

Newsletter

VICTORY TO THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION!

Footsore and discouraged anti-war activists, your salvation is at hand! There has been "a welcome development"; "broad new forces" are joining the anti-war movement--according to the Socialist Workers Party, that is. Who are these welcome additions to swell the ranks of dedicated (at least semi-annually) peace crawlers? None other than the "People's Peace Treaty" crew; a motley collection of liberals, ultraleft confrontationists, reformists, pacifists, class-collaborationists, Maoists and Stalinists, the Communist Party being a predominant element in this lash-up. Just what we need: more classless confusion and social-patriotism, wrapped up in the fake radical image of apparent NLF support to what is basically a public relations gimmick selling out the Vietnamese revolution.

The Student Mobilization Committee is bad enough, with its demand "Bring all our GIs Home Now!" (as if withdrawing the troops was like returning an overdue book rather than stopping a unilateral act of imperialist genocide!). But the "People's Peace Treaty" not only does not demand immediate U.S. withdrawal, but asks the Vietnamese peasants and workers who have been fighting for their freedom for over 20 years to meekly lay down their arms and "release all prisoners," "guarantee the safety of all withdrawing troops," and "guarantee the safety and political freedom" of all those who collaborated with the U.S. imperialists in Vietnam! We really are not surprised that the SMC and the CP have decided to embrace over a pile of forgotten leaflets and principles and "unite" for April 24, however. As the CP retreats from its demand of immediate withdrawal, who else could it back into but the SWP-YSA-SMC, rushing headlong into the arms of the liberals. It's tidier to have all the garbage in one bag, anyhow.

THE NLF'S STALINIST BETRAYALS

The National Liberation Front of Vietnam cannot create a classless, socialist society in Vietnam. Would-be revolutionaries, instead of endlessly chanting "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh" etc., would do better to study the history and program of the NLF--they would realize that these Stalinists seek only a coalition government with the bourgeoisie, not socialism. The NLF asserts that "industrialists and traders must enjoy freedom of enterprise" and vows to "protect the right of ownership of means of production and other property of citizens." Just as the American Stalinists bloc with reformist leaders, the Vietnamese NLF blocs with industrialists and reformists. As the Vietminh before it, it has sold out the Vietnamese revolution and butchered leftists. We support the military victory of the NLF over American imperialism, but recognize that only the working class and peasantry, under revolutionary proletarian leadership, can create a socialist Vietnam.

FOR WORKING-CLASS POLITICS

American leftists must look to the working class in both Vietnam and America. The same elements that will bring socialism to Vietnam can force an end to the U.S. presence there. One mass general strike of the American working class is worth more than one million student strikes, petitions signed, ROTC buildings burned and draft cards turned in.

Anti-war militants must learn the lessons of the failure to end the war of the Cambodia-Kent-Jackson State demonstrations last spring. The lack of any domestic response to the Laos invasion showed once again that the government's contempt for the anti-war movement's power to change government policy is absolutely justified. The anti-war movement as constituted has no social power whatsoever, a fact of which Nixon is well aware. Only a movement based upon the working class, with a perspective of struggle aimed against the bourgeois state and its conscious and unconscious allies--the union bureaucrats, reformist and liberal illusion-mongers, petty-bourgeois adventurers and all those who would lead us away from proletarian class struggle--stands a chance of ending the endless imperialist wars which are an integral part of the capitalist system.

The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus calls for a turn to the labor movement armed with a revolutionary socialist program. The workers are engaged in a tremendous strike wave directed against the war-related erosion of their working and living conditions. Enormous social struggles are sure to follow, and whether the anti-war movement participates to deepen the revolutionary implications of these struggles or continues to serve as a left cover for the liberal bour-

geoisie will be determined by the program we forge now. We call upon all those who are fed up with student powerism, social-patriotism, class-collaboration and red-baiting hostility to political struggle to join and support the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus!

