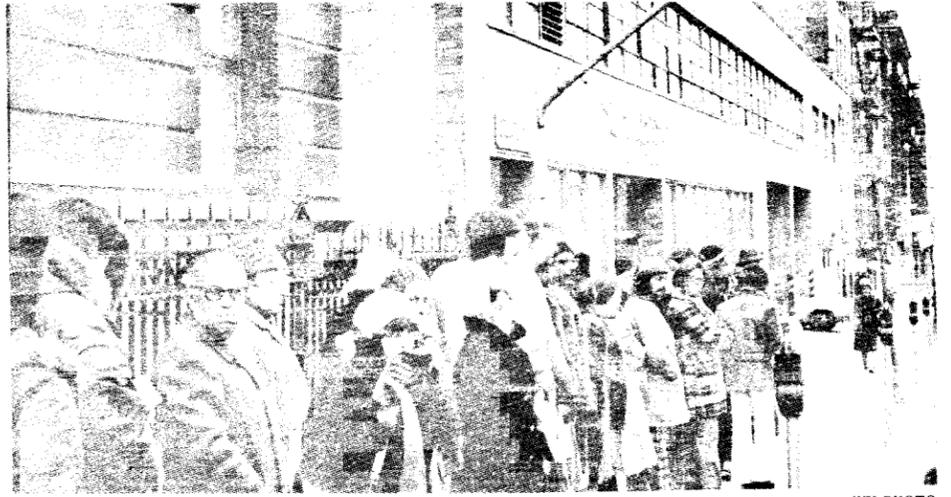


As Economy Plummets...

Ford's Cure: More Layoffs

JANUARY 27—Gerald Ford began his statement to Congress last week with the obvious: "The state of the union," he observed, "is not good." Earlier in the month the *Wall Street Journal* (3 January) reported that business and government economists, who had almost universally predicted an upturn in mid-1974, were now confused and uncertain, but agreed that "the direction is down." George Meany of the AFL-CIO announced that "economic disaster is facing America."

That the capitalist economy is in a mess is not hard to divine. During the fourth quarter of 1974 industrial production fell at an annual rate of 12 percent, the steepest drop since World War II. New claims for unemployment compensation in the last week of December alone were up more than 600,000 over the previous week, an all-time record. Meanwhile, the consumer price index rose more than 13 percent last year and wholesale prices shot up 20.9 percent, the largest in-



Unemployment line in New York, January 1974.

WV PHOTO

crease since 1946 (*New York Times*, 16 December).

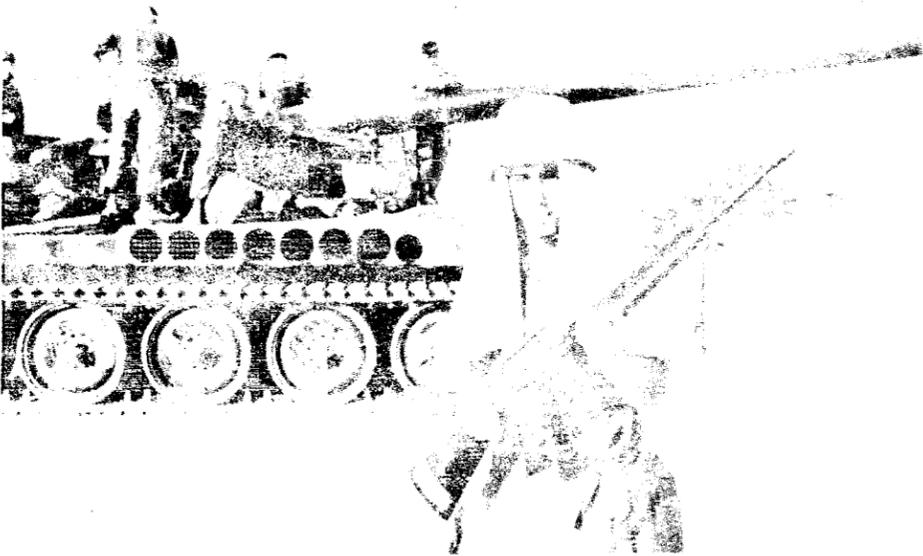
The Ford administration has actually had a difficult time figuring out just what was happening under its nose. At the beginning of the fall its economic prognosis was for "sideways waffling." Then, as car sales and housing construction went through the floor, there was talk of a "V"-shaped recession. By late November high government officials modified this to a "U"-shaped curve, and in December there began to

be leaks about a possible "L"-shaped depression.

Policy Muddle

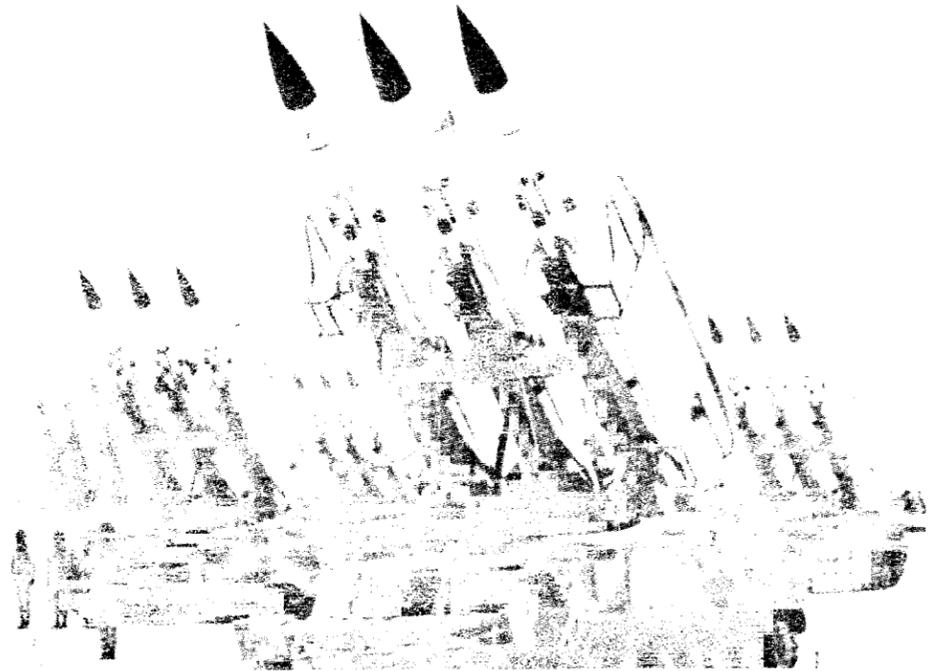
Washington was even more confused about what to do about the economic crisis. Following his "economic summits" in September, Ford declared inflation to be the number one enemy and proposed a 5 percent income tax surcharge to fight it. Expansion of the

continued on page 10



U.S. troops in desert maneuver.

DER SPIEGEL



Russian Sam-6 missiles.

DER SPIEGEL

Kissinger Threatens Invasion

Near East Realpolitik

JANUARY 24—Secretary of State Kissinger's recent announcement, made in an interview with *Business Week* (13 January), that U.S. military intervention in the Near East could occur in the event of an "actual strangulation of the industrialized world," sent shock waves through Arab capitals, while causing consternation in Europe. His remarks coincided with official concern over the plummeting economy following dismal fourth-quarter reports here, and with a recent proliferation of rumors that Israel would soon launch a "preventive" war against bordering Arab states. In this context the interview seemed a direct threat of armed American intervention in that arena.

Lately, as in the not-so-distant past, U.S. policy makers have demonstrated a willingness to translate their belli-

cose words into deeds. Desert-training activities by American armed forces have been stepped up (one such exercise code-named "Petroland") and the aircraft carrier *Constellation* barged into the Persian Gulf last month with the "reluctant" approval of the Secretary of State. Escalating his verbal brinkmanship, Kissinger's sham reluctance turned to reported "anger" when a naval task force missed an opportunity to sail into the Gulf of Tonkin as a show of force in response to NLF and DRV victories in Vietnam this year.

President Ford has been pressuring Congress to increase American financial aid and military assistance to the Thieu regime while renewing reconnaissance flights over the North. This open act of aggression is in direct violation of the Paris "peace" accords,

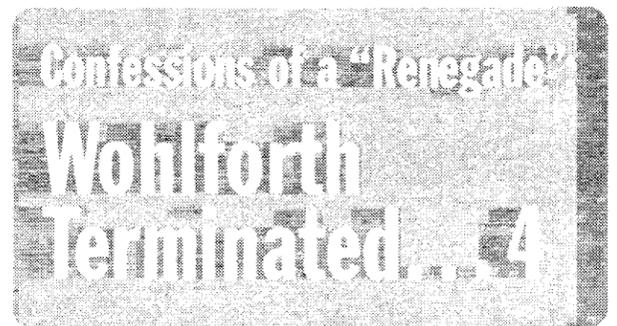
a fact "justified" by Defense Secretary Schlesinger with references to "different circumstances" (*New York Times*, 15 January). Congress, in turn, has continued to push for a resumption of cold-war policies against the Soviet Union, with liberal Democrats (Jackson, Kennedy) leading a successful effort to sabotage the U.S.-USSR trade bill.

The significance of the world economic and political situation and the rightward shift in liberal opinion has not been lost on the establishment intelligentsia. Robert W. Tucker, a "responsible" critic of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, has written an article in this month's *Commentary* which in great detail lays out the case for American invasion of the Persian Gulf in the near, if not immediate, future.

Professor Tucker was astonished, it seems, that no one, including the normally reliable Pentagon, has been publicly advocating military intervention. A rejection of the use of armed force seems to this one-time Vietnam dove incompatible "with avoiding the distinct possibility of an economic and political disaster bearing more than a superficial resemblance to the disaster of the 1930's...."

Is a military foray feasible? Certainly, if the U.S. bites off a 400-mile treeless (already defoliated) strip running down the coast from Kuwait through Saudi Arabia to Qatar. The cost would be low against these militarily defenseless states and the payoff would be 50 percent of the reserves of the oil-exporting countries (40 percent of page 8

continued on page 8



Socialism through Constitutional Amendment?

The Socialist Workers Party has launched its latest scheme to reform U.S. capitalism into oblivion. Although inflation, layoffs and the threat of war in the Near East are currently dominating the news, the SWP has a different theme: the Spirit of '76. With the approach of the bicentennial celebrations of the American Revolution these reformist ex-Trotskyists naturally want to get into the patriotic swing of things.

Announcing a "'76 Presidential Drive" the *Militant* (17 January) put the emphasis on the SWP's latest electoral gimmick: amending the Constitution with a new "Bill of Rights for working people":

"We propose expanding the Bill of Rights in the Constitution to include protection from the new problems created by present-day capitalist society."

The proposed additions include "the right to a job," "the right to an adequate income," as well as rights to free education, free medical care, to "know the truth" about economic and political policies, and for minorities to control

their own affairs. Topping it all off is "the right of workers to decide economic and political policy."

