's steady drift into barbarism. According to a Bureau of Labor Statistics spokesman quoted in the *New York Times* (4 February), NYC unemployment is now running 10.5 percent, almost twice the national average, with ghetto youth unemployment a staggering 40 percent. Yet in the midst of this misery the city has been arbitrarily rejecting welfare applications at the rate of 50 percent a month. Twice this winter New York ground to a halt as blizzards hurried the city, yet Koch refused to pay municipal workers who could not make their way to work.

Hundreds of thousands suffered through this bitterest of winters huddled around their ovens to keep warm as landlords wrung every last drop of profit out of slums before setting them ablaze for the insurance money. Indeed, arson is rapidly becoming one of New York's largest industries. And last week residents in the ravaged South Bronx had even more reason to feel they were living inside a war zone when the sewer system suddenly exploded, spewing scores of man-hole covers sky-high,

wrecking a 5-story housing project, shattering glass and depositing falling rubble everywhere. Authorities say the explosions were caused by gasoline poured into the sewers for reasons that are as yet unexplained.

Of course, all this is not to say Koch has done nothing at all. Last February one of Koch's first acts was to order 186 workers dropped from the City Hall payroll. He then spent the next month conducting a public opinion poll to find out whether the populace found him more appealing when driving around in a broken-down Chrysler or whether he should start being seen in his new nine-person Cadillac limousine. In the midst of these pre-occupations, last week the mayor had a fit of pique when he was informed that of the 186 people he had ordered fired, only 40 were actually gone because the unions had successfully managed to relocate the rest in other city departments. According to the 27 March *New York Times*, Koch disgustingly told an aide, "It's like spitting into the wind." City workers facing layoffs and a wage freeze (without Cadillacs) may be inclined to spit in the face of this would-be 1970's Marie Antionette.

Municipal Negotiations

Although he somehow found a way to raise the salaries of top city managers, Koch insists there is absolutely no money for wage increases for municipal workers. He is also insisting that cost-of-living increases deferred from the last contract and owed to the workers will not be paid at all unless attached to new productivity clauses. In addition the city is demanding another 6,000 job cuts. It also wants the elimination of premium pay for Saturday, Sunday and holiday work, elimination of two paid holidays, of paid wash-up time, coffee-breaks and lunch periods as well as the removal of all contractual clauses restricting layoffs!

To add insult to injury, not only will city workers get less than nothing, but they are being asked to pay for it themselves. This year the city is demanding the unions invest \$800 million in pension funds (besides the \$3 billion they already own) in city bonds that nobody else will buy. In another important way these bonds further lock the unions into the bosses' grip. If the workers put up a fight the city can threaten to declare itself bankrupt, making much of the pension funds worthless!

This time around the municipal union bureaucracy is not simply offering no resistance, but is actively conspiring with Koch to make sure the cutbacks stick. This was indicated by Gotbaum's February 25 announcement of the formation of a joint bargaining coalition, composed of AFSCME District Council 37, the UFT and the Uniformed Sanitationmen's Association to make sure no single union "leapfrogged" over the others in negotiations. Was this the labor solidarity of 200,000 city workers united to put the squeeze on the bosses? Quite the contrary, its purpose was to prevent anybody from getting anything!

That the coalition's sole purpose is to undercut the "danger" of "pattern setting" by the powerful TWU was made clear by a 27 March *Business Week* article which reported on Gotbaum's collusion with Koch to try and conclude municipal negotiations before the TWU April 1 contract-expiration date, even

though the rest of the city contracts do not run out until late June:

"This early bargaining is part of a joint strategy devised by the union coalition and the city, with the aim of producing a 'reasonable, uniform' settlement for all transit and city workers."

For appearances sake, Gotbaum now waxes mildly indignant about Koch's "outrageous, retrogressive" demands and for a few days the municipal bureaucrats went so far as to stomp out of the negotiations. Yet lest anybody get



WV Photo

Ed Koch, posing as friend of labor, speaks at demonstration against transit fare hikes in 1975.

the wrong idea, Gotbaum was quick to add upon returning to the bargaining table, "We're not foot crazy, we're not running off the job" (*New York Times*, 25 March).

Incentive Pay for Murder

Dangerously, the New York City police, who are bargaining separately, may be the only city employees to "strike" and win a substantial pay increase this time around. These armed thugs of the bosses always feel their oats in times of economic decline when the bourgeoisie has even more need of them to protect property and guard against social upheaval. In the fall of 1976 the cops reacted to threatened cutbacks in their contract by drunkenly rampaging through the streets, wrecking cars, blowing whistles, overturning trash cans and misdirecting motorists down dead-end streets. By the blackout of June 1977 they had grown even bolder and for two days terrorized the populace by careening their squad cars along the sidewalks in the dark as they carried out their indiscriminate round-up of the black population.

