

Imamu Baraka: From Mayor Gibson to Mao-Thought

The history of the struggle for liberation from racial oppression in the United States is the bitter story of radical aspirations of the black masses repeatedly betrayed by the empty promises of demagogues, both romantic and cynical. The promise of black liberation aboard the separatist voyage of Marcus Garvey, the promise of overcoming Jim Crow segregation by marching behind Martin Luther King's pacifist liberalism, the promise of black power in the cities through community control—all proved

to be illusions, broken against the reality of the capitalist social order.

Superficially, the black power movement of the 1960's seemed to have achieved a distorted "success." By 1974 there were black mayors in Newark, Detroit, Gary, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Washington, D.C.; "community school boards" were set up in New York and elsewhere; black professionals found new job opportunities in "minority businesses" and poverty program neighborhood centers. But for the black masses this

"success" was illusory: black incomes were again falling relative to whites; black capitalism simply meant ghetto straw bosses, community control meant strike-breaking, and the cops of the black capitalist politicians continue to shoot down ghetto youth.

Following the waning of the black power movement, an amalgam of Pan Africanism and Mao Tse-tung Thought has lately gained popularity in radical black nationalist circles. And one of the most flamboyant sellers of Mao-tickets to subjectively revolutionary black youth is Imamu Amiri Baraka (formerly LeRoi Jones). His current vehicle is the Congress of Afrikan People (CAP).

While CAP claims to be Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, it is Baraka's picture that appears on virtually all CAP pam-

phlets in Newark: he was a real political power in the city. His cultural projects were funded with federal government money, and along with the Prudential Insurance Company (which had one of its executives as head of the Newark Urban Coalition) he launched a drive to build up a black (capitalist) political machine and elect a black mayor in Newark. In 1968 he formed the Black Caucus for that purpose, and by all accounts it was Jones who was a key to Kenneth Gibson's electoral success in 1970.

Baraka Against Unions

Having become a successful power broker, Jones now had to face "the responsibilities of office." From the capitalists' viewpoint he passed the test with flying colors. When the Newark Teachers Union (NTU) struck in defiance of court orders in 1970, more than a hundred union members were arrested and more than 30 convicted of breaking a reactionary no-strike law. While elementary class solidarity demanded support for the union under attack, black nationalists were concerned only with the illusion of "community control." It was the Young Lords and "black community leaders" whose "representatives kept the schools open" (*New York Times*, 7 February 1970).

When the NTU struck again the next year, the school board did its best to recreate the atmosphere of the 1968 NYC teachers' strike, mobilizing "community leaders" in the service of strikebreaking. Jones' youth group attacked some of the picketing unionists. Fortunately, the attempt to polarize the city along racial lines failed in spite of him, largely because the union's president and 30 percent of its membership were black.

But those were the days before Jones/Baraka became a "Marxist-Leninist-Mao-Tse-tung thinker." Now CAP's newspaper, *Unity and Struggle*, "frankly admits" errors and makes "ruthless self criticisms" of its past mistakes (which ones?). Now they are all for the class struggle, but the April 1975 issue of *Unity and Struggle* is preparing once again to line up against the teachers who are faced with massive layoffs in Newark:

"If the Newark teachers go out on strike will they be striking for all the workers and for a just cause or will they be being used by Shanker and his boss, Nelson Rockefeller?..."

"We all support the struggle of working people against corrupted Board officials and the capitalist system in general... But at the same time we do not support the game used by the capitalists to divide the workers whether it be an anti-community teachers strike in Newark or a race war like the one that was started in Boston."

So for all its "ruthless criticism" of "narrow nationalism" in the past, for all its denunciations of "fascist" Gibson who is now seen as a "tool of capitalist rule," CAP still lines up with the bourgeoisie against the workers' struggles! For this task, Mao Thought is more than adequate—having in the past excused such betrayals as the ruthless suppression of a 1971 youth uprising in Ceylon—and we will no doubt soon be hearing of the

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Statement by John Hess, Co-Editor of Jump Cut preceding a Militant Labor Forum given by the SWP in San Francisco on Friday evening, May 16, 1975.

"I have a brief political statement to make before this forum on Revolution and Cinema gets under way. I thank the Chairperson for his permission to make it now. I want to vigorously protest against the SWP policy of forcefully excluding for political reasons certain groups on the left, specifically the Spartacist League, from their open, public forums. I raise this protest not as a member of either group, but in defense of the principle of workers democracy.