The SWP would have us believe that George Washington and the other "founding fathers" simply forgot these extra "rights," or didn't fully anticipate the "new problems created by present-day capitalist society." As Peter Camejo, the group's presidential candidate, says: "Nearly 200 years after winning independence, America faces a growing crisis.... The colonists who fought against British rule and the abolitionists who fought against slavery learned they could have no faith in colonial governors or slave owner parties." The conclusion: vote SWP!

The Communist Party used to go in big for this kind of "proletarian patriotism." During the late 1930's the CP's Earl Browder proclaimed: "Communism is twentieth-century Americanism." But even the ultra-reformist Stalinists choked on the "socialism by constitutional amendment" quackery now being dished out by the SWP.

In 1966 a draft "New Program" of the CPUSA was published with a paragraph beginning: "One obligatory Constitutional amendment in a socialist transformation would abolish the capitalist form of property...." Following a storm of criticism, this section was dropped in the second (March 1968) draft of the program.

A January 1969 revised second draft, however, came up with a new angle: President Roosevelt's "Economic Bill of Rights," which reportedly included "the right to a useful and remunerative job," "the right to adequate medical care" and "the right to a good education." But, the CP added, "In capitalist society this Economic Bill of Rights cannot be fully realized...." In contrast, neither in the *Militant* article nor in a later campaign pamphlet does the SWP clearly say that its "bill of rights for working people" cannot be implemented by the ballot box.

Revolutionary-minded workers know that capitalism cannot be reformed into its opposite. In the words of the 1938

Declaration of the Socialist Workers Party, which the degenerated SWP of today would doubtless like to forget (having categorically renounced violence in court in order to further its "socialist lawsuit"):

"The belief that in such a country as the United States we live in a free, democratic society in which fundamental economic change can be effected by persuasion, by education, by legal and purely parliamentary methods, is an illusion. In the United States... we live in actuality under a capitalist dictatorship; and the possibilities for purely legal and constitutional change are therefore limited to those which fall within the framework of capitalist property and social relations...."

"While relying primarily on mass actions, propaganda and agitation as the means for furthering its revolutionary aim, the Party will also participate in electoral campaigns, though at all times contending against the fatal illusion that the masses can accomplish their emancipation through the ballot box."

As Marxists we know how to appreciate the tremendous achievements wrought as a consequence of bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the past, including the American Revolution of 1776. As consistent defenders of proletarian democracy we resolutely fight for all the democratic rights which can be won under capitalism.

But in mobilizing the international working class for the conquest of power we fight not in the spirit of '76—the spirit of bourgeois democracy, long since grown reactionary—but in the spirit of '17, of the Russian Revolution which, for the first time in history, erected a workers republic under soviet rule, the first stage on the road to socialism. ■

NYC Bomb Atrocity Paves Way for Repression

On January 24 a massive explosion occurred at the Fraunces Tavern and adjacent Anglers Club in lower Manhattan, killing four persons and injuring 44 others. Many of the victims, including passers-by on the street, suffered from shrapnel wounds, while others had cuts, bruises and shards of glass in their bodies.

An hour after the incident callers identifying themselves as members of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) of Puerto Rico claimed credit for the bombing and directed police to a note left in a nearby telephone booth. The message stated: "We did this in retaliation for the CIA ordered bomb that murdered Angel Luis Chavonier and Eddie Ramos, two innocent young workers who supported Puerto Rican independence." It demanded release of five Puerto Rican political prisoners held in U.S. jails for over twenty years.

Last Friday's blast was the second major bombing claimed by the "FALN." On October 26 large explosions occurred at five banks and corporate headquarters in New York City. On that occasion, however, no one was hurt.

The January 24 bombing was an act of *indiscriminate* terror and a crime against working people! The four victims who died in the Fraunces Tavern were apparently unremarkable wealthy individuals; moreover the injured included clerks and secretaries from the Wall Street area and the list of emergency-room cases as published by the press included several persons with Spanish surnames, quite possibly Puerto Rican restaurant employees.

Unlike the explosions of October 26, which took place at 3 a.m. with the areas relatively deserted, this latest bomb was set to go off during the lunch hour

when the restaurants were jammed with customers, and was placed in the doorway where it would inevitably injure, if not kill, pedestrians on the crowded sidewalks. Even the reported note did not claim any special significance for the target. Under the circumstances, the large number of injured can only be regarded as deliberate.

We in no way defend this senseless and criminal act or its perpetrators, no matter what their motivation. Had we the power to do so, we would ourselves bring the authors of such an outrage before a tribunal of working people, which would hardly be inclined to mercy.

However, we have no confidence in the police or bourgeois courts to "bring them to justice," as Mayor Beame pledged. The agencies of the bourgeois state yearly jail and kill hundreds and thousands of innocent victims in order to enforce the brutal "law and order" of class oppression. The authorities may well want to use this incident as an excuse to launch a campaign of intimidation and cop terror directed against the entire Puerto Rican population, in the limit emulating the infamous "Zebra" dragnet in San Francisco.

In particular, leftists and nationalist militants are certain to be singled out for victimization. After the October 26 explosions, NY Police Department Assistant Chief of Detectives John Sullivan said, in reference to the "FALN": "This is a new name, but we feel it is affiliated with Puerto Rican independence groups in the past that are continuing into the present." The threat implicit in these remarks is obvious. Already in March 1974, three armed attacks were carried out against the San Juan offices of the Puerto



Free Puerto Rican Nationalist political prisoners! From left: Irving Flores, Rafael Cancel-Miranda, Lolita Lebrón, Andrés Figueroa.

Rican Socialist Party (PSP) newspaper, *Claridad*, and its printing plant while police stood idly by, refusing to intervene.

The Puerto Rican Nationalist Party political prisoners named by the FALN were also perpetrators of terrorist acts, but of a different kind. Oscar Collazo was sentenced to life imprisonment after trying to shoot his way into Blair House in 1950 in order to assassinate President Truman. Lebrón, Miranda, Cordero and Flores carried out an attack on the House of Representatives in 1954, wounding five Congressmen. This was not the random terror of the "FALN." The targets were bourgeois politicians responsible for the colonial oppression of Puerto Rico and the perpetuation of capitalist exploitation.

Marxists have always strongly counseled would-be revolutionaries against individual terrorism, which is an impotent strategy of despair—heroic gestures by those who have no faith in the capacities of the proletariat. We nevertheless defend militants who, however misguided their outlook, strike against the class enemy in the name of the oppressed masses.

We express our militant support for the cause of Puerto Rican independence.

BAY AREA FORUM

VIETNAM SINCE THE TREATY

Speaker: TWEET CARTER
SL Central Committee

Unitas House
2700 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, Calif.

Saturday
1 February
7:30 p.m.

If the January 24 bombing was, as reported, motivated by a desire to fight Yankee imperialism, it grows out of a just aspiration of the Puerto Rican masses to be finally freed after four centuries of colonial oppression. But the act itself is literally indefensible.

In fact, both actions attributed to the "FALN" were so stupid politically that they might as well have been the work of police provocateurs. The October 26 blasts took place immediately prior to Puerto Rican Solidarity Day and served to undermine that demonstration. The Fraunces Tavern bombing will not only dampen support for Puerto Rican independence in the U.S., but it can, and probably will, be used as an excuse for discrimination and violence directed against the several million Puerto Ricans living on the mainland.

The way forward for the liberation of the Puerto Rican masses is not indiscriminate mass terrorism nor impotent bombings of symbols of imperialism. It is through united class struggle, particularly with U.S. workers, for the revolutionary Marxist, i.e., Trotskyist program. As part of that struggle for working-class unity it is an immediate duty of all socialists and union militants to stand ready to defend Puerto Rican left and nationalist organizations, and the Puerto Rican population generally, against the chauvinist victimization which can be expected in the wake of the recent bombings.

—Free Collazo, Cordero, Flores, Lebrón and Miranda!

—Immediate Independence for Puerto Rico! For a Soviet Puerto Rico as Part of a Socialist Federation of the Caribbean!

—Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

Pacifism and the Picket Line:

The UFW and Workers' Self-Defense

In the course of our efforts to defend the United Farm Workers against a vicious union-busting campaign by a coalition of growers, Teamsters' bureaucrats and cops, the Spartacist League has sharply criticized the defeatist policies of the UFW leadership. These include: reliance on the support of the Catholic hierarchy, liberal politicians and top AFL-CIO/UAW bureaucrats rather than on the ranks of labor; the union's chauvinist campaign against "illegal" Mexicans working in the fields; and Chavez' pacifism, which led to the abandonment of the 1973 grape and lettuce strikes in the face of violent attacks by Teamster goons and sheriffs' deputies.

The policies of several self-proclaimed socialist organizations were the opposite: in their efforts to cash in on Chavez' popularity in petty-bourgeois radical and left-liberal circles, they have been largely uncritical cheerleaders for the UFW bureaucracy, at most offering "helpful advice." To this date the Communist Party has not openly opposed the union's obscene attack on "illegal" aliens.

The Revolutionary Union, in turn, proffered its services to the UFW officials as goons to beat up and exclude SL supporters from Farm Workers support rallies and marches. And SWP leaders touted the UFW as the "vanguard of the U.S. trade-union movement" while the *Militant* sung the praises of the impotent consumer boycott strategy and defended Chavez' calling off of the lettuce/grape strikes.

While our strike support work was generally exemplary in contrast to such capitulation before the betrayals of Chavez and Co., the SL erroneously codified a tactic with very specific applicability into a general slogan: "For Armed Self-Defense of the Picket Lines." Although it is absolutely vital to the survival of the union to prepare for militant self-defense of the picket lines, in this situation to specify "armed" self-defense allows for misinterpretation and can be twisted by anti-union demagogues into the spectre of workers shooting it out with sheriffs' deputies.

As a Marxist organization we are far from glorifying the purely military aspect of the class struggle, as do various Castroites, Maoists and renegades from Trotskyism, who distinguish revolutionary from reformist by

Farm workers experience capitalist "law and order."



the "moral" criterion of willingness to "pick up the gun." We raise the call for workers self-defense as part of a political program which demonstrates to the class the need to struggle against the capitalist order rather than accept a pacifist strategy of meek submission to defeat. As Trotsky wrote about self-defense in the Transitional Program: "Scabs and private gunmen in factory plants are the basic nuclei of the fascist army. Strike pickets are the basic nuclei of the proletarian army. This is our point of departure. In connection with every strike and street demonstration, it is imperative to propagate the necessity of creating workers'



Wayne State University
Women participated in labor's battles of 1936-37.

groups for self-defense."

Cesar Chavez has chosen moralistic crusades rather than class struggle and thus has aided and abetted the Teamster/grower/cop alliance in its wrecking operation on the UFW. Even conservative business unionists do occasionally see the need to protect picket lines from violent attack, but the best examples of workers self-defense are from labor organizations and struggles under revolutionary leadership.