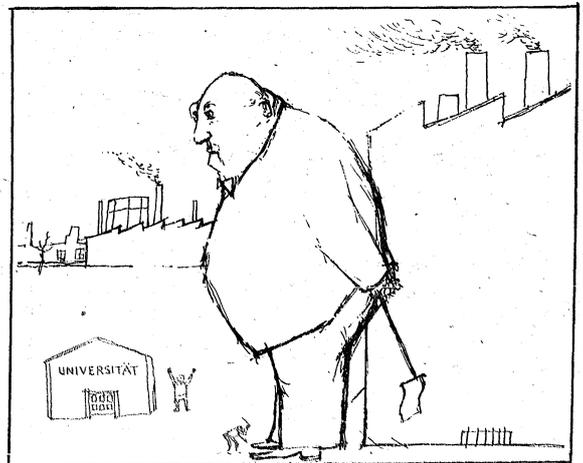
FOR LABOR POLITICAL STRIKES AGAINST THE WAR! Many activists taking part in the Kent-Cambodia protests realized that the strike had to be spread to other sections of society to be effective. A number of unions have taken positions against the war--rank and file militants must demand that their unions make these positions real by striking unless Nixon ends the war immediately!

NO LIBERAL BOURGEOIS SPEAKERS AT ANTI-WAR RALLIES! Under the banner of 'non-exclusionism', SMC welcomes the class enemy into the anti-war movement. The major activity of SMC's "mass actions" has been to provide both the forum and captive audience for liberals to do their canvassing. The only real independence for the movement is irreconcilable opposition to the class enemy.

ALL INDOCHINA MUST GO COMMUNIST! To merely call for the withdrawal of U.S. troops without coupling this with the demand for class action fraudulently blurs the distinction between those pro-capitalists in the movement who are critical only of the more blatant excesses of imperialism and those radicals who realize that the roots of war lie in the capitalist system itself. We support the military victory of the NLF, and call for the victory of a socialist revolution in Indochina!

END GOVERNMENT REPRESSION! No U.S. worker can afford to think that the slaughter of students or the persecution of Black Panthers and other radical groups is not a part of an attack on all working people. The same troops which killed student protesters are used to break strikes; the same cops who persecute ghetto residents also smash picket lines; the same courts which "punish" radicals fine and jail strike leaders.

BREAK WITH THE CAPITALIST PARTIES--FOR A POLITICAL PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS! Workers, seeing no alternative to the increased economic squeeze from rising taxes, inflation, massive unemployment and layoffs resulting from the policies of both the Republicans and Democrats and the Vietnam war, vote for the "lesser evil" or not at all. The workers clearly need a political party which represents their own class interests. The U.S. working class will remain politically trapped until it has built, by struggle against the fake labor "leaders", its own party, and we must fight from the beginning to make it a revolutionary party.



THE RED UNIVERSITY: Limits of Student Power
reprinted from Spartacus (Germany)

ON HOMOSEXUAL OPPRESSION: LEFT-WING PURITANISM

Homosexuals have long been accustomed to the charge of "crimes against nature" by the spokesmen of official morality. Much of the radical movement, however, accuses them of crimes against the revolution besides. If the cops don't get them, maybe the revolution will--if some "revolutionary" organizations are taken at their word.

PL--PROGRESSIVE LEGION OF DECENCY

Progressive Labor is one organization doing its best to convince sexually oppressed groups that if PL could make the American revolution, their social oppression could be even more systematic than what they endure now. PL has done it before--witness the WSA-SDS position at the time of the June '69 SDS split on the family as an instrument of revolutionary struggle, and their long opposition within SDS to raising the demand for free and legal abortion. A variation on the same pseudo-proletarian Victorianism is their line on homosexuality expressed in the February issue of PL, as a disease of capitalism like dope addiction which is damn well not going to exist under socialism. Here PL marshalls its ignorance in the service of an opportunistic conception of reaching workers with their politics (lots of workers don't like homosexuals).

