

## Opportunists' Response to Greensboro Massacre

# Let the Murderers Investigate Their Crimes

In the wake of the murder of 5 members of the Communist Workers Party (formerly the Worker's Viewpoint Organization) and wounding of 9 others by the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis, working directly with police in Greensboro, North Carolina, once again a host of organizations claiming to be "communists" or "leftists" have shamelessly revealed their real nature. Two groups in particular, the so-called "Communist" Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML) and the *Guardian* newspaper, have openly joined the chorus of the bourgeoisie in their attempts to cover over this monstrous crime and lay the basis for further and more vicious attacks on revolutionaries and the masses of people.

The Nov. 12 issue of *The Call* (the CPML's newspaper) and the Nov. 14 issue of the *Guardian* run out the ruling class' line on the Greensboro massacre with just the thinnest possible "left" veneer. Beneath the numerous obligatory pious and empty condemnations of the KKK's "racist oppression" and the like (which the bourgeoisie itself makes sure to include in their press), the bottom line is: "This is just a case of some right-wing nuts attacking some left-wing nuts who basically had it coming to them due to their wild and foolish actions. The ruling class is not at fault here except for the fact that the police weren't doing their job, serving and protecting the masses of people. In fact, it is only the ruling class that can prevent such horrible things from happening."

In the very week that the bourgeois press is spewing out its line that what happened in Greensboro was a clash between "extremists of the left and the right," both *The Call* and the *Guardian* chime in, singling out the CWP as being responsible for the massacre because of its "ultra-left actions." Both newspapers devote considerable space to attacking the CWP and its actions in Greensboro. This is so much the case, that the *Guardian*, for example, feels compelled at the end of their editorial to make the following statement: "The principal target here is the Klan and the Nazis, not the CWP, of course."

*The Call* makes a point of counterposing the Greensboro massacre with the activities in Dallas on the same day, where 50 KKKers were escorted through the streets by an army of their riot equipped buddies in blue. The KKK was protected by the cops from 3,000 anti-Klan marchers. They were even escorted home after a stop at the police station to change out of their sheets. The Dallas action was fine. But the purpose of this comparison is to make the point that people in Dallas played by the rules and no one got hurt, whereas, in Greensboro, people were more or less just asking for trouble and provoked the Klan into opening fire on the crowd.

David Simpson, long associated with the CPML and a spokesman for the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), which is practically synonymous with the CPML these days, joined with others at a press conference to criticize the police for not

stopping the perpetrators of the massacre. Of course, the police were part of the whole operation from the beginning.

*The Call* reports on Simpson's "linking Klan terror to the non-union status of North Carolina's textile industry and the owners' campaign against organized labor and Black-white unity," and the call of those at the press conference "for an open Congressional investigation of the police and the Klan activities around the shooting." This portrayal of the Klan as merely a group of paid goons of the textile mill owners used to smash union organizing drives and divide the workers is also repeated in their front-page editorial.

What is this but a deliberate attempt to cover over the real nature of the Klan and Nazis revealed in Greensboro, as direct paramilitary fascist agents working with the government authorities to attack "reds" and Black people in this time of crisis? CPML's point is that people should just keep cool, these are just quite normal times here and these "union busters" can be taken care of by the democratic laws of the bourgeoisie and Congressional investigations.

Right in line with all this, the *Guardian* too makes its appeal to listen to the voice of reason of the bourgeoisie. They write in their editorial: "Immediately, the left must demand a thorough investigation of the Greensboro murders. Where were the police when the shooting started?... Why, indeed, are these organizations of armed racist

killers permitted to exist at all?... 'By every law, they... had every right to be there,' commented the Greensboro police chief. Then the law must be changed in Greensboro and throughout the country." And they end their editorial thusly, "The entire left and all progressives should unite around Greensboro to form the kind of movement seriously capable of *cleansing our society* (emphasis ours—RW) of the racism the bourgeoisie tries so hard to encourage."

Here in the aftermath of a cold-blooded mass murder that was obviously well planned and coordinated by the capitalist's state, with the calculated purpose of declaring open season on revolutionaries and oppressed nationalities, the CPML and the *Guardian* are trying to throw water on the movement of the masses of people and sand in their eyes, calling on people to let the very government that planned this crime take care of things. They are directly aiding the ruling class in its plans to cover up their role in perpetrating the massacre and continued efforts in building and strengthening their reactionary terrorist organizations.