An instructive case was the 1934 Teamsters strike in Minneapolis, led by Trotskyist militants of the Communist League of America (CLA). At the height of that mass struggle, which involved 6,000 truck drivers, there was a pitched battle as several hundred police sought to remove pickets from the city's market district. Recognizing that a showdown was approaching, the union had concentrated 1,500 strikers in two different points ready to move into battle when needed.

In the fight which ensued, the armed police and special deputies were taught a good lesson about the strength of proletarian organization and dispersed after some roughing up. The only "arms" of the strikers were clubs and several trucks. Simultaneously, the women's auxiliary, also led by comrades of the CLA, led 700 in a march on city hall (see Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Rebellion* for an account of the strike).

Revolutionary Marxists do not, of



Teamster strikers battle police in Minneapolis, May 1934. Under Trotskyist leadership the workers energetically defended pickets, sent scores of cops to hospital and won the strike.

course, renounce the right to defend themselves from capitalist terror and attack. We have always insisted that the idea that the ruling class will voluntarily give up power through the ballot box is a reformist pipedream. However, our purpose is not to engage in heroic posturing, but to win, and for that reason, also, to turn the call for armed self-defense into a general slogan is mechanistic and therefore wrong.

The question of how self-defense is to be accomplished is a tactical question, crucial to be sure, which can change abruptly in a matter of minutes. While success can depend on ability of the leadership to act correctly in such situations, both cautiously and audaciously, what is sure is that those who do not call for militant struggle, and instead make a strategy of apologizing for the betrayals of the present misleaders of the workers movement, will never be able to meet this test. ■

Letter

[India]
16 December 1974
Dear friend,

Will you care to publish an article on Trotskyism in China? Recently you may have seen an article in the *Intercontinental Press*—"India's forgotten political prisoners." A leader of the CLI [Communist League of India, section of the "United Secretariat"] went to Delhi in 1973 to attend a conference for the Naxalite prisoners. Appeals, comments, etc. demanding the release of the Maoists frequently appear in *Lavai* ["Struggle," the Bengali-language publication of the CLI]. But not a word about the Chinese Trotskyists in Maoist prisons for two decades. United Secretariat issued an appeal for the Chinese Trotskyists only in 1972, unanimously; but perhaps it was a big fraud as they gave the least publicity to it. More was done for the French Trotskyists in India and abroad. In India the appeal for the Chinese Trotskyists remains suppressed despite protests from a section of the party. That these things are not accidental is borne out by the fact that even the disaffiliation of the Chinese section was contemplated on the eve of the Tenth Congress [of the United Secretariat] according to an internal document of the LTF [Leninist-Trotskyist Faction of the USec], though the idea was given up for some reason or other.

Farooq Alim

WORKERS VANGUARD

Marxist Working-Class Bi-weekly of the Spartacist League

Editorial Board:

Jan Norden (editor)
Liz Gordon (chairman)
Chris Knox (labor)
Karen Allen (production)
George Foster (advisory)

Circulation Manager: Anne Kelley

Correspondents:

West Coast: Mark Small
Southern: Joe Vetter
Midwest: Len Meyers
New England: R. Carling
West Europe: Joseph Seymour

Published by the Spartacist Publishing Company, Box 1377, G.P.O., New York, N.Y. 10001 Telephone: (212) 966-6841

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

Confessions of a "Renegade":

Wohlforth Terminated

In an account reminiscent of Jay Lovestone's recitation of the crimes of Stalin, ex-Workers League National Secretary Tim Wohlforth has now surfaced with a long document about his frame-up and purge at the hands of Gerry Healy, boss of the British Workers Revolutionary Party and godfather of the Workers League. After more than a decade of glorying in his role of fawning American junior partner to Healy, Wohlforth was unceremoniously dumped and replaced by his long-time lieutenant, Fred Mazelis (see "Workers League Crumbles," WV No. 56, 8 November 1974). The ouster was carried out personally by none other than Healy himself.

While Wohlforth's lurid 39-page account ("The Workers League and the International Committee," 11 January 1975) is evidently truthful as a description, it betrays a stunning lack of political understanding. Throughout his reign as tinpot despot of the Workers League Wohlforth slavishly emulated his mentor's organizational practices of suppression and slander, the deliberate destruction of cadres and the invocation of the absolute authority of the "International Committee" to intimidate any stirrings of opposition among the membership. Now that Healy has turned the notorious Wohlforthite "method" against Wohlforth himself, the deposed former accomplice finds the only possible explanation to be that Healy has suddenly lost his mind:

"He is seized by at times what approaches madness for subjective idealism is a form of madness as it rearranges the world according to the individual. He becomes convinced that he is surrounded by CIA agents and proceeds on that basis. Anyone who objects is denounced for being an anti-internationalist...."

Subjective idealism must be pretty rampant in Healyite circles. Wohlforth makes the following modest assessment of the import of his removal as National Secretary: "The explosion which has taken place between Comrade Healy and the Workers League is of great historic significance. Condensed within this experience is all the past experience of the Fourth International." By way of contrast, the Spartacist tendency was compelled to break from Healy in 1962 in order to maintain our political integrity, but we refused to characterize Healy/Wohlforth's unprincipled organizational maneuvering as politically definitive (much less world-historic) until 1967 when it acquired a clear programmatic basis.

Wohlforth's testimony amply confirms every organizational allegation ever made by the Spartacist tendency, but for Wohlforth commencing only on 30-31 August 1974 when the skies fell in on him. Wohlforth's fundamental response to every exposure by us of the Workers League's cynical opportunism, Stalinist-style gansterism and fraudulent "mass" posturing has always been that Spartacist is no good because it is "anti-internationalist"—i.e., that we refused to unquestioningly accept the "discipline" of the International Committee. We replied that the IC is no Marxist international, and "the IC" is but an empty abstraction to cover rotten politics, akin to the Stalinists' abuse of "the Party."

The Horse's Mouth

Now let us see what Wohlforth has to say today about the International Committee:

"...It never was allowed to go beyond the level of small groups basically functioning as appendages of the SLL-WRP [Socialist Labour League was the earlier name of the Workers Revolutionary Party, Healy's British group].

More precisely, the IC never went beyond being an international organization around a single individual, Gerry Healy....

"...That these differences were not openly confronted and fought out within the U.S. and internationally reflected the atmosphere which prevailed in international relations within the IC. Open discussion and political struggle was discouraged by Comrade Healy's tendency to push every discussion to the most extreme point and to seek to break the person who disagreed with Comrade Healy. Only a most muted discussion ever took place in the international movement under such conditions....

"...There are no elected bodies. The IC is, as we shall see, whatever the Workers Revolutionary Party wants it to be. It is the WRP which writes whatever statements are occasionally issued. It is the WRP which calls whatever meetings of the IC that are held and which determines what sections should attend. It is Comrade Gerry Healy who determines what the WRP determines....

"...To Gerry Healy there is a complete identity between the international movement and his national party, the Workers Revolutionary Party. Internationalism stops at the frontiers of Britain. It is seen as a 'principle' which requires the subordination of other parties to the international which is seen as identical with the WRP. To what is the WRP subordinate?"



Fred Mazelis

Well, former head of the American section, you should know. Only, we always thought you liked it that way!

Healy as Big Daddy

Wohlforth always dismissed the Spartacist tendency's allegations about the grossly bureaucratic practices of the Healy/Wohlforth regimes with smug demands that we demonstrate upon what materially privileged stratum the WL regime is based. In his present document, however, Wohlforth (never one to worry too much about consistency) makes no attempt to locate any "material base" for Healy's conduct. He simply declares that the Workers League has reverted to centrism (a term, incidentally, which he employs for every variety of political animal, including Max Shachtman in 1956 as the latter prepared to liquidate into CIA-influenced American social democracy). Yet there is a certain sociological logic to the Healyites' practices.

The Healy organization's attempts to work within the British labor movement have been uniformly sterile and disastrous. At one or another time over the past twenty years they have amassed a certain following among dock workers, construction workers, coal miners and

auto workers, and have nothing but their ex-supporters' bitterness at the Healyite oscillations between adventurism and opportunism to show for it. (Their present "mass base" in the television and film industries can be expected to go the same route, although perhaps somewhat more eccentrically considering the vision of social reality as refracted through a television camera.)

But the Healy organization has been quite successful in maintaining a relatively large, flashy, high-turnover youth operation which every year draws in sizeable numbers of militant British youth by offering them pageants, dancing, rock bands and sports events together with a dash of "socialism," miscellaneous marches and lots of newspaper selling. The British masses are infused virtually throughout with a relatively very high degree of class consciousness, so that even the semi-lumpenized youth from whom the Healyites recruit characteristically share a strongly class-conscious outlook, even if their capacity to intervene in the class struggle is marginal and episodic.

But since such layers lack both the discipline of the labor process and any obvious immediate personal use for knowledge, a high-volume, high-turnover operation aimed at them necessarily requires a strong dose of authoritarianism and the manipulative use of dogma as a substitute for program. Thus we can attribute to the Healyites a lumpenproletarian component as the context for their opportunist/adventurist oscillations and systematic organizational abuses.

Wohlforth as Huey P. Newton

Beginning in the summer of 1971 Wohlforth, evidently in association with Healy, launched the Workers League on a sharp turn "to the youth" intended to parallel the British technique. But the attempt to import the WRP style of semi-lumpen youth organizing intensified the contradiction between "Trotskyism" and the requirements of such an operation. The corresponding layers in American society to the raw material of Healy's Young Socialists are overwhelmingly ghettoized black and Spanish-speaking youth, a generation or two removed from rural isolation and poverty, very heavily chronically unemployed, in a country with no political class consciousness and themselves with so little access to the labor movement that economic class consciousness often appears as a privilege of older white workers aimed against minority-group youth. While Healy's pseudo-Trotskyism associated with a semi-lumpen base makes a certain kind of sense in class-conscious Britain, a nationalist or Maoist rhetoric corresponds far more closely to the ideological proclivities of American raw ghetto youth.

Very serious and dedicated revolutionists can indeed be recruited from such strata, but under prevailing conditions only by the individuals' involved breaking, through a difficult, lengthy (and often unsuccessful) process, from ghetto existence and its dominant ideologies. But the Healy/Wohlforth approach—which is strikingly analogous to government summer programs for restless youth—is not intended to lead to the crystallization of black and Spanish-speaking communist cadres but to supply a "mass" base for a mock-extremist political operation. Therefore the Workers League found itself forced to parallel the techniques of, for example, the Black Panthers: an infallible leader and a militarized



Tim Wohlforth

WV PHOTO

regime to impose discipline.

The Workers League turn toward "youth in the neighborhoods" was evidently seen by Wohlforth as a bulwark against "liquidation" into "trade union work." He explains that political backwardness "makes it so easy for demagogic forces to maneuver within the unions disguising themselves as militants. Union policy alone is insufficient to flush them out." This is, of course, true given the Wohlforthites' crassly opportunist line in their every encounter with the union bureaucracy, which Wohlforth defends at some length over the example of support to Arnold Miller of the Mine Workers.