FOR MARXIST SCIENCE, NOT SUPERSTITION

PL is trying to "fight male chauvinism" in strange fashion. It should be obvious to anyone that homosexuality is encouraged by no dominant capitalist institution (except negatively by the horrors of bourgeois marriage and family life). The most effective means for discouraging homosexuality (besides direct persecution) are the same means used to oppress women and youth. Central among these are the institutions of bourgeois marriage, the family, and religion. Here people receive the conditioning which includes a taboo against homosexual feelings and practices--a fear which for many people is probably stronger than positive response to either sex. That the conditioning process is not uniformly successful means only that no social order succeeds completely, always, in molding individuals exactly according to a certain pattern--if it did, there would be no homosexuals, no women's liberation movement, no communists, no nonconformists of any sort. Those who do opt for nonconformity, of course, pay a big price--ask any independent women or homosexuals.

SEXUAL FREEDOM AND COMMUNIST PROGRAM

It is one thing to recognize the Marxist truth that the struggle for social revolution cannot center around issues of special social oppression, sexual or otherwise (most sections of the women's, black and "gay" movements have yet to realize this). But another matter entirely is the utterly retrograde belief that the prejudices and chauvinist practices among workers under capitalism, such as those concerning women and homosexuals, represent a progressive aspect of their consciousness. Obviously a homosexual communist is duty-bound to take backwardness into account, and not invite isolation before obtaining a hearing for his (her) class program, just as no communist woman should seek to win the sympathy of socially conservative working women on the basis of some libertarian personal life style. But these important tactical considerations do not mean that absolute sexual freedom is not part of a communist program. The Bolsheviks (before Stalin) struck all the oppressive laws off the books regarding women and homosexuals. They also rejected the backdoor oppression of "rehabilitation" of anybody's brand of consenting sexual behavior. (For documentation of the Bolshevik policy on various aspects of sexual oppression, and the policy reversals under Stalin, see the Socialist Workshop pamphlet available from the RMC for 50¢.)

But avoiding stupidities like the cliché "Do you want your daughter to marry a black and why not?" is very different from elevating backwardness into revolutionary virtue. For every worker alienated by "Gay Liberation" there are plenty who are driven to frenzy by Women's Liberation--because psychologically it seems to threaten most of them more directly. The hollow "satisfaction" of male supremacy in personal relations (provided one is confident of "masculinity" of course) is one of the few "satisfactions" which capitalism promises the male worker. We take this backwardness into account tactically in order better to defeat it in the long run, not because we endorse it.

What does PL propose? If they believe that "movements which unite with drug addicts and homosexuals a defamatory and baseless analogy close the door to workers" how do they propose to implement this insight? Consistency would demand that PL expose and root out such carriers of capitalist corruption within the workers' and radical student movements. The right wing can root out the communists and PL can expose the sexual "deviants" of all political stripe. PL partly backs away from this logical implication of their medievalism by not proposing to catch and "cure" the "deviants" now under capitalism--that will be done humanely but oh so effectively under socialism. Yet PL knows that other "evils of capitalism" must be fought here and now, every day. Is PL just afraid to talk now of purging society of homosexuality in the way they talk of smashing racism?

We think so. We suspect that PL does not undertake the line of action outlined above because they realize that every decent element would despise them for it. And they may know better than what they print in PL. Perhaps some "aversion therapy" from the radical sections of Women's Liberation will help the editors of PL be "rehabilitated into useful roles" (PL's "socialist" formula for the homosexual cure)--in the fight against sexual oppression.

Probably the Maoists will be undismayed to learn that homosexuals are indeed persecuted as undesirable in China; they are already acquainted with the concepts of the "socialist family" and bureaucratic vacillations on abortion. And in Cuba (SWP-YSA, recently enthusiastic about "Gay Liberation", take note). The allegedly capitalist Soviet Union still persecutes the "capitalist sickness" of homosexuality; according to PL's and Maoist logic, some shred of revolutionary morality must therefore persist there.