"Now is the crucial time for the development of the left in America and the only way we can gain strength, clarity, direction, and therefore effectiveness is through constant, open, rational debate of the principles and issues. The physical expulsion of the three ILWU labor union militants from a recent Militant Labor Forum on Chile seems a strange way for a self-proclaimed Marxist political party to conduct itself at a moment when the increasing confusion among the capitalists provides us with many opportunities to advance our cause.

"I call on the SWP to reverse its anti-Marxist exclusion of other groups from its public forums; I call on my colleagues on this panel to join me in this protest."

I attended the lecture given by Juan Carlos Coral at the University of Chicago. During both the periods of the lecture and the ensuing disturbance, I at no time witnessed any disruptive activities on the part of any of the members of the Spartacist League. Quite to the contrary, they participated fully and helpfully in the defense guard around Coral, actively seeking to keep him protected.

While I do not necessarily support the political positions of the Spartacist League—in fact, I am a former member of the YSA—I feel that the allegations made by the YSA represent a breach of conduct on the radical left. Any sympathies I had with the YSA after I quit their organization I have no longer.

David Arenberg

The SWP claims that the Spartacist League disrupted the appearances of Juan Coral in the Bay Area. This is not true. However, I did attend a speech by Coral that was disrupted—by the SWP. This meeting took place in the Mission District of San Francisco. I was called on early in the discussion period and after I had spoken for only a couple of minutes SWP members began to shout so loudly that I could not be heard. A goon squad of 8 to 10 people from the SWP security force surrounded me and the shouting continued.

This action was carried out by the SWP with no protest from the chairman and completely disrupted the meeting for five to ten minutes. Finally I gave up trying to complete my remarks and sat down. The chair next called on Earl Owens, a member of the Class Struggle League. Owens spoke first in defense of my democratic rights and the rights of everyone at the meeting, stating that by not controlling its own members the SWP had disrupted the meeting.

After attacking this assault on workers democracy he then proceeded to denounce Coral's statement of support for the current government of Argentina. After the meeting, Owens was surrounded by angry SWP members who shouted "You Spartacists disrupt everything." Owens could only protest, "I'm not a Spartacist," and that the SWP were the real disrupters.

Tweet Carter

Spartacist League Central Committee



Imamu Amiri Baraka

phlets and his picture that dwarfs those of Marx and Lenin in the organization's Newark meeting hall. To understand CAP it is first necessary to know its leader. After a brief flirtation with the left (he was head of the New York City Fair Play for Cuba Committee at one point), Jones "came home" to Newark in the mid-1960's as a well-connected black poet and playwright.

During the Newark ghetto rebellion of 1967, Jones was beaten by the cops and arrested but quickly released. He was far more valuable to the racist Democratic Mayor Addonizio as a sharpshooting anti-communist, blaming "outside agitators" of the "white left" (SDS) for the outburst of ghetto anger. In his book, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, Robert L. Allen describes how Baraka was the willing instrument of the cops against the left:

"In his capacity as spokesman for the United Brothers, Jones actively sought to quell the riots which developed after the murder of Martin Luther King. He believed that Black control of Newark could be won through the ballot, not the bullet. On April 12, 1968 he participated in an interview with Newark Police Captain Charles Kinney, and Anthony Imperiale, leader of a local right-wing white organization. During the interview, Jones suggested that white leftists were responsible for instigating the riots."

Jones was not just another black

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are not part of its job agency!

The unionized building trades workers correctly see the coalition's demands, especially its insistence that it directly control one quarter of the hiring on the site, as threats to the union, the seniority system and their jobs. The coalition's call on the university administration to go around the union hiring hall, threatening to sue the union if its demands are not met, amounts to plain-and-simple union-busting, an attack on the entire working class, including black workers. This is not surprising, given participation in the MNC by contractors who, whether they are black or white, see the unions only as impediments to higher profits.

The existing union leadership, however, bears the ultimate responsibility for the ugly confrontation which erupted at CCNY. The narrowly self-interested labor bureaucracy, which has fought tooth and nail against any attempt to alter the previously lily-white composition of the craft unions, has made the unions vulnerable to attack, while driving the union ranks into apathy or into the arms of outright reactionary and racist elements. In the absence of substantial oppositional forces fighting for a class-struggle program within the unions themselves, the bourgeois ideology of the union misleaders is inevitably reflected in the ranks. At CCNY, many of the construction workers fraternized with the marauding cops during last week's incidents.