Not surprisingly, Wohlforth is unable to grasp what is wrong with his organization's incursions into the labor movement. For example, his only criticism of the "Trade Unionists for a Labor Party" operation is that the Workers League liquidated its public face into this front group; there is no mention of the fact that the front group's program deliberately omitted any mention of the crucial political issues facing the working class at that time, racial oppression and the Vietnam war. No wonder Wohlforth thinks that the only way to avoid opportunist trade unionists—i.e., cynical but articulate cadres who will sooner or later abandon the small change of the Workers League to carve out careers within the union bureaucracy—is to build a base in a milieu which is deeply alienated from the labor movement.

The document is full of vituperative attacks against "conservative," "abstract propagandist" forces in the Workers League who "represented a centrist retreat from the construction of a revolutionary youth movement" and counterposed a call for more trade-union work. (Before accepting the bogeyman of a Workers League totally submerged in the unions, we should point out that in the entire document the only trade-union fraction mentioned—although there are references to journalistic coverage of other industries—is a white collar fraction in the SSEU composed of college graduates.) These elements are castigated for holding themselves aloof from the militants drawn around the youth organizing; at the summer camps, for example, they even "hid behind bushes to keep away from the youth."

What these summer camps were actually like is testified to by Wohlforth:

"...the first days of the [1974] camp became preoccupied with the question of discipline. It actually took longer this year than last to get some agreement on the rules which governed the camp. Even after this agreement was reached the disciplinary problem would plague the camp to its last day.... Anyone who now dismisses this experience as a 'disaster' dismisses the real material struggle to build a movement of workers.... The United States is

the center of the capitalist crisis. A peaceful, orderly camp would reflect only the unreal, idealist distance of such a camp from the class struggle in America."

It may be surmised that some of the Workers League members balked at serving as wardens for restless youth lured to these events by means such as those of which Wohlforth boasts in explaining the great "success" of the 1973 YS conference:

"We held talent shows and bazaars and other events during the course of building for the conference.... At the end of the conference, a highly successful dance was held with a well-known band."

The Ax Falls

Internally in the Spartacist League around 1966, the following historical analogy was presented: Stalin/Healy, Foster/Wohlforth, Browder/Mazelis. Yet now even after the fact Tim Wohlforth is obviously unable to make head or tail of the reason for his dramatic fall from grace.

The first intimation of trouble occurred in 1973, when Wohlforth received a letter from the WRP's Mike Banda criticizing his draft resolution on American perspectives and insisting on "the primacy of the European Revolution—particularly in England" in apparent counterposition to Wohlforth's emphasis, allegedly based on Healy's remarks to a Workers League plenum, on the "understanding that the center of the world capitalist crisis was the crisis of American capitalism." In the present document Wohlforth criticizes Banda for the latter's infatuation with the Vietnamese and Chinese Stalinists, an astute observation coming a mere ten years or so after our tendency had noted that self-same fact. Wohlforth's response to becoming the recipient of two different lines from England was to try "as best we could to straddle the contradictory positions put forward by Healy in January and Banda in March."

But the ax was first unsheathed in conjunction with "a series of classes which we opened up to the Spartacist group" (i.e., the Workers League violated its long-standing practice of excluding Spartacist members from publicly advertised events). Wohlforth describes his peremptory summons to England:

"In late June the British comrades called me over for consultations. They were particularly upset by a reference in one of the classes which suggested that the relations between the British and French movements had been one of compromise.... The British intervention, however, took on an extreme character. Every even potential difference was magnified to an absurd degree. I was even attacked as being an American pragmatist for purchasing an American rather than a British web offset press! As the week progressed the hyperbola progressed. By the end of the week's visit the British comrades—more exactly Comrade Healy—threatened to break a 12 year political relationship with the League over this single sentence.

"The night before I was to fly back the discussion—actually a one way shouting match—went on until 2:30 a.m. I was sent to bed with all political relations broken. A public statement was to appear in the *Workers Press* [Healy's newspaper]. Then at 5:30 a.m. I was awakened for one last meeting with Comrade Healy at which I was told I would be given one last chance. I was to fight for the very life of the League against centrism within it.... Particularly I had to break with the centrist elements around me in the leadership and drive the movement forward into the working class. Special mention was made of Comrades Lucy St. John, Dennis O'Casey and Karen Frankel.

"I returned to the United States shell-shocked. I immediately launched a bitter struggle within the leadership of the party and throughout all the branches in the country...."

Having evidently interpreted his instructions as a license to undertake a wholesale purge, Wohlforth proceeded to drive out of the Workers League virtually every prominent experienced cadre (see "Whatever Happened to the Workers League?" in *WV* No. 53, 27 September 1974). How hollow now ring Wohlforth's pious words about the preservation of cadres: "Such individuals

embody great experience. This is why we must proceed with such care, with such restraint and caution, when moving organizationally with a cadre."

Apparently Healy had not anticipated such carnage, because he intervened again claiming that "the very struggle he had urged me to take up within the party leadership was 'factional'." But he apparently was not yet prepared to move against Wohlforth, for at the April 1974 International Committee conference he held up the Workers League "as a model" and squelched the Greek delegate who requested a full discussion on the hemorrhaging of leading Workers Leaguers.

A Method in Healy's Madness?

Wohlforth was finally removed at the 1974 Workers League summer camp. Wohlforth's own recitation of the events indicates that here was a man who was prepared to capitulate time after time over any political or organizational question, until he was brought face to face with the ultimate insult: Healy's charge that Comrade Fields, Wohlforth's close companion, was an agent of the CIA.

Wohlforth recounts that two weeks before the camp he was again summoned to England. When he arrived:

"I was whisked to a special meeting with Comrade Healy also attended by Comrade Banda and other comrades. The following was immediately proposed: (1) the whole past year had been a mistake, a turn into community politics and a retreat from the working class; (2) the former party members who had left were driven out by myself and Comrade Fields who represented a clique leadership; (3) Comrade Fields was probably a CIA agent; (4) there was to be no national conference this Fall; (5) the group of former party members was to be urged to come to the camp for discussions and brought back into the party without discussion with the PC....

"I returned to the United States a bit shell shocked. The British comrades, I thought, had always been right. They must now be right. I did my best to hold to that position while I proceeded to build the summer camp—now less than a week away....

"Comrade Healy sent Comrade Slaughter ahead of him to make sure it was 'safe' for him to come. Comrade Slaughter was to call England to reassure Healy. A special Political Committee meeting of the WRP was scheduled to decide whether or not Comrade Healy would be allowed to come to the camp without risking his life....

"Immediately upon arriving in Canada Comrade Healy began on the question of the CIA.... Comrade Healy was now convinced he was in the midst of a nest of the CIA. He even considered the thought that the whole Workers League was a CIA front....

"A meeting was immediately organized of IC comrades at the camp. I was accused of harboring and covering for a CIA agent. It was stated that I had failed to report on Comrade Fields' past CIA 'connections'.... I tried as best I could to accept everything Comrade Healy stated in the way of criticism of the League and my functioning. I no doubt accepted more than I should have. But I simply could not accept this charge against Fields....

"The Political Committee was taken in a large van across to the other side of the lake. There we sat silently with the former party comrades and Comrade Healy proposed their readmission. Without so much as a word being said the Political Committee voted the comrades back into the party....

"On Friday night Comrade Healy, at the suggestion of the German comrade, called a special meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers League, attended also by IC members present at the camp. At this meeting everyone was encouraged to denounce the leadership of the party in order to bolster the characterization of the past year of party work as liquidationism. Comrade Healy called the session 'Christmas' and thoroughly enjoyed it. It was at this meeting that Comrade Healy first proposed that I be removed as National Secretary of the party. In actual practice, the shift in leadership was already well underway....

"Comrade Healy started the discussion [at the next Central Committee] meeting with his charges that Comrade Fields was an agent of the CIA. I was held complicit in the situation [by

not reporting it to the IC.... In the middle of these proceedings I stated that I disagreed with the whole proceedings. This produced an extreme reaction in Comrade Healy.

"It was this mild resistance on my part which encouraged Comrade Healy to go ahead with the already well developed plans to remove me as National Secretary. Comrade Healy proposed that Comrade Mazelis put forward a motion to remove me as National Secretary and to suspend Comrade Fields from party membership pending an investigation into the CIA charges. This Mazelis did and it passed unanimously receiving even my vote and that of Comrade Fields. Then Comrade Healy proposed that I nominate Comrade Mazelis as National Secretary. I proceeded to do so and it passed unanimously....

"I shortly discovered that the action taken on August 31 was definitive in



Gerry Healy

character. A special meeting of the IC was called which after the fact: (1) endorsed Comrade Healy's totally unauthorized actions; (2) specifically barred me from any role in the day to day political leadership of the party; (3) barred Comrade Fields from any contact with the League of any sort. I offered my resignation from the League in response to this action. To continue in the League would have been a mockery of the entire struggle which had preceded August 31."

Subsequently a commission of inquiry consisting of two people including Mazelis cleared Fields of the charge of being a CIA agent (although, with typical arbitrariness, after being acquitted she was barred from holding office for two years). On the commission's invitation, Wohlforth reapplied for membership. Healy, however, ruled that Wohlforth must first appear before the IC, which Wohlforth refused to do.

Stalin is reported to have told the Lovestonite leaders in Moscow, "By the time you get back only your wives will support you." Is it possible that Healy was pursuing an analogous method in his choice of technique for the disposal of Wohlforth—finding in Wohlforth's relationship with Fields the key to one abuse which even Wohlforth, with his apparently limitless appetite for political self-abasement, would be unable to swallow?

What is even less clear in the Wohlforth document are the precise reasons for Healy's decision to heave his American epigone over the side. One can speculate about the role of Banda or the possibility that Healy felt threatened by an occasional twisting of his tail by Wohlforth who had actually achieved junior partner status after the rupture with the French made the Workers League a correspondingly larger component of the IC operation. But it is likely that Wohlforth's wholesale destruction of the Workers League cadre was a prime mover in the process, and thus Wohlforth is a victim primarily of his own gratuitous organizational brutality.

The prognosis for the Workers League is not good. The comparison of statistics Wohlforth adduces to document its decline is unreliable since the earlier counts were originally con-

cocted with Wohlforth's well-known proclivity for mendacious multiplication, but it is obvious that the Workers League membership is shrinking. Healy/Mazelis' efforts to win back the separated brethren will have at best limited success, as the human material is badly damaged by its earlier experiences in Healyite "democratic centralism."

The new leadership is uninspired; even granting Mazelis a certain flair for legalistic stabbing-in-the-back, as demonstrated particularly at the 1966 London Conference (which Wohlforth sat out, sulking), he is so colorless as to be almost invisible. The disruption of the pecking order should continue to produce a lot of scrambling among ambitious WL cadres, among them David North, who figures prominently in the Wohlforth document. And the Healy organization in Britain has itself recently suffered a serious blow with the reported departure of some 200 members around one Alan Thornett.