We have reserved our sharpest criticism for Progressive Labor, because as self-proclaimed vanguard party, they deserve it most. (Less significant "Marxist" organizations have outdone PL; when PL has been opportunist, ignorant, and wrong, they have been obscenely wrong. The National Caucus of Labor Committees in a recent leaflet against the SWP-YSA compared homosexuals, and by implication all specially oppressed groups, to dogs.) But while criticizing "vanguard" groups which mouth idiocies in the name of revolutionary leadership, we must not spare the various movements against special oppression, whose leaderships reinforce PL's prejudices. It is more than a mood of pseudo-revolutionary Puritanism which makes PL vilify homosexuals. In part PL is reacting impressionistically to the fact that the existing movement against homosexual oppression (like most of Women's and Black Liberation) lacks anything resembling a program for socialist revolution, the only permanent solution to their oppression.

The best of "Gay Liberation" is the Red Butterfly group. A main arena of their work seems to be winning recognition for their struggle through work in the SWP-YSA-dominated SMC.

Participation in the SMC, notorious for its class collaboration (denounced regularly and essentially correctly by PL and its sections of SDS), is an excellent way for homosexuals to win temporary acceptance from liberals and their confused student following. It is also an excellent way to reinforce the prejudices of groups like PL, which, although dead wrong on many vital issues, nonetheless do seriously desire to reach the working class to make a revolution. The SMC also alienates all sections of the working class, which correctly hate their liberal enemies repeatedly featured at SMC rallies, and which will hate them more, not less, as they lose widespread illusions about the capitalist system in struggle. The Red Butterflies, despite their evident desire to bring a radical perspective to homosexuals, remain a centrist group according to the classic short definition: revolutionary in words, opportunist in deeds. Their desire to be part of the "mainstream" (read SMC) of the "movement" is not in itself unhealthy. But the mainstream of the "movement" happens to be led by class-collaborationist garbage--and only a bitter struggle can change that.

From opposite poles, PL and the various "liberation" movements make symmetrical errors. PL, in backward sectarian fashion, refuses to intervene actively in important movements once it has recognized the rottenness of their leaderships. Perhaps PL feels that its own politics and cadre are not tough or sophisticated enough to win people away from their misleaders when more than the simplest issues are involved. (Through the low-level politics of the CWSA strategy in SDS, concentrating mostly on unorganized workers, PL overcame its past opportunism in union work of "left-center coalitions" with "progressive bureaucrats, etc., by simply avoiding unions.)

A REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

The existing "liberation" movements universally share a lack of working-class revolutionary perspective. What PL fails to recognize is that nowhere has any movement, including movements of the working class itself, been anything but bourgeois in leadership and program in the absence of Marxist leadership. No spontaneous movement against any form of oppression, even against the economic exploitation upon which capitalism is based, can maintain a revolutionary program unless it is linked through its most conscious cadres with a Bolshevik communist party. The various movements do not recognize this either, the more left among them seeing their particular struggles as somehow "inherently revolutionary" without a revolutionary program. For homosexuals, and for all the specially oppressed, liberation can be won only by struggle alongside the working class armed with Marxist program for the destruction of class society, the basis for all oppression.

RMC NEWSLETTER

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The RMC Newsletter is published by the Revolutionary Marxist Caucus. We seek to build a revolutionary socialist youth organization which can intervene in all social struggles armed with a working-class program, based on the politics of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

NEWARK

(continued from back page)

Democratic Party ward-healers. That is, the actual black community consists of diverse social groups and conflicting classes which have no common interest in education or anything else. The notion that all people in some area have common political interests is the central myth sustaining bourgeois democracy. It enables elected politicians to attack particular groups of workers or other oppressed groups, while claiming to serve the "public" or "community".