Whatever the motives of many of the MNC's supporters, beneath the militant rhetoric lurks the hucksterist appetite to replicate the job-trusting rake-off mentality of the construction union tops. In the guise of opposing the racist status quo—which is supported by the blatantly anti-black, exclusionist, nakedly reactionary policies of the construction unions—the MNC eagerly makes itself a party to an assault on the hard-won gains of unionism: the seniority system and the union hiring hall. It would be tragic if the MNC were successful in appealing to the just grievances of unemployed minority-group workers and sympathetic students, using this reservoir of anger to buttress its own schemes.

The Maoist opportunists of the Revolutionary Student Brigade formed a rotten bloc with the "community" forces of the MNC, although the RSB's mentors in the Revolutionary Union now claim to oppose preferential hiring. In contrast, the SL/SYL has consistently fought for an end to discrimination in hiring, for contractor-funded minority recruitment and training programs, a shorter work-week at no loss in pay (to provide jobs for all) and the ousting of the reactionary union bureaucracy by a class-struggle leadership—while warning that preferential hiring schemes serve the bosses by setting one section of the working class against the other.

It is necessary to unite the unemployed with the employed workers, through trade-union organization of the unemployed; massive public works programs at full union-scale wages and under union control; unlimited, unconditional unemployment insurance at union wages; and amalgamation of unemployment insurance, welfare, SUB benefits and social security programs into a single fund at the highest rate. And the fight must be directly against the capitalist system, refusing to accept the "logic" of production for profit, by calling for strikes and factory occupations against mass layoffs; expropriation of construction companies and all industry with no compensation; and a workers party to fight for a workers government which can institute planned production for use, the only way to guarantee full employment. ■

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"two lines" which make a struggle against layoffs "objectively reactionary."

CAP's "Revolutionary" Nationalism

The Congress of Afrikan People is not the only organization which has traveled from cultural black nationalism to "Marxist-Leninist-Maoist" Pan-Africanism. Many of yesterday's leading advocates of the seven principles of Kawaida (Maulanda Karenga, Baraka, etc.) now claim to adhere to the principles of Marxism-Leninism.

Faced with the demise of the black power movement (including its most left-wing expression, the Black Panther Party), a large U.S. contingent to the Sixth Pan-African Congress at Dar es-Salaam in 1974 welcomed the socialist

rhetoric of Nyerere and other African leaders. But while "African socialism" is the ideology of petty-bourgeois bureaucrats seeking to transform themselves into a capitalist class under conditions of extreme economic backwardness, the recent popularity of socialist Pan-Africanism among U.S. blacks represents in part a subjectively left-wing response to the manifest bankruptcy of "black power."

Yet the very abstractness of the new rhetoric was its main attraction for leftward-moving black nationalists, making it possible for slick, cynical opportunists like Baraka to elaborate a "revolutionary nationalism" whose "socialism" was still very much anti-union. It was all too easy to see the Kenneth Gibsons as the domestic equivalents of such reactionary "African socialists" as Leopold Senghor.

CAP has not broken from black nationalism. It declares: "It is the Congress of Afrikan People's view that black people are an oppressed nation in the United States" (*Black Scholar*, Janu-

ary/February 1975). This position paper sees that blacks are situated in key industries in the U.S. and lack the economic-territorial basis to secede, yet CAP still calls black people a nation. This is nothing but the old cultural nationalism dressed up in a Mao suit.

Blacks in the U.S. are a color/race caste segregated at the bottom of the working class. The key position of black workers in the country's industrial structure will give them a vital role in building a united revolutionary vanguard. Moreover, the struggle for the democratic rights of racial minorities and against the special oppression of black people must be a major component of the proletarian revolution in the U.S. The forging of a Leninist-Trotskyist workers party is the only means to prepare the overthrow of capitalism which is at the root of black oppression. Utopian dreams of a separate black state—whether in Africa, the old "Black Belt" of the South or northern ghettos—will go the way of Garveyism.

And while Garveyism was able to

...Indochinese Revolution

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reason to exercise the utmost vigilance against infiltration by imperialist spies and agents, and it would hardly be surprising if, as Cambodian Information Minister Hu Nim said in his statement, CIA agents are being slipped in aboard small sailing vessels. The Khmer Rouge

demonstrated good sense in returning the crew and its statement showed dignity in the face of an inevitable attack by vastly superior forces, when it could only lose.

Given their bitter experience with U.S. imperialism, the Cambodian government likewise had every reason for inspecting an American ship entering its territorial waters. At the same time, if there was no evidence of spying, both Cambodian and U.S. workers should legitimately have been concerned for the freedom of the crew, who were cynically used as pawns in a criminal imperialist adventure. Ford naturally showed no concern whatever for their lives, and U.S. planes could easily have killed them all with the massive fireworks.