No Tears for Wohlforth

As for Wohlforth, we can say with sincerity: it couldn't happen to a nicer guy. Wohlforth has spent twelve years masquerading as a Trotskyist and helping Healy to do the same, in the process politically destroying whatever serious elements from among militant minority-group youth his organization has encountered, repelling most of them, convincing them that "socialism" is just another con game whose purpose is their manipulation, and converting a few into cynical fellow operators.

Wohlforth's greatest crime—in which he was abetted by Healy and Art Phillips—was that, in pursuit of supreme authority for himself and shortcuts to influence and numbers, he broke up the left wing within the SWP in the 1961-62 period. He split the opposition to the SWP's sharp right turn, cut it off from the possibility of winning valuable comrades from a section of the old-time SWP membership, set up our tendency for expulsion from the SWP in a situation of weakness and isolation which almost destroyed us, certainly setting us back a number of years. No amount of new-found empirical "wisdom" on Wohlforth's part can undo the enormous objective service he rendered the Pabloists at that crucial juncture, nor his continued service to them as foil and horrible example of what happens to those who break away to the "left."

But his ignominious departure from the Healyite fold at least accords us an opportunity to display to him a little piece of Wohlforthite viciousness. One of the practices at which Wohlforth excelled was the art of gratuitous denunciation. He always insisted that any individual leaving the Marxist movement for any reason must be denounced as a "renegade." In particular he waxed eloquent over a statement circulated internally within the Spartacist League in response to the resignation of Geoff White, formerly a founding leader of our tendency. Our statement replied to the evolved anti-Trotskyist political positions of White but also expressed recognition of his years of collaboration during which, recognizing his increasing political distance (the product in part of the demoralization engendered by Wohlforth's wrecking operations), he sought to train younger cadres to carry the movement forward.

Now Wohlforth has become, in his own terms as well as ours, a "renegade." With his usual pomposity, and lavish use of the imperial "we," Wohlforth pontificates:

"It is true we lost the skirmishes with the centrists but we won the theoretical fight at each point. We have left a priceless heritage in this theoretical struggle. This now passes on to the new generation of revolutionary fighters who face the big battles with the capitalist class itself."

Roughly translated, "I quit." And a final irony is that it was Geoff White who rendered the Marxist movement's verdict on Wohlforth when he remarked years ago, "Wohlforth is the living proof that crime does not pay." ■

Democratic Rights and Socialist Revolution

The degeneration of erstwhile Trotskyists is evident not only at the level of program and practice, but also in their transformation of scientific Marxist terminology into truisms, clichés and gibberish. Thus the Socialist Workers Party has transformed the right of "self-determination" (the right of a nation to a separate state) into freedom from all forms of oppression through real or illusory separatism. The Mandelites have transformed "workers control" (dual power at the point of production) into anything from more flexible production techniques à la Volvo to the dictatorship of the proletariat. And the Healyites have transformed "crisis" (a phase in the economic conjuncture) into "The Crisis," a new hyper-revolutionary historical epoch.

Joining this illustrious (?) revisionist tradition, the Revolutionary Socialist League is now waging a campaign to trivialize Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution. A rapidly disintegrating left-Shachtmanite sect, the RSL's sole value is that it is so muddle-headed that its writings serve as a useful foil for elementary Marxist education.

What Was the Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution?

In a pretentious article entitled "Permanent Revolution: Key to Black Revolution" (*Torch*, October 1974), the RSL informs us that the permanent revolution is a "theory of the relation between democratic rights and the socialist struggle." Apparently Trotsky did not understand his own theory. In his most careful exposition of his political world view, the Transitional Program ("The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International") written in 1938, the concept of permanent revolution is applied only in the section on backward countries. And it is related to two specific and linked bourgeois-democratic tasks—agrarian revolution and national independence.

The theory of permanent revolution is not about democratic rights in general but about the historical tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, a very different matter. The great historical accomplishment of the bourgeois-democratic revolutions, culminating in the French revolution of 1789, was the elimination of pre-capitalist institutions which impeded economic development. This meant eliminating monarchical absolutism and its social base among a landed aristocracy retaining feudal-derived obligations from the peasantry. (The RSL's Chris Hudson has performed the remarkable feat of writing a lengthy article on the "permanent revolution" without once mentioning the peasant question!)

In order to rally the urban plebeian and peasant masses against autocracy, the bourgeois revolutionaries had to appeal to democratic and egalitarian ideals whose maximum programmatic expression was a sovereign parliament based on universal male suffrage. However, given the fact that propertyless toilers are much more numerous than exploiting property owners, it was feared that a government based on universal male suffrage could threaten capitalist property, so that in reality all bourgeois revolutions stopped short of and suppressed attempts to realize a full democratic program. In fact, universal male suffrage was not generally

achieved in Western Europe until the twentieth century.

It was precisely the French bourgeoisie's betrayal of the program encapsulated in "The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen" which led to the development of socialist theories by those revolutionary intellectuals faithful to the cause of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" (e.g., Babeuf, Buonarroti, Blanqui, Saint-Simon, Fourier). Far from being a discovery of Trotsky, the belief that the realization of democratic ideals could only be achieved by an anti-bourgeois popular revolution was the central premise of pre-Marxian socialism.

The position that full, consistent and permanent achievement of democratic rights could only be realized under socialism was a truism in the Second International and can be found in any of Kautsky's numerous expositions on socialism. In fact, Kautsky was nowhere more insistent on identifying the socialist revolution with bourgeois-democratic demands than in his classic attack against Lenin, Trotsky and the Russian Revolution (entitled *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*).

What Is Trotsky's Theory of the Permanent Revolution?

No one in the Second International (not even the ultra-revisionist Bernstein, much less Kautsky) believed that the Russian, or any other, bourgeoisie was capable of instituting some kind of ideal democratic regime. Rather, the traditional wisdom of the Second International (shared by the Mensheviks) was that the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, under pressure from a radicalized peasantry and social-democratic proletariat, could approximate the achievements of the great French revolution. This would have meant the overthrow of tsarist absolutism and its replacement by some form of representative government, along with the expropriation of the landed aristocracy for the benefit of the peasantry.

Trotsky rejected this view, denying that the Russian liberal bourgeoisie was capable of replicating 1789, or even the abortive bourgeois-democratic revolutions of 1848. Trotsky asserted that the growth of Western capitalism had arrested the development of the Russian bourgeoisie, which was fundamentally dependent upon the feudal-derived exploitation of the peasantry. Far from supporting a peasant uprising against the landed aristocracy, the Russian bourgeoisie would seek to suppress the agrarian revolution. Only a proletarian state, he said, could achieve the historical bourgeois-democratic tasks and defend the insurgent peasant masses. Trotsky differed also with Lenin, who projected (in 1905) the possibility of an anti-bourgeois peasant party coming to power and instituting a uniquely radical, but still capitalist, regime.

In countries even more backward than tsarist Russia (e.g., India, China) feudal regimes and Asiatic despotism had been displaced by the imperialist powers as state guarantors of peasant exploitation. Therefore, the struggle against autocracy in the classic bourgeois-democratic revolutions was replaced in the twentieth century by the struggle against imperialist domination. This is how Trotsky summarized it in the Transitional Program:

"The central task of the colonial and semi-colonial countries is the agrarian revolution, i.e., liquidation of feudal heritages, and national independence,

i.e., the overthrow of the imperialist yoke. Both tasks are closely linked with each other."

As the Third International degenerated under Stalin, its ideologues—notably Bukharin—reproduced the Menshevik theory of a "two-stage" revolution in backward countries, with a multi-class struggle against imperialism culminating in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The program of a proletarian revolution, supported by the peasantry, such as was carried out in Russia in 1917 under Lenin's leadership, was declared by the epigones to be "Trotskyite" ultraleftist heresy.

The Menshevik-Stalinist "theory" was tested with exceptionally clear and disastrous results in the Chinese revolution of 1925-27. Ironically, one of the most precise statements of why the bourgeoisie of the backward countries would not lead an anti-imperialist democratic revolution comes from the In-



Cops attack demonstrator in Philadelphia, 19...



Southern slaves picking cotton before Civil War.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE

dian Bukharinite M. N. Roy venting his rage at the Kuomintang for betraying his naive faith in its revolutionary capacity:

"Rather than sacrifice the sectional interests of the reactionary landlords and capitalists, the bourgeois nationalist leaders betrayed the revolution. Class solidarity cut across national solidarity...."

—quoted in Harold Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*

Because the theory of permanent revolution defines the relationship between historically bourgeois-democratic tasks and the socialist revolution, it likewise defines the relationship between the bourgeois nationalist forces and the communist vanguard. In the advanced capitalist countries a revolutionary upsurge will necessarily be centered on the workers movement, though possibly saddled with a reformist leadership. In backward countries, however, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists often have hegemony over the urban plebeian and peasant masses during a revolutionary upheaval (e.g., China 1925-27, the "Quit India" movement in 1942, the Algerian war of independence, Bangladesh

in 1971). The purpose of the theory of the permanent revolution is to enable the communist vanguard to win over the masses from the bourgeois nationalist leadership before the latter goes over to the camp of bloody counterrevolution. This is not the central strategic task in advanced capitalist countries.

The Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution in the U.S.

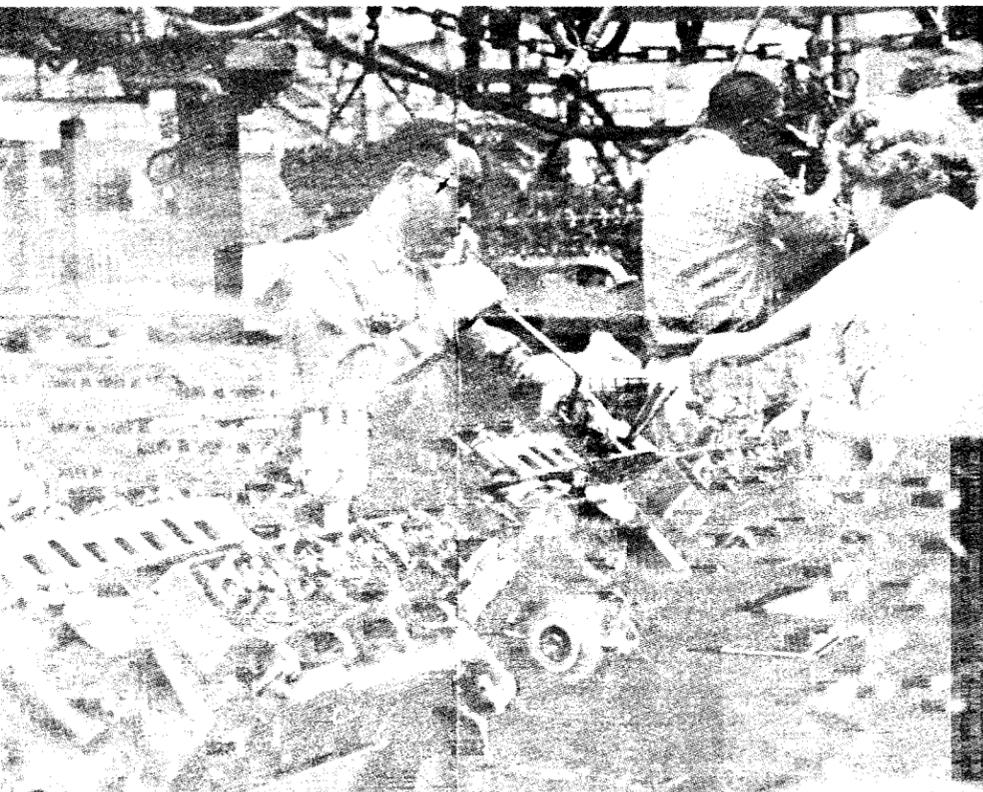
Because the United States originated as a settler-colony, it developed as one of the "purest" bourgeois societies among capitalist nations. However, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century American society was burdened by institutions inherited from the first epoch of capitalism (the epoch of "primitive capitalist accumulation"), institutions which impeded further economic development. Chief among these were the colonial/mercantilist relation to Britain and a sectional economy in the South dependent upon black chattel slavery.