Instead of calling for the schools to be controlled by the "community", which is political fiction, and therefore used by the ruling class, we call for the schools to be controlled by those specific groups involved in the educational process. The central group is the teachers, the basic workers in the system who literally produce education. They are in the best position to formulate educational policy and, without their active support, no educational policy can be successful. At the grade school level, the teachers' power over educational policy should be shared with the students' parents who are assumed to represent the interests of their children. At the junior high and high school levels, the parents' role in making policy should be replaced by the students themselves. Non-teaching staff should share power over those aspects of the system which affect them as workers.

BLACK NATIONALISM

AND HOW NOT TO FIGHT IT

The decisive question in the Newark Teachers strike was whether the union could win the loyalty of the black masses away from the Gibson administration. The black establishment can turn the ghetto against the labor movement because of the latter's active and passive acceptance of racial oppression. And despite its black "radical" leadership, the NTU also stands condemned in this regard. The NTU was offered and accepted support from Anthony Imperiale, a fascist politician based on Newark's largely

Italian North Ward. He supported the strike to discredit the Gibson "black power" administration. In no sense pro-labor, Imperiale's goons would have taken the lead in attacking teachers had the NTU struck against the old Addonizio-Mafia administration. Instead of repudiating Imperiale's support, which used the strike for reactionary ethnic ends, the NTU fulsomely supported it. The Imperiale issue provided the black nationalists with their most powerful propaganda weapon against the NTU.

While handing out leaflets condemning union acceptance of Imperiale, Columbia RMCers David Wagner and John Holmes were physically attacked by Imperiale supporters. Although the Labor Committee had six distributors there as against the RMC's two, the Labor Committee refused to protect the RMCers' right to distribute their literature. Their fawning on the union bureaucracy and conciliatory attitude toward white racism led the Labor Committee to tolerate fascist attacks on the radical movement.

In addition to opening themselves up to racist charges over the Imperiale question, the NTU's negotiating demands included more security guards in the schools, thereby threatening justifiably restless students with the cop's club. Also the union called on the rightly despised cops to protect them from Jones' goons, rather than relying on their own defense guards.

However, even if the NTU had repudiated

Imperiale and had not called for more security guards for the schools or police to guard them against the nationalists, it is quite likely the majority of Newark's blacks still would not have actively supported the union. Mass support cannot be rallied through purely defensive, business-union policies. As long as unions limit themselves to protecting the interests of particular groups of workers, bourgeois politicians can claim to represent the broader public or community interests. This is particularly true in Newark, where a largely white union in a largely black city is facing a black mayor. It should be clear to all Newark trade unionists that all wings of the Democratic Party are violently anti-labor. The Newark Teachers Union should take the lead in forming a Newark workers party to oppose Gibson in the next election. A Newark labor administration could break the influence of black demagogues over the ghetto masses by really fighting racial oppression, rather than fronting black bodies, with and without dashikis, in prestigious posts. A Newark labor government could carry out a program of ending racial discrimination at all levels, soaking Prudential Life and other big companies for much needed tax funds, expropriating slumlords and turning the houses over to the tenants rent free, and abolishing the well hated racist police and replacing them with a civilian militia. Only labor action on the basis of this kind of program can purge the American working class of the disease of race hatred.

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STONY BROOK: 1199 "STRIKE"

STONY BROOK--The Revolutionary Marxist Caucus has been consistently involved in the 1199 "strike action" here; on the picket lines, at student-worker meetings, and in raising the political program and criticism of the 1199 bureaucracy necessary to winning the strike.