Despite the overwhelming dove sentiment in the U.S. and European bourgeoisies with respect to Vietnam and Cambodia only a few short weeks ago, imperialist ruling circles throughout the world uniformly praised Ford's petulant display of military might in the Mayaguez incident. The London *Economist* (17 May) commented that "This was a fresh reminder that brinkmanship is sometimes necessary and sometimes works..." The Japanese government, which had long dissociated itself from Washington's Vietnam policies, firmly supported the U.S. attack, even apologizing for the landing of Marines in Thailand ("maybe the United States did not have enough time to think about Thailand," remarked its spokesman according to the 16 May *New York Times*).

In the U.S., the fact that President Ford violated the vaunted legal prohibitions on involvement in military hostilities in Indochina to carry out the "Mayaguez operation" has, of course, been quickly swept under the rug. (So was the illegality of the mass evacuation of more than 130,000 Vietnamese reactionaries, exploiters and war criminals, their families and their gold.) Liberals in the U.S. Senate are deciding not to call for a reduction of U.S. troop strength in West

Europe. In short, it is being made crystal clear that objections to the Vietnam adventure by imperialist doves were based on the fact that it was a losing gamble, tying up resources urgently needed elsewhere to defend the same class interests. The Mayaguez incident was a chance to reaffirm their class loyalties.

The Spartacist League warns that the imperialist butchers of Indochina, both "doves" and "hawks," are prepared to plunge civilization into a nuclear holocaust in order to preserve their exploitative system of class rule. They seek always to reverse the tremendous social and economic conquests of the Russian Revolution and the revolutions which have destroyed capitalism in the deformed workers states, from East Europe to Vietnam and Cambodia.

While both Peking and Moscow seek "peaceful coexistence" with U.S. imperialism, Marxists warn the workers that a life-and-death battle with the bourgeoisie is inevitable. Without placing any political confidence in the architects of détente and the advocates of coalition governments with the bourgeoisie, we call for unconditional military defense of the deformed and degenerated workers states against imperialist attack and domestic counterrevolution. Only by a political revolution, led by a Trotskyist vanguard party, which overthrows the parasitic bureaucracy and establishes organs of democratic working-class rule (soviets) can the revolution be extended and a real defense against counterrevolution be mounted, through world proletarian revolution.

—U.S. Hands Off the Indochinese Revolution!

—Extend Soviet/Chinese Nuclear Shield to Cover Phnom Penh, Saigon and Hanoi!

—For a Communist United Front Against Imperialism—For Political Revolution Against Stalinist Bureaucratic Rule!

—Take Vientiane!

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capture the imagination of thousands of workers, youth and unemployed in Harlem and elsewhere before it disappeared, it also promoted a virulently anti-union brand of "black capitalist" ideology. Class collaboration with its "own" bourgeoisie is inherent in all forms of nationalist ideology, and this has been true of Baraka's career from the anti-communist baiting of the "white left" through "community control" strike-breaking to his current anti-union "socialism."

Facing the Future... And the Past

CAP's turn toward Maoist Pan-Africanism is relatively recent, and for some time the membership (many of whom are subjectively revolutionary, but with their political development distorted by the cultism around Baraka) seemed to be in political flux. The article "CAP: Going Through Changes!!" (*Unity and Struggle*, October 1974) which announced the organization's embracing of Mao Tse-tung Thought also said:

"... we have made mistakes, undoubtedly we will make more. But we will be testing all dogmas, policy, &c., reorganizing all our work along revolutionary lines and practicing ruthless self criticism in order to unite our theory and practice, and contribute to the building of a socialist society."

Last fall members of the Spartacist League were told that many CAPers now felt that Baraka's support to Gibson in 1970 was "a mistake." But more recently we have been told that it was a "necessary stage" in the struggle for black liberation. This argument is false to the core: the liberation of the oppressed masses depends on the political independence of the proletariat from the class enemy: support for bourgeois politicians (black or white, and no matter how "progressive") is always a betrayal of the struggle against capitalist exploitation and racial oppression.