America had two bourgeois-democratic revolutions: the war to break the state tie to Britain in 1776-84, and the suppression of the Southern slaveholders' bid for a separate state in 1861-65 (which led to the abolition of



NMU seamen in the 1930's.

EGBERT JAPNGIE COLLECTION



black and white auto workers, Detroit.

UAW SOLIDARITY

slavery). These were directed against the heritage from the age of mercantilist capitalism. Because America's bourgeois-democratic revolutions were not directed against an entrenched feudal order, they had an extremely narrow programmatic focus and radical plebeian elements were never a serious contender for power.

Thus a genuinely bourgeois-democratic program for the post-1865 South (the expropriation of the ex-slaveholding class and distribution of its land to the black freedmen), which was put forward by the Radical Republicans led by Thaddeus Stevens, was decisively defeated in 1867, before Reconstruction. Reconstruction was an inherently unstable situation in which the ex-slaveholders retained economic dominance (through a tenancy system) while being excluded from governmental power. Given this situation, some version of the Compromise of 1877 was inevitable.

The RSL's Chris Hudson recognizes that Northern capitalist politicians betrayed the bourgeois-democratic rights of black people in the South, attributing this to the fact that capitalism "was still not able to industrialize the whole

South and remake it in the image of the Northeast." This is irrelevant: large parts of the Middle and Far West remained agrarian in the post-Civil War era and were at least as bourgeois-democratic as the industrial Northeast.

The surplus extracted from black slaves was largely channeled to Northern capital through the latter's control of commerce and finance. The Northern aim in the Civil War was not the elimination of the exploitation of blacks in the agrarian Southern system, but rather to eliminate the excessive political power of the slaveholding class which threatened a separate state. The abolition of slavery was a far from inevitable outcome of the Civil War. It was not Northern capital's original war aim, much less was that aim the full, "nine course" bourgeois-democratic program.

A further factor arresting the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the post-bellum South was that the existence of a class of enfranchised black freeholders would have been a dangerously radical element in the late nineteenth-century political alignment. Imagine the impact of the Populist movement if Southern blacks had had

the same political and economic weight as Midwestern farmers.

The Basis of Black Oppression

The RSL identifies the oppression of blacks with the deprivation of bourgeois-democratic rights:

"The rights denied to blacks are referred to by Marxists as bourgeois-democratic rights, as are the rights of women, the rights of nations to self-determination and equality, etc. These are rights promised equally to all regardless of race, class, sex, nationality, etc."

This is abstract and, in a sense, wrong. When Marxists refer to bourgeois-democratic rights they do not mean equality in general, but equality *before the law*: suffrage, the right of public political expression, to form political parties, etc. Except for certain areas in the South, blacks have the same legal political status as whites. The fundamental basis of black oppression lies elsewhere.

The basis of black oppression is that of an *economic caste* concentrated in the industrial reserve army—the most marginal, lowest levels of the proletariat—and in the lumpen population. The perpetuation of black caste oppression is not primarily the effect of legally sanctioned state action, but of the atomistic working of the bourgeois social economy (e.g., job and housing discrimination, poor housing, etc.). The attainment of full legal democratic rights and even their rigid enforcement (such as elimination of promiscuous police violence against the ghetto poor) would not fundamentally alter the condition of U.S. blacks. The elimination of the special caste status of black people in America is literally inconceivable without economic planning and the massive redistribution of wealth through proletarian revolution.

This caste oppression is not basically the heritage of some previous historical epoch. It is a new form of oppression, essentially the product of this epoch of capitalist decay. In the present period there is a universal tendency in advanced capitalist societies to transform the industrial reserve army into a national/racial caste. Despite certain unique features, the situation of black workers in the United States is analogous to the Irish in Britain and to Mediterranean labor in France and West Germany.

The notion that black oppression results from an uncompleted bourgeois-democratic revolution makes sense

only if one maintains the one-time Stalinist position (now upheld by Nelson Perry's Communist Labor Party) that black people in the U.S. constitute a nation; or the latter-day Stalinist theory which projects an "anti-monopoly" revolution leading to a non-imperialist "advanced democracy." And in fact, the RSL's "permanent revolution" theory amounts to the bizarre notion that socialist revolution arises out of the struggle for what the Stalinists term "advanced democracy."

Self-Determination and Racist Terror

Given the Revolutionary Socialist League's infatuation with bourgeois-democratic demands, it was predictable that it would call for self-determination while admitting that blacks are not a nation!

"...the future holds the possibility of the seething cauldron of racism boiling over into an apartheid-type totalitarian control of the black minority or the attempt at total extermination.

"In this case the best defense of the black minority would still be socialist revolution. But the proletarian vanguard must still be ready to stand with blacks in their right to take the last desperate measure of self-defense—separation—if they so choose, explaining at the same time that it is only the dictatorship of the proletariat which can offer the possibility of blacks' creating their own state."

It is hard to believe that Hudson and the *Torch* editors read this article before printing it, since this passage contains an obvious logical contradiction. If a black state can "only" be achieved under "the dictatorship of the proletariat," then separatism *cannot* be "the last desperate measure of self-defense" against totalitarian racist terror.

Even discounting Hudson's imbecilic self-contradiction, the underlying political thrust is dead wrong. Revolutionary Marxists oppose self-determination for black people not because it is undesirable (i.e., socialism is better) but because it is either impossible or would be reactionary. An economic caste can only create a nation-state through Zionist-type methods—forced massive population transfers producing an anti-black "Palestinian" people.

The victory of fascism or some other form of racist bonapartism would indeed face blacks with South African-type terror and possible mass murder. Under such conditions, a nationalist movement of American blacks similar to Zionism could well emerge, seeking to create a settler colony. White American bonapartism might even support such a Zionist type of black nationalism. But the resulting conflict between the black settler-colony and the native population could only be totally reactionary and totally tragic. We do not call for such a development.

Faced with a totalitarian racist regime, there would indeed be an urgent democratic demand for the defense of blacks, and it is not self-determination. It is the same demand the world Trotskyist movement raised in the 1930's and 1940's on behalf of the Jews threatened with Nazism, a demand which was a *democratic alternative* to Zionism. This is open global immigration for a minority facing racist terror. It is only through emigration to several states that American black people could escape from racist terror without displacing and oppressing some other people.

Black Liberation as a Proletarian-Democratic Task

The current oppression of blacks in the U.S. is neither a remnant of some previous historical epoch, nor is it any kind of national question. The caste oppression of black people concentrated in the industrial reserve army is a product of this epoch of imperialist decay. The elimination of national/racial castes within and below the proletariat cannot be identified with classic bourgeois-democratic rights. Rather, black liberation is a proletarian democratic task, the realization of equality through socialist economic planning. ■

Continued from page 1

Near East Realpolitik

the world's total proven petroleum resources).

According to the *New York Times* (10 January), however, leading U.S. generals prefer the Mediterranean route—a surprise attack on Libya—because there would be less time to undertake the one effective means of retaliation available to Arab states: blowing up the wells.

The *Commentary* article goes on to examine the odds of great-power retaliation. The USSR? Not in its national interest, Tucker concludes. (Unfortunately, the Russian bureaucracy, which long ago usurped political power from the working class, also did not see the adequate arming of North Vietnam and the NLF as in its interest.) West Europe and Japan? The U.S. must act in "as even-handed a manner as possible" once it grabs the oil.

In recent years, particularly during the Vietnam era, speculations such as the above have been generally left to the pages of William Buckley's *National Review*. But for those who remember Dulles' talk of "rolling back Communist aggression" in East Europe and Kennedy's plans for closing the (non-

and Japan would remain "political eunuchs." (Kissinger, in his interview, referred to these governments as "impotent.")

Both this article and Kissinger's remarks have been widely discussed in the bourgeois press, indicating that they are not the theoretical whimsies or political blusterings of an "irresponsible" few. (Defense Secretary Schlesinger and President Ford explicitly reaffirmed Kissinger's threat.) However, one major impediment to such an undertaking—which has been "found to be militar[il]y feasible and highly risky" (*New York Times*, 19 January)—is the lack of popular sentiment for a military adventure.

As Tucker points out: "The difficulty, of course, is that the public has been long habituated to support the use of force only in cases which have been made to appear as necessary for the containment of Communism. . . ." The decline in American political and economic hegemony requires the revival of war as an instrument of "rational" foreign policy vis-à-vis other capitalist nations as well.

Anti-communism is no longer



British paratroopers invade Egypt, 1956.

DER SPIEGEL



U.S. Marines landing in Lebanon, 1958.

DER SPIEGEL

C 7007 CX
Nr. 3
29. Jahrgang DM 2,50
13. Januar 1975

Amerika droht: Schlag gegen die Ölscheichs

Sollen wir uns von diesen Kerlen mit Dreck beschmeißen lassen?

DER SPIEGEL

The spirit of '75 in Washington. Headline reads: "America threatens strike against the oil sheiks." Ford's comment: "Are we going to let these guys crap on us?"

existent) "missile gap," Kissinger's latest gambit is merely a throwback to the familiar delusions of an "American century." In fact, the "think tanks" which had their heyday in the 1960's were chock-full of intellectuals who used to routinely spend their days charting post-World War III survival statistics and their nights dreaming up scenarios for nuclear surprise attacks.

When bourgeois defeatism was in vogue during the late 1960's, Tucker (like many other liberal academicians) had a briefling as a "neo-isolationist," a position he is willing to modify in light of recent developments. The good professor explains that he could not at that time predict that West Europe

enough. It is necessary to heighten national chauvinism by campaigns against foreign workers and a wave of protectionist propaganda. While the Henry Jacksons push these policies in Congress and the Meany/Chavez/Woodcocks promote them in the trade unions, the Tuckers have the job of offering slick phrases and feasibility studies as intellectual rationales for a global bloodbath. The political result of the decomposition of capitalism, as Lenin pointed out, is inter-imperialist war. This time the bombs will be atomic.