It was largely the cops' hostility which led to the three-year removal from Manhattan criminal court of black judge Bruce Wright, who was dubbed "Turn 'Em Loose Bruce" because of his protests against police brutality and exposure of the use of high bail as a weapon against poor blacks and Spanish-speaking people. Reinstated last month, Wright is pursuing federal lawsuits against the state's three top judges, three local district attorneys and the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) for his banishment.

In the present negotiations the PBA has become so provocative that it is demanding in addition to a big pay raise a grand total of 138 days off a year including five days off for receiving an award, three days off for "expert" firearms rating and...incentive pay to kill. That's right, the PBA is officially demanding 45 days "traumatic leave" for every cop who kills a citizen!

These blue-uniformed thugs and enforcers for the bourgeoisie should be spurned by all of organized labor. Cops

are not fellow workers but the class enemy. The cops are fighting only to be able to run around shooting up the town and terrorizing the population at high pay. These professional strikebreakers must be kicked out of the labor federations once and for all!

Dump Gotbaum, Shanker, Guinan—For a Workers Party

Koch & Co. argue that the city workers must passively accept nothing in order to convince Washington to continue its aid to New York. Just the opposite is true. The crisis of New York City is the crisis of decaying capitalism in a concentrated form. Only an offensive by the labor movement can take the burden of the crisis off the working masses and throw it on to the capitalist class. New York City is broke because it is being held hostage by the banks who gobble up one-third of the budget and because it picks up fully half of the \$6 billion welfare tab as against, for example, 20 percent for Mississippi. The stringent austerity program of MAC, Koch and Washington will continue to speed up the erosion of the living standards of New York's already ravaged population. Militants in the New York labor movement must demand cancellation of the debt as well as expropriation of the banks and major industries with no compensation to the capitalist vultures. And the only way to achieve this or merely preserve previously won union gains—is through militant strike action.

The 25 March issue of the influential London *Economist* says that New York City should be treated like an underdeveloped country and financed by loans from the International Monetary Fund. Indeed, for the past three years New York has already been run like a banana republic with its entire treasury taken over by the banks via Big MAC and the Emergency Financial Control Board. The unions have been negotiating at gun-point, while their pension funds were shamelessly looted. Not only did the union leaders swallow all of this whole, but when the primary elections rolled around they called for re-electing Big MAC's little front man, Abe Beame! Even with Koch running on a program of straitjacketing the unions, still the bureaucracy would not call for a break with the Democratic Party!

New York City workers must declare openly that the real looters are the banks, the corporations and the capitalist politicians. They must form a workers party, based on the unions, to fight for the interests of the working people, to link up with the miners and the rest of the working class fighting the same enemies. And the first obstacle that stands in their way is the labor bureaucracy—the Gotbaums, the Shankers and Guinans—which has led the city labor movement from defeat to defeat while pulling out the vote for the bosses' Democratic Party.

Don't beg, strike! Give Koch the Lindsay treatment! ■

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**Give Koch the
Lindsay Treatment!**

NYC Transit: Don't Beg, Strike!

On March 31 the contract of the 31,000-member Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 expires, signaling a critical period for New York City labor. The last round of municipal negotiations took place amidst the Great Bankruptcy Crisis of 1975-6, when all loyal New Yorkers were supposed to "pitch in" and "sacrifice" to save the Big Apple from a disaster born of fiscal profligacy. Of course, the banks, having planned the "crisis" dumped their \$2.3 billion worth of city bonds on the market before it crashed, leaving "ma and pa" investors and union treasuries holding the bag.

In the aftermath 60,000 trade-union jobs were eliminated, cost-of-living clauses thrown out, a wage freeze imposed, contract gains ripped up and \$3 billion extorted from union pension funds to be sunk in near-worthless city and Big MAC bonds. This time around a virulently anti-union Democratic mayor, tight-fisted Congressional committees and the bankers' cahala aim to see that labor has "learned its lesson." The unions' answer must be: strike!

The strength of NYC labor in the next few years will be greatly influenced by whether the union officialdom allows the disastrous 1975-6 settlements to become the "pattern" for future negotiations. But there are not only urgent negative reasons for a walkout: at this moment all the pieces exist to put together a tremendously powerful strike. By itself the TWU has the capacity to bring the financial citadel of U.S. imperialism to a grinding halt. This year if the TWU strikes, it may well be joined by the Long Island Railroad workers as well as unions at the *New York Times*, the *Post* and the *Daily News*, whose contracts expire on March 30. Moreover, a coalition of 60 other municipal unions representing 200,000 workers are also in the midst of their negotiations — aiming for an April 1 deadline — and could be brought out in a joint strike.

For his part newly elected New York mayor Ed Koch is thirsting for blood. In his very first labor negotiation, Koch is

already demanding that Governor Carey call in the *National Guard* to run the huses! Even before his inauguration a secret game-plan prepared at the mayor's request mapped out plans for blocking pay increases and proposed to blame a 1979 fare hike on the transit workers. The existence of this secret memo, known as the "Koch Book," was first revealed by the *Daily World* (17 December 1977) and last week was confirmed to *WV* by one of the authors.

Behind Koch's hard line is the bourgeoisie's desire to preserve the draconian reductions in the city budget

it forced through during the orchestrated "fiscal crisis." With the onset of depression conditions in 1974-5, the financial moguls decided that mushrooming unproductive expenditures in the government sector were becoming a brake on the profitability of American industry. The decision to go after New York City first was quite conscious. Since the mid-60's, organized labor's percentage of the workforce showed a decline in all areas except government employees who were, moreover, striking at an alarming rate. New York was the obvious target as the haction of the

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT). So leading corporations and international financiers deliberately created a near-bankruptcy situation for NYC securities, pulled out all the political stops and geared up for a major confrontation, if necessary, to push its austerity program through.

Although prepared for open war with the unions, it never came to this pass. The municipal labor bureaucracy, doggedly loyal to the bourgeoisie, simply rolled over and played dead while thousands of jobs were lost, a wage freeze imposed and incalculable hardships inflicted on the population through the slashing of monies for schools, hospitals and other social services. Now that these economies have been extracted, the present task for the bourgeoisie is to make them stick. This is the meaning behind the *Wall Street Journal's* 28 February article warning that even a "modest" increase for the TWU would "wreck the precarious balance" the MAC fought so hard to obtain.

Koch's first real challenge comes with the TWU contract. The transit workers, however, may cause him some problems as the ranks are angry, fed up with their con-artist International president Matt Guinan, and ready to walk. While Guinan had planned the March 26 mass TWU rally at the New York Hilton as a media event designed to show the Transit Authority (T.A.) that the ranks were chomping at the bit, this year he found the ire of the 3,000 members present heavily directed against himself. Not only was Harry Van Arsdale, the notorious sell-out president of the NYC Central Labor Council, almost hooded on the stage, but TWU members standing on chairs, hooting and shouting, "What about the last time?" repeatedly interrupted Guinan's speech as well. The transit workers demonstrated they had caught a bit of "miners' fever," holding up signs reading "Miners Aren't the Only Ones Working in a Hole."

(continued on page 11)



NYC Transit workers vote for strike.

WV Photo

Stop Murdoch Union-Busting!

At midnight March 30 the contracts of 12 New York newspaper unions run out. The future viability of the newspaper unions, who have suffered drastic cuts in membership over the years due to the folding of several papers and extensive automation, necessitate militant strike action now. While in the past a newspaper strike would have shut New York's major dailies down tight, today if the writers, drivers, typographers, stereotypers, mailers and other unions walk out they face the prospect of a scab edition hitting the streets the next morning.

Taking a lesson from the successful strikebreaking of the liberal *Washington Post*, Rupert Murdoch, the tabloid king, published a 48-page "experimental edition" of the *New York Post* last weekend using executive and non-union "volunteers". The *New York Times* (27 March) quotes Byron Greenberg, general manager of the *Post*, that "The *Post* intends to continue publishing and will request employees to report to work." Barbara Yunker, chairman of the *Post* Newspaper Guild unit (writers union), told the *Times* that production and news personnel from another Murdoch newspaper, the *San Antonio Express-News* had been flown in to help on the scab "experimental edition" and that a scab dormitory was being set up. In addition the newspapers are running a campaign to encourage people to quit the Guild. Reportedly so far under company pressure 50 members have resigned.

The potential of simultaneous strikes by the newspaper unions, the city transit workers and the Long Island Railroad would teach filthy strikebreakers like reactionary Murdoch and liberal Koch a lesson. The newspaper unions must block the production of scab editions by occupying the newspaper plants and editorial offices. The city labor movement, in turn, has a duty to use any and all necessary means to ensure that Murdoch's scab paper does not reach the newsstands.

Victory to the newspaper unions!