"But Addonizio was a racist and had to be defeated at all cost!" a CAPer will protest. Leaving aside the fact that Baraka sided with Addonizio, and even arch-reactionary racist Anthony Imperiale, against the ghetto rebellion of 1967, this is the same type of rationalization the reformist Communist Party gave for its

backhanded support to Roosevelt in the 1930's and 1940's. That the class collaborationism of Maoism/Stalinism is reflected in the policies of CAP is evident in its "Strategy for 76" published in the March issue of *Unity and Struggle*:

"Progressive forces should deal with the enormous crisis that 1976 will usher in by launching a campaign, running a presidential candidate and holding a national people's convention in the Spring of 1976. And that campaign will be an anti-democratic, anti-republican, anti-depression and anti-repression movement to combat the rising threat of fascism in the U.S. and imperialist wars abroad."

This is classical popular frontism, an old standby of the CPUSA. From Henry Wallace to Benjamin Spock, the Stalinists have promoted "third parties" and "peoples candidates" in order to obscure the need for a class opposition to the Democratic and Republican parties of capitalism. In contrast, the Trotskyists call for the formation of a workers party, based on the trade unions, to fight for a workers government.

CAP's inability to draw the class line means that it has no program for revolutionary struggle in the trade unions, no answers for black workers in the heart of American heavy industry. (This is not surprising, of course, since CAP's program for the Newark Teachers Union is evidently to break it!) It has also meant that CAP seeks to control killer cops with... community control. When police clubbed down scores of Puerto Ricans, killing two, last fall in Newark, Baraka denounced Gibson's regime as "blackface fascism" while proposing as a solution a "civilian review board."

"Necessary Stage"... For What?

CAP defends Baraka's strikebreaking by claiming that the NTU strike was "anti-community." Naturally government workers' strikes always hurt the oppressed first, because they are most dependent on public services. But it was precisely the inner-city "community" of workers and unemployed whose children attend Newark's public schools that had a vital and direct interest in the victory of the strike. It was the suburban "community" of Prudential executives and government bureaucrats who send their children to private schools that screamed

the loudest about "the public interest" and fought to smash the strike.

The importance of trade unions is not that of "just another pressure group." Unions are an elementary attempt to suppress the competition between workers engendered by wage slavery, enabling them to organize around their common interests. Of course, unions by themselves are not sufficient to emancipate the working class, much less the rest of the oppressed. But what is needed is to build a revolutionary vanguard party and a class-struggle leadership inside the union to defeat the pro-capitalist bureaucracy which is the major obstacle to the construction of such a party. By joining the capitalist state in its assault on the NTU, Baraka reinforces the present misleaders of labor.

Workers need to fight for political as well as economic organizational independence from the bourgeoisie—they need their own party as well as their own unions. CAP defends Baraka's support for Gibson's first mayoral race on the basis that this was a "necessary stage" that the masses had to go through, and that the masses had to learn from their experiences. What did the masses learn when they resoundingly re-elected "fascist" "enemy of the people" Gibson for a second term?

The "theory of stages" of Stalin and Mao, here applied to Newark's Chiang Kai-shek, reduces every sellout and betrayal to a "necessary stage." Martin Luther King calls for troops to put down the Watts rebellion? King was a "necessary stage." Gibson uses the cops to ruthlessly break up a Puerto Rican festival? Gibson was a "necessary stage." Chiang Kai-shek, honorary member of the Comintern Executive (at Stalin's invitation), crushes the Shanghai uprising? That, too, was a "necessary stage." The blood of the blacks murdered in Watts, the Puerto Ricans murdered in Newark and the workers murdered in Shanghai is on the hands of every apologist for these betrayals and defeats. Without conscious intervention of the revolutionary vanguard, organized in a Trotskyist party and fighting for proletarian independence, the oppressed will have to suffer many more such "necessary stages." ■

LCR Purge...

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of the Fourth International represents the potential for a qualitative step forward in the fight to build a Trotskyist organization in France as part of a regenerated Fourth International. The expulsion of Lafitte comes a year after the resignation of Lesueur, another central committee member of the USec's French section (then called the FCR), to join the Spartacist tendency. Both Lesueur and Lafitte played a leading role in the 1973 bank strike and were instrumental in building the LCR's bank workers' fraction. In 1973 Lafitte was an FCR candidate in elections for the French National Assembly, and as a member of the national leadership of Tendency 4, he was elected alternate member of the CC at the LCR founding conference last December.

Although its documents contain a few ambiguous formulations, the political positions of the B-LF represent a qualitative break with both the infantile/degenerate centrism of the IMT and the bold-faced reformism of the LTF, and a return to authentic Trotskyism. Unlike a number of eclectic left Pabloists (Tendency 4 in the LCR, the "third tendency" of the USec, German Spartacusbund) who continue in endless maneuvering and intrigue with the USec minority and majority, the B-LF declares its determination to struggle to reforge a politically homogeneous, democratic-centralist Fourth International.