The political and economic conditions for the next holocaust are already ripening. A key step along this road is the nuclear arming of the now "im-

potent" West Germany and Japan, an event to be expected in the not too distant future. The current unwillingness of the formerly subservient West German government to support U.S. oil policy, and its officially expressed "horror" at the Kissinger remarks, are evidence not of pacifism or neutralism but of appetites to again play an "independent" world role. (Hitler re-armed Germany after Versailles by playing on such sentiments for a revived "independent" role for German imperialism.)

The Near East could easily and soon erupt into a barbaric war on a smaller, but no less bloody, scale than the previous two world imperialist conflagrations. Since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war the U.S. has shown a willingness to fan the fires on both sides. Western arms sales to the Arab states now total in excess of \$3 billion. Washington has decided to rearm Israel to a "21-day" capability, going so far as to gut some American reserve and training units of their heavy military hardware as a consequence. (Israel had only a six-day capability during the last war.)

Nixon's promise of nuclear reactors (i.e., the materials for nuclear weapons) to both Egypt and Israel after the 1973 war was recently rejected by the Rabin government in Tel Aviv. Israel is already known to have nuclear capacity and almost certainly actual weaponry. The rejection was partly due to Israel's reluctance to allow international inspection of its plutonium-making facilities. Just as important, it hopes by this move to build Congressional resistance to a reactor deal with Egypt.

(In addition, today's *New York Times* reports that the U.S. is delivering some 200 Lance missiles to Israel. This rocket, which is "just being introduced into the United States Army," is "primarily a nuclear weapon" because its cost would otherwise be prohibitive if fitted with conventional warheads.)

There are strong pressures now building in Israel for a "preventive" strike against the Arab states. Arms

deliveries to the Arabs, paid for out of cartel-produced oil price rises, will not begin for about a year. Many Zionists argue for an attack now, before the military situation changes and before more political pressure for a Palestinian mini-state develops. Among these there are, of course, partisans of a "final solution."

A recent letter to the *New York Times* (13 January) developed this argument with characteristic Realpolitik rationality. Complaining that a recent *Times* contributor had connected the atrocities at Auschwitz to those at Hiroshima, the writer proposes that the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima was "rational" and even "humane," because it saved American lives.

The letter's author worries since "those who do not see much difference between Auschwitz and Hiroshima may lack the perspective to understand the relative merits in current controversies, including the ones between Israel and its neighbors." You see, if Israeli lives are threatened it could "[become] necessary to inflict another Hiroshima on Cairo, Damascus and even more noteworthy world capitals. . . ."

Legal considerations prevent us from here speculating as to the retribution workers' tribunals will exact from the Tuckers, Kissingers and such "humanitarians" as the author of the *Times* letter. Every class-conscious worker and would-be socialist should burn with impatience lest mere years remove these vampires from our hands.

In the past the Spartacist League has been virtually alone among ostensibly socialist groups in the U.S. in upholding a policy of revolutionary defeatism on both sides in the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948, 1967 and 1973. While reformists and centrists called on the Faisals, Husseins, Qaddafis and Sadats to unleash an "anti-imperialist" war against Israel, we warned that there would be nothing progressive in a victory of Arab sheiks and colonels over the imitation Prussian generals of Tel Aviv.

We uphold the right of self-determination for both the Arab and

Hebrew nations existing in historical Palestine, while recognizing that the counterposed national claims of these geographically interpenetrated peoples can only be democratically resolved in the framework of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

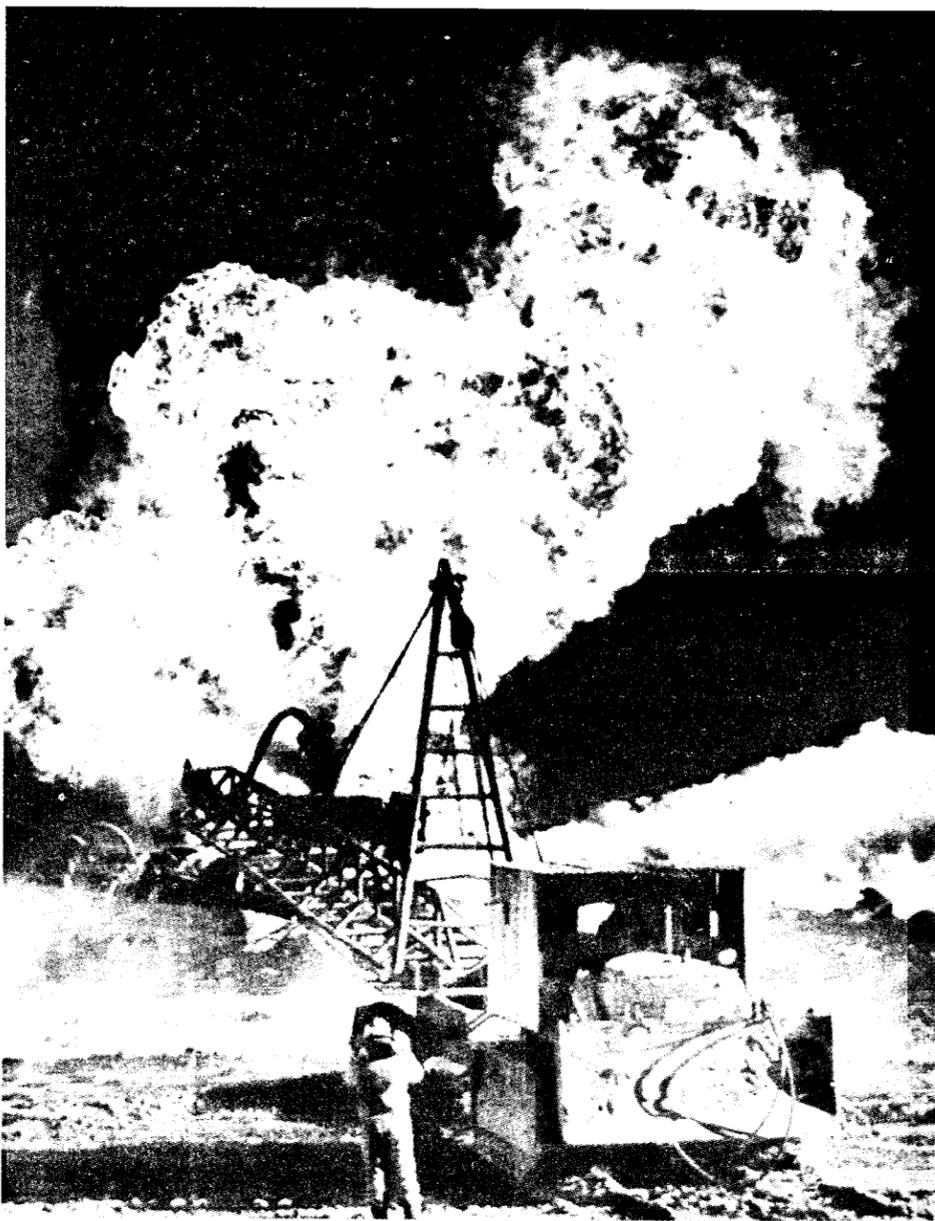
The 1948, 1967 and 1973 wars were not fought over the question of the Palestinians' national rights, which were subordinated to a reactionary war between several independent capitalist states. Moreover, Hashemite Jordan adamantly opposes an independent Palestine, and in the case of the 1948 war *all* the Arab governments involved sought to carve up among themselves the areas not occupied by Israel.

Israel is, of course, allied with the imperialists, but the same has always been true of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the 1973 conflict made clear the ability of the Western powers to switch their support to the Arabs. In the October War, France and Britain maintained a position of pro-Arab neutrality and every country in Europe except Portugal refused to allow U.S. planes to land on the way to Israel. General Moshe Dayan, who ought to know, has charged that it was Nixon's refusal to adequately resupply Israeli



SYGMA

Henry Kissinger: "I am not saying that there's no circumstance where we would not use force. But it is one thing to use it in the case of a dispute over price, it's another where there's some actual strangulation of the industrialized world."



DER SPIEGEL

Arab states have threatened to blow up oil wells if invaded by imperialist powers.

forces which caused the war to end in military stalemate.

While it is absurd to talk, as do various opportunists, of a classless "Arab Revolution" against imperialism, the Western powers have on several occasions militarily attacked Arab regimes in the Near East. In the case of the 1956 Franco-British invasion of Egypt (in alliance with Israel), the Spartacist League called for a policy of revolutionary defensism on the Arab side.

In the abstract, Washington would no doubt prefer to solve its "oil problem" by engineering palace coups, such as those which toppled King Saud in 1966 and Mossadegh (Iran) in 1952. But in the event of another Near East war in the next few months, it is almost inevitable that the Arab oil boycott would be reactivated. This could make real Kissinger's threats of armed U.S. intervention. In the event of an imperialist grab for Near East oil, it is the duty of all revolutionary socialists to call for

revolutionary defensism on the Arab side.

It is necessary to oppose the "humane" solutions of the imperialists, no matter how anti-communist the Arab regimes may be. But we give no *political* support whatever to these reactionary forces or to *any* bourgeois government. Nor do we place confidence in the rulers of the Russian deformed workers state, a parasitic bureaucratic caste which time and again has demonstrated that in its desire to work out a "deal" with imperialism it will cold-bloodedly sacrifice the interests of the working masses and socialist revolution.

The only guarantee for victory to the working people is a policy of proletarian internationalism in all countries: against national chauvinism and threats of imperialist invasion in the U.S. and Europe, against Zionism and Arab nationalism in the Near East, and for political revolution in the deformed workers states. Forward to the rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

U.S. Steel's Answer to Pollution: Layoffs

"Smiling Ed" Sadlowski—who recently won overwhelmingly against the candidate of the United Steel Workers (USW) International bureaucracy in a Labor Department-supervised election for director of the union's District 31 (Chicago-Gary region)—has just encountered his first test as a union leader and "honest reformer." Before the fight began he threw in the towel.

The giant U.S. Steel Corporation has been trying for a year and a half to upset, reverse or otherwise avoid a court order on meeting air pollution standards for the open-hearth furnaces at its Gary works. The order was obtained by the federal government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). U.S. Steel had requested a third extension (from December 31 until the end of June) of the compliance deadline for the 10 open hearths which still remained functioning. Most of the aged open hearths have been replaced by the cleaner (and more productive) basic oxygen process furnaces.

U.S. District Court judge Allen Sharp ruled out an extension but then, under pressure from Richard Hatcher (mayor of Gary) and Vance Hartke (U.S. senator from Indiana), agreed to a three-month extension if U.S. Steel would pay a \$2300-a-day fine. The corporate giant disdained to pay what for it was a mere nuisance surcharge, electing instead to close the open hearths and threatening to lay off 2,500 workers. In effect the government ruling amounts to a cost-cutting measure for the company and penalizes the workers for the bosses' pollution.