The time-tested policy of "divide and conquer" has been successfully used once again by the 1199 leadership in the course of a desultory and losing strike of cafeteria workers on the Stony Brook campus. The ground was well prepared for the sellout settlement finally reached between Prophet Foods (the company running the campus meal plan) and the 1199 union, beginning last December when Prophet Foods first began laying off part-time and probationary workers. The 1199 contract, providing for a probationary period prior to full union membership, gave the bosses a free hand to lay off one group, thus weakening the collective strength of all the workers. The union bureaucracy did nothing to stop the layoffs then. What was Progressive Labor doing last December? Although PL supporters in the union fought the layoffs, on the campus they avoided the demand, operated SDS largely as a PL youth group, refused to support the Newark Teachers' strike, instead concentrating on an "anti-imperialist" confrontationalist action (trying to kick a GE recruiter off campus) in alliance with the Independent Caucus of SDS, an anarcho-Maoist grouping.

In March, Prophet Foods laid off 300 of the 40 cafeteria workers still at Stony Brook. The union leadership called a job action, did nothing to build for it, and capitulated to a court anti-strike injunction. Sustained worker-student picketing was not organized; the few pickets

present were forbidden to carry signs saying "On Strike", and the name 1199 could not be attached to anything specifying a refusal to work, thereby withholding the power of the union from the workers' struggle, and also cutting off the possibility of united labor support of the strike. The union leadership, preferring to maintain its privileged position at its memberships' expense, rightly feared a militant and independent struggle by workers which would expose it as sold out and corrupt, and thus guaranteed in advance the failure of the strike. Eddie Kaye (1199 resident bureaucrat) made this clear when he called workers and students away from guarding a cafeteria in order to let managers in to cook! He was forced to back down by the angry and militant response of the striking workers, and had to support them (against his will) in their struggle to keep the cafeteria shut down. The end result of this wilful mishandling of the strike is a settlement which calls for only 30 (out of 300!) of the laid off workers to be rehired, and still has no provision against future layoffs!

The union leadership not only kept the workers divided among themselves (by not organizing labor support for the strike, and then turning around and saying that workers would be rehired on the basis of who had worked for the strike, not on job seniority); but also did its best to keep students and workers separate. Leon Davis, 1199 president, spoke on campus about the strike, spending half his time in an implicitly anti-communist attack on students who criticize union leadership, hoping to isolate left critics and create hostility to them among the workers. Because of some students' continued and serious involvement in the strike,

most workers do not share Davis' view. But the refusal of groups like PL to politically criticize the union bureaucracy plays right into the hands of bureaucrats like Davis, and only adds to the isolation of the left. Other campus political groups made similar mistakes. The Labor Committee has largely ignored the betrayals of the union leadership, since they see unions as an artificial division of the working class like black nationalism anyhow. The Independent Caucus, spending its time in mindless activism, proposed the ridiculous gimmick of a worker-student food collective. The Workers League, notable for its lack of presence on the picket lines, called for a general campus strike rather than the need for united labor support.

While PL did make a few criticisms of the bureaucracy, they had no program around which the workers could struggle. The RMC has continually opposed the "students can't tell workers what to do" straw-man excuse for not raising correct politics. We insisted on fighting against all layoffs of workers--no worker's job is safe unless all are! This strike clearly demonstrated the need for the rank and file of 1199 to struggle against its sellout leadership in order to take control of its own union. We have taken part in this struggle as part of the RMC perspective of building a mass socialist youth group which participates in labor struggles and seeks always to raise the politics necessary to the victory of the working class!

--Sue Adams, Stony Brook SDS
--Melinda Levine, Stony Brook SDS
--Libby Scheier, Stony Brook SDS and RMC
--Richard Stomper, Stony Brook SDS and RMC

CLASS & RACE IN NEWARK

THE RISE OF THE BLACK BUREAUCRACY AND THE URBAN CRISIS

The American ruling class responded to the ghetto uprisings in Watts, Detroit, Newark and elsewhere with the traditional methods of the stick and the carrot. While ghetto residents, and especially radical groups like the Panthers, were murdered or jailed, the uprisings provoked a serious attempt to expand the black middle class, particularly in the state bureaucracy. The ruling class realized that if the ghetto masses were not to remain estranged from the "American way of life" it was necessary to blacken the face of the local government apparatus. Thus, in the past few years, the Democratic Party has selected one or another of its black hangers-on to run for election in cities with an absolute or near black majority. Thus Hatcher is mayor of Gary, Stokes mayor of Cleveland and Gibson mayor of Newark. A section of the left, led by the Communist Party, has naturally applauded the rise of Uncle Tom courthouse politicians as a great democratic victory for the black masses.