The international Spartacist tendency is committed to waging the "difficult, long, and, above all, uneven" struggle for the rebirth of the FI ("Declaration for the Organizing of an International Trotskyist Tendency," *WV* No. 49, 19 July 1974). An essential part of this struggle will be the regrouping of valuable forces from ostensibly revolutionary organizations through a process of splits and fusions. In a number of countries this is already occurring and we hope that the Bolshevik-Leninist Faction will follow the path taken by the RIT, B-LT and individual comrades in Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany and the U.S. who have broken with Pabloism to make common cause with the international Spartacist tendency.

—For a Trotskyist Organization in France!

—Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

...Boston Busing

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and their capitalist/cop oppressors—is illusory and even suicidal. The working masses must rely on their own organized strength. This was the theme of trade-union oppositionists from the UAW and National Maritime Union who participated in the march with signs calling for labor defense squads to stop racist attacks.

The demonstration was steeped in symbolic displays of respectability and patriotism—from the red, white and blue-draped speakers' platform to the Shriners' band playing the Marine Hymn and Star Spangled Banner. The NAACP's Atkins provided a folksy political rationale: "We are here today to commemorate the removal of the monster [racism] from the cradle of the confederacy and to celebrate the removal of the monster from Boston's cradle of liberty. I am glad to tell you that Boston is finally on C.P.T.—Constitutional Protection Time." He called on the demonstrators to work "to save the country from the consequences of unchecked moral insensitivity and deviation from the country's fundamental law."

The theme of the rally was reliance on the benevolence of the bosses' government. Nowhere was this more explicit than in the speech by Maceo Dixon, representing the SWP-dominated National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR). Only a day after the vicious imperialist assault on Cambodia, Dixon remarked, "If Ford can send troops and tanks and bombers to Cambodia...he

should be able to send troops to Boston to enforce the law." Yes indeed, but just what will the butchers of Indochina do in Boston?

At a Spartacist League forum that evening, former Black Panther Party member Gerald Smith answered that question by noting, "Malcolm X had a saying, 'You can't demand that a chicken lay duck's eggs.'" Despite a flawed and above all partial political analysis, Malcolm X understood what the SWP and their reformist cohorts work to obscure: the state is a body of armed men that exists to protect the rights not of the masses but of their oppressors. Smith summed up the counterposition: "While the SWP considers itself the democratic doctor of capitalism, the SL considers itself the grave-diggers of capitalism."

The subservience of the SWP to reformist coalitionism was never more evident than at the Boston demonstration. There was hardly a single SWP banner or sign in sight. NAACP signs predominated, with slogans such as "Schools Are for All Children" and "Quality Education—Let's Do It Together."

Aggressively cutting through the morass of liberalism, pacifism and chauvinism, an impressive Spartacist League contingent of about 150 marched with slogans such as "Not White Against Black, But Class Against Class," "No Trust in Capitalist Politicians, Troops and Cops—For a Labor and Black Defense Against Racist Anti-Busing Vigilantism" and "For a Workers Party to Fight for a Workers Government." Some small centrist groups effected an ad hoc united front with the SL marchers, while unaffiliated militants all along the

march cheered our banners and joined our contingent. As the contingent turned in toward the Commons, at the corner of Arlington and Boylston, a group of perhaps two dozen young black militants wearing parade marshals' arm bands approvingly greeted our militant banners and slogans.

The marchers' response to a small counterdemonstration by a band of Nazis was instructive. As the SL and others moved to deal with the racist scum, SWP and NAACP marchers linked arms to keep the indignant crowd from getting at the fascists. The police moved immediately to protect the Nazis.

The Maoists' policy was a nearly total boycott of the demonstration. An October League spokesman explained that "This march represents the assimilationist wing of the black bourgeoisie led by the NAACP, whereas the December march represented more of the nationalist wing, exemplified by [black Democratic State] Representative Bill Owens. The NAACP busing plan is forced assimilation and denies the democratic right of Third World people to attend the schools of their choice" (*Guardian*, 21 May 1975). Unable to find a militant-talking black bourgeois politician like Owens to tail, Maoist groups like the OL chose abstentionism, leaving the masses to their misleaders.

The alternative to Uncle Tom liberalism will not be found in the social-democratic SWP or the mush-headed Maoists, but in the revolutionary Trotskyist program of the Spartacist League, which struggles to become the vanguard of the workers and the tribune of all the oppressed. ■

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