Brother Sadlowski, fresh from his "historic victory" (according to the Communist Party's *Daily World*, 2 January) said little and did nothing, save to sagely observe that "U.S. Steel is more concerned about chasing the buck than about the welfare of workers and the community." Despite the rave notices on his election by various reformist "socialists," Sadlowski had clearly underlined his lack of any class-struggle instincts before his victory over Sam Evett. In early November he had sponsored a scheme to compensate steel workers laid off as a result of the coal strike by paying them out of the union's strike fund. U.S. Steel would certainly not object to that!

The layoffs in Gary will not be as extensive as threatened by the company. However, hundreds will be laid off and hundreds more will find themselves working short-time. Sadlowski's response to these cutbacks has been to "threaten" that the union might enter the government's suit against the company. With such leadership steel workers have much to worry about, since orders for steel are now declining and industry-wide layoffs will soon be on the agenda as the economy continues its precipitous decline.

It was evident that Sadlowski's militant rhetoric was pure bluster (see our article "Ed Sadlowski: Out-Bureaucrat on the Make," *WV* 22 November 1974), as his demagoguery about democracy will also prove to be. Nevertheless, several supposedly revolutionary groups (the October League, the International Socialists and, of course, the CP) quickly hopped on the bandwagon, hoping Sadlowski's popularity would rub off on them. Only his betrayals will.

If the trade-union bureaucracy has nothing but an occasional (and increasingly rare) crumb to offer working people, the petty-bourgeois ecology movement has even less—but not for lack of an issue. U.S. Steel is the worst polluter of air in the industry and the Gary works are the filthiest in the country, emitting 20,000 pounds of particulate matter per hour. There is little question that the air in Gary

(where the sun glows like a dying ember and street lights seem like far-away stars) is so foul as to imminently endanger human health. (At one point a rain combined with the emittants



Ed Sadlowski

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

from steel plants to produce sulphuric acid, severely damaging local foliage.)

In a city where most of the population are steel workers or their relatives, the betrayal of the bureaucrats of the USW in allowing this gaseous cesspool to develop and continue is glaringly obvious. The conservationists, on this occasion the League for Women Voters and "Community Action to Reverse Pollution," had an even more barren "strategy." They simply demanded enforcement of Judge Sharp's original order.

The EPA and the good judge were, of course, willing to compromise. The federal agency has recently passed the buck to normally reactionary state legislatures, allowing them to determine what degree of air pollution they desire up to the minimally safe federal standards. And then there is the question of jobs.

The efforts of these sometimes well-meaning liberals to pressure the bourgeois state to regulate the class it represents are shown to be especially fruitless in times like these. During a period of capitalist economic crisis it is obvious that costs, both in the private and "public" sectors, are to be trimmed because of decreasing profits and revenues. One of the first social cutbacks is to be in terms of the now "unrealistic" clean air and water standards—standards which were, at best, minimal concessions. (In his "State of the Union" address President Ford called for "deferring" auto pollution controls until 1980.)

The labor bureaucracy is the major obstacle to the development of the only movement which could win both adequate health safeguards and jobs for all—a class-conscious working-class movement fighting for the overthrow of capitalism. Preventing the erosion of the environment is only part of the struggle to prevent attacks in social welfare and living standards of working people generally.

In the final analysis capitalism is not capable of responding significantly to any, let alone all, of these demands. The working class must be prepared to assume the task of organizing and rationalizing production by taking control of society as a whole.

Steelworkers must demand: no layoffs—make the company, not the workers, pay for real pollution safeguards.

As part of the fight for a workers government to expropriate capital, the union misleaders—from reactionaries like the USW's current president, I.W. ("No Strike") Abel, to the "progressive" Ed Sadlowski, whom the liberals are already grooming as Abel's successor—must be ousted by a militant new leadership based on a class-struggle program. ■

Continued from page 1

More Layoffs . . .

money supply was sharply cut back from about 7 percent annually to 2.8 percent.

Even after finally admitting the existence of a recession, Ford told the plutocrats and financiers of the Business Council that he was opposed to "quick fixes" and, "If there are any among you who want me to take a 180-degree turn from inflation fighting to recessionary pump-priming, they will be disappointed" (*New York Times*, 12 December). A gasoline tax increase, he said, was definitely out. Reminded of this statement a few weeks later, as he was announcing the new Ford program of income tax cuts and import duties on foreign oil, the White House press secretary said, "Well, it could be 179 degrees."

The new "anti-recession" program announced by President Ford in his "state of the union" speech was quite simple: a 12 percent across-the-board tax cut on personal income for 1974, a 5 percent increase in investment tax credits for business, a \$3 per barrel import duty hike on foreign oil and a smattering of federal job programs.

Among bourgeois economists and commentators there was virtual unanimity that the administration proposals would not turn the economy around. "Ford's 'Quick Fix' Seen as Too Weak With Energy Plan Only Shuffling Funds," was the headline of the *New York Times*' (15 January) analysis. "Ford's Plan to Battle Slump Risks Creation Of Further Problems," was the *Wall Street Journal's* conclusion, pointing in particular to new inflation or a severe credit crunch. George Meany called the program "the weirdest one I've ever seen."

The combined cut in personal and business income taxes would come to a total of \$16 billion, which most economists termed a drop in the bucket. Even Ford seemed to agree, repeatedly dodging reporters' questions as to when the impact of the tax cut would take hold. Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, earlier testified in Congress that a cut of \$10-15 billion would not significantly stimulate the economy. What was important, he said, was to "dissipate the extraordinary uncertainty and gloom" about the economy. The problem was "psychological" but "not irrational" (*New York Times*, 7 January). The vaunted "quick fix," then, turns out to be nothing but a psychological upper, a kind of economic methedrine.

More Layoffs, More Price Rises

Congressional and labor criticism of the administration program focused in part on the disproportionate benefits of a straight-rate tax cut for the rich. A family of four which earned \$5,000 last year would receive a \$12 rebate on 1974 taxes; with a family income of \$10,000 the return would be \$50, but with before-tax earnings of \$40,000 this would rise to \$1,000. The regressive impact of the plan (redistributing income in favor of the rich) was deliberate: government economists expressed fear that a large tax cut for workers would be spent for food, while a lump-sum \$1,000 check sent to

"better-off" families might lead to the purchase of a new car.

The second main area of criticism was on the oil import tax, which would mean a 27 percent increase in the price of crude petroleum. Such a sharp rise, though as a tax it would have a depressing effect on the economy, would be quickly "passed through" in the form of price rises for manufactured products using oil products. In regions primarily dependent on foreign oil for generating electricity (Northeast, Midwest) the tariff increase would mean a jump of more than 25 percent in power costs. This could lead to heavy layoffs and the shutting down of entire plants in some areas.

On consumers, primarily working people, the impact of the oil tax would be just as sharp. Government figures



Leonard Woodcock

released last week showed that for just about every income category the additional costs as a result of the \$30 billion increase in oil taxes would exceed the amount received in the form of a tax cut.

Democrats Have No Answers

When Democrats met at a "mini-convention" in Kansas City last month, the main item in their eight-point economic program was a call for income tax reduction, which the administration opposed at the time. Now that Ford has made an about-face on the tax issue and announced that his budget will have a \$32 billion deficit, the liberals are reduced to calling for a "fairer" distribution of the rebate and bigger job programs.

In addition, Congressional Democrats proposed a lowering of interest rates by expanding the money supply and revival of something like the Reconstruction Finance Agency as a means of channeling money to companies threatened by a cash crisis. However, Ford will probably take up both these proposals, which have also been endorsed by the *Wall Street Journal*. Thus on the basic points of their economic programs conservatives and liberals are united. Yet both admit, tacitly or openly, that their proposals will not solve the present crisis.

The main area of controversy is over the oil import duty ordered by Ford on Friday and the proposed tax on domestic petroleum production. Congressional leaders are pushing through legislation for a 90-day freeze of Ford's executive order (as well as questioning his legal authority to issue the decree), but have given no position of their own.

At the recent meeting of its general board, the AFL-CIO leadership announced its program for the economic crisis. This platform is almost a word-for-word repeat of the Congressional Democrats' proposals (including a \$5 billion tax cut for business and strict enforcement of speed limits) with two differences: the union tops call for a ban on Arab oil and protectionist tariff legislation against "foreign competition." Thus these "labor statesmen" have come up with an "answer" to the economic crisis which is, if anything, somewhat to the right of the Democrats and Republicans!

The Labor Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class

This fact has not been lost on the bourgeoisie. Late last year the *Wall*

Street Journal published two editorials whose headlines accurately portray the relationship between big business and the labor bureaucracy. The first, "Arm in Arm With George Meany" (21 November), began with the remark that, "If George Meany, 80, ever decides it is time to begin a second career, perhaps he would consider a job writing editorials for this newspaper. . . . in recent years his view of the world has frequently come to coincide with ours." The second, "Arm in Arm With Leonard Woodcock" (16 December), praised the UAW leader's opposition to an auto price cut because the companies' profit margins are "razor thin."

Of course, it is unlikely that George Meany, 80, will take up the *Journal's* offer. He is much more effective as an agent of the capitalists *within* the labor movement. And in that respect he is no different from the rest of the union brass. Though some may talk more militantly than others (particularly if they are lower on the totem pole, or currently out of office), the entire labor bureaucracy—from Meanyite reactionaries and Woodcock liberals to the reformist fakers now in power in some local unions—supports the continuation of capitalism.

Therefore, they must also accept layoffs. It is no accident that when Chrysler threatened to permanently close down the Jefferson Avenue assembly plant in Detroit last November, UAW International vice president Ken Bannon replied the union had no power to stop this but "moral persuasion." Nor is it an accident that a number of local union presidents have recently taken up the Maoists' slogan of "Jobs or Income" as their answer to the crisis. What they really mean is *abandoning* the struggle for jobs, in favor of pressuring city councils and Gerald Ford for a bigger dole and a few public works programs.

A Transitional Program

Beyond the mainstream labor bureaucracy there are a number of reformist groups which, despite their socialist pretensions, have as their policy being just one step more militant than the Woodcocks. If the UAW calls for a tax cut for all incomes under \$25,000, then they call for no taxes on incomes under \$25,000. If the AFL-CIO calls for a \$20 billion federal jobs program, they will demand twice the amount.

Revolutionary Marxists must tell the truth to the workers, not fool them with such gimmicks. The truth is that no amount of tinkering with the tax system or countercyclical "Keynesian" measures for government spending can end the crisis, which is the product of the boom-bust cycle inherent in capitalism. (And because of those forces, the period of crisis will eventually come to an end, although at a great cost in suffering for the working people, as a new cycle begins.)

The struggles of the working class must be aimed toward the revolutionary expropriation of this oppressive system. That does not mean that communists ignore the immediate issues facing the workers or oppose reform