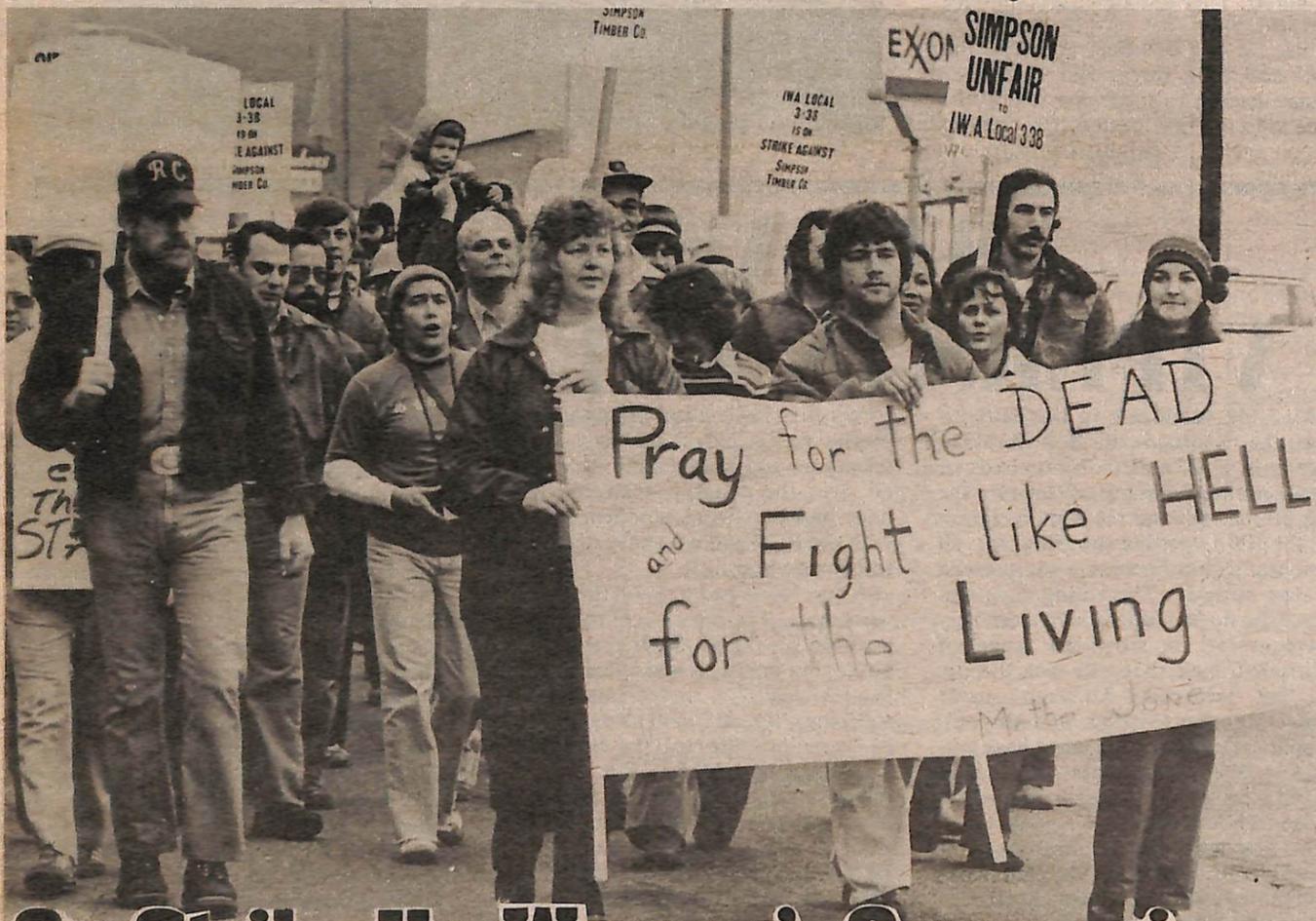
What is all this but the most straight-up social-pacifism? What is this but outright scurrying for cover in the face of the drawn sword of the bourgeoisie? None of this sheer opportunism is out of ignorance or naiveté on the part of the CPML or the *Guardian* about the nature of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the functioning of its state apparatus. No, they are all too aware of the situation and they are cringing and cowering in fear of the power of the enemy. Having only the utmost contempt and hatred for the masses of people, these opportunists are desperately trying to keep the masses from fighting the bourgeoisie head on in order to protect their own trembling and sniveling hides.