However, the black ghetto youth, who are the potential troublemakers, cannot identify with ultra-respectable bourgeois politicians like Stokes and Gibson. To insure the ghetto masses remain loyal to the new black regimes, they had to be given a more militant and populist image. So the ruling class turned to black nationalist "street radicals", who could ape the rhetoric of a Malcolm X or Stokely Carmichael. The alliance between the governing establishment and the black nationalists is personified in Leroy Jones--ex-beat poet, ex-Fidelista, Kenneth Gibson's campaign manager, proprietor of a black nationalist street gang and recipient of \$80,000 in Federal money for teaching one course on black culture. Leroy Jones represents the ghetto-militant wing of the new black bureaucracy--the man hired to convince Newark's black poor that the Gibson-Prudential Life administration is really what they had fought and died for in 1967.

The rise of the black bureaucracy coincides with and partly reflects the major financial crisis of city government. The exodus of more affluent elements to the suburbs has reduced the revenue base, while the concentration of poor in the cities has created a desperate need for increased social services, notably welfare. The Vietnamese war has stripped real wages through inflation and higher taxes and made it near impossible for workers to tolerate higher local taxes. Against this economic background, a sharp attack would have to be made against city workers' wages and job conditions regardless of the race situation. The new black city administrations can be particularly effective in breaking city employee unions by rallying the ghetto masses around the cry that the unions are racist and selfish and by presenting labor conflicts as caused by white workers' refusal to accept "black power". Teachers are particularly vulnerable as targets for this kind of racist demagoguery since they are predominantly white, middle-class professionals. In this sense, the attack on teachers' unions is the opening wedge of an attack on all city workers.

GIBSON AND CO. TRY TO BREAK THE NEWARK TEACHERS' UNION

The open and vicious attempt of the Newark Board of Education to destroy the NTU must be viewed in this light. Reacting to criticism that his administration was too cozy with the big insurance companies, Gibson made the Board of Ed. a bastion of "black power". Headed by Jesse Jacobs, a black "militant", former official in the Newark Housing Authority, the Gibson-appointed board consisted of government bureaucrats, professionals and businessmen. The Board's union negotiators include Gene Campbell, one of Gibson's proteges, and Donald Saunders, who wears African garb to the negotiating sessions. Not a single working teacher is on the board.

The Board's negotiating demands amounted to the clearest possible union-breaking attempt. They first asserted that they "refused to discuss any economic terms." They then demanded a complete scrapping of the old contract. This included the abolition of union grievance procedure, which meant that teachers could be dismissed, transferred or given any order without recourse.

The Board of Ed. used the most vicious methods in trying to break the strike. The second day of the strike, a group of black and white striking teachers were attacked by members of Jones' black nationalist goon squad wielding lead pipes. When this only strengthened the union militancy, the Board used the laws against public employee strikes to put a number of union leaders in prison. The union has suffered a high rate of scabbing and has not, in general, broken the hold of the Gibson administration over Newark's black population.

OCEAN HILL-BROWNSVILLE, NEWARK AND THE LEFT

In all fundamentals, the Newark Teachers strike was a repeat of the 1968 New York United Federation of Teachers strike which centered on Ocean Hill-Brownsville. In each case, a new black board of education tried to break the teachers union within its jurisdiction partly out of self-aggrandizement and partly because the financial situation called for an attack on city employees. In each case, the Board of Ed. accused the teachers' union of being a racist, alien element in the black community, indifferent to the needs of ghetto youth and unwilling to take orders from black superiors. In 1968, the left, including most groups claiming a proletarian socialist orientation, lined up behind the anti-labor, petty bourgeois nationalists of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville governing board and sought to destroy the UFT. Of all groups claiming to be revolutionary, only the Spartacist League, Workers League, and Labor Committee gave critical support to the UFT strike.