To these ends, both newspapers opposed the funeral march called for in Greensboro after the killings. The CPML does this by not mentioning a word about the march, preferring instead to make general calls "to forge a solid, united movement in defense of democratic rights and against Klan terror." *The Guardian* said, "CWP's plans for the funeral march have drawn criticism from a number of forces. Organizers of the Nov. 7 protest vigils, along with other North Carolina activists contacted by the *Guardian*, indicated they do not plan to take part."

*The Guardian* attempts to justify their straight-up cowardice and opportunism by saying, "Few outside the RCP have joined in previous CWP anti-Klan activities." As a matter of fact, the RCP hasn't joined in previous CWP activities and beyond that has serious disagreements with them, but this is not the point here. What they are trying to say here is: "Look, these guys that got murdered are just 'ultra-leftists' with no base. It's only crazies like the RCP, who would be so foolish as to march straight up in the face of the Klan, Nazis and their ruling class masters. It really doesn't matter if we play it safe and refuse to take a stand in direct opposition to the bourgeoisie here or not. Never mind the fact that the Greensboro massacre was a knife thrust into the belly of the struggle of the masses of people in this country."

Revolutionaries, including the RCP, and others who wanted to turn back this attack, however, marched in the funeral march in Greensboro. Why? Because a large section of the masses of Black people and others in Greensboro and across the country wanted to take this attack head on and because it was absolutely necessary to do so. The attendance at the march in the face of massive intimidation is testimony to this mass sentiment.

In their rush to hide under the skirts of the bourgeoisie, the CPML and the *Guardian* are following the well-worn path of the likes of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) that made peace with the imperialists when things really hit the fan. But one question remains. At least the CPUSA had built up a large membership and following which they used as a bargaining chip in striking a deal with the enemy. What will these pitifully weak organizations use? Just what kind of deal do they expect to get?



## On Strike Vs. Women's Oppression

Shelton, Wa.—"Welcome to Shelton, Christmastown, USA" reads the huge Santa Claus at the entrance of this working class community of 7,000. Neat rows of houses lead to the waterfront and the city center. The big store called Lumberman's and the plastic replica of Paul Bunyon that towers over the self-service gas station stand as a testament to the industry on which the town depends. One young man, born and raised in Shelton, calls it "Simpson town." The two big industries are Christmas trees and Simpson Timber.

Last summer Toni Gilbertson, a 26 year-old mother of one, applied for work at Simpson Timber. Her interview included questions like, "What would you be willing to do to get a job at Simpson?" Toni got a job, then filed a sex discrimination suit. After 26 days on the job, she was fired. Since then,

more women have stepped forward to expose other perverted comments by their Simpson employers. They have been asked to take off their blouses; one, if she wore a bra; others, if they would have sex with the supervisors; and they have endured comments by the supervisors about the measurement of their breasts.

After six grievance meetings, the company refused to rehire Toni. The union leadership fought the firing not on the basis of sex discrimination, but a technical violation of the job-bidding clause. On October 8, members of the local voted to strike, the second time in twenty-five years! After shutting down the Shelton plant, this International Woodworkers of America local of 1,400 (which includes only 50 women) sent roving pickets as far away as California. They shut down Simpson's

plywood plant in Albany, Oregon and the door plant in Vancouver, Washington for two days.

The union leaders continue to promote the issue as a contract violation. Many strikers look at it differently. As one said, "This is the first time ever for a union in the U.S. to go out for this. The whole thing started with sexual discrimination and the majority of us here think it's a tremendous issue and we're going to back it to the hilt."

On Saturday, Nov. 9, 500 strikers and their families marched through Shelton. Toni Gilbertson was among them. "Why should women make less than men? Why should women have to put up with that stuff. I didn't just do it for myself. I did it for all the women who have to work at Simpson." ■