In the Newark situation, the Board of Ed.'s efforts to present itself as the victim of a racist attack didn't wash nearly so well. The general anti-union attitude of the Newark Board of Ed. and its ties to the establishment are more obvious than in the case of the localized Ocean Hill-Brownsville governing board. More importantly, in addition to stressing working condition issues with obvious benefits for the students, the NTU is 30% black, with significant black participation in the leadership (including imprisoned president Carol Graves), which has a reputation for being left-of-center.

Therefore, most of the radical groups which actively supported scabbing against the UFT in 1968 gave passive, very critical support to the Newark strike. The Newark strike was particularly embarrassing for the Communist Party, which had made Kenneth Gibson one of its heroes, inviting him to address its "rank and file" trade union conference. The CP was primarily concerned with covering up Gibson's union-busting role and feverishly ran around trying to find a third party to re-establish peaceful co-existence between the city bosses and their workers. After ignoring the strike as long as they could, the Socialist Workers Party gave critical support for the strike. However, the SWP claimed that lack of support for the

strike was caused by the NTU's refusal to come out for "community control" of the schools, although it was precisely in the name of "community control" that the black nationalist Newark Board of Ed. was seeking to break the union. Playing the opposite game of the CP, the SWP concentrated their fire at Gibson, covering up Jones' role. The "ultra-proletarian" Progressive Labor Party managed to ignore the most politically explosive strike in the New York area in the past few years, limiting itself to a leaflet which said that in order to win the strike, the teachers would have to give up their middle-class prejudices and "serve the people". The various orthodox Maoist groups, thoroughly confused by the presence of black faces on both sides of the picket line, likewise ignored the strike and went about "serving the people" elsewhere.

The support of the Black Panthers was most important for the success of the strike, since the moral authority of the Panthers within the ghetto was a powerful counter-weight to the Board of Ed. -Jones black nationalist machine. The Panthers, to their credit, issued a statement unequivocally supporting the strike. However, while correctly attacking the Newark Board of Ed. as part of the American ruling class, the Panther statement supported the strike in the name of "genuine" community control, rather than in the interests of the organized workers' movement. By denying the common class interests of black and white workers and asserting that the oppression of black people can be ended through "controlling" ghetto institutions, the Panthers perpetuate the ideology upon which rests the influence of the black wing of the American ruling class over the ghetto masses.

AGAINST PHONY "COMMUNITY CONTROL" FOR TEACHER, PARENT AND STUDENT CONTROL OF THE SCHOOLS

Central to the conflicts between the black school board and teachers' unions is the concept of "community control". School boards are selected through the same process that the rest of the government bureaucracy is--namely, the electoral process, either directly or through appointment by a higher elected official, as in Newark. It is amazing that radicals, who see through the facade of bourgeois democracy at every other level, believe that local school boards genuinely represent the electorate. In the black ghetto, the major bourgeois party, the Democratic Party, controls the electoral machinery largely through patronage. Under present political conditions, local school boards can only consist of Democratic Party politicians; that is, conscious representatives of the ruling class. The Newark or Ocean Hill-Brownsville school boards no more represent the black community than do Edward Brooke, Shirley Chisholm or Carl Stokes.

The term "community" is simply the populist, black equivalent of the term "the public". Terms like the "community" and the "public" are used to disguise the conflicting class interests in society. The black community consists of unionized workers and small businessmen, welfare mothers and landlords, college students and street hustlers, senior civil servants and junkies, high school students and Baptist preachers, young revolutionists and

(continued on page 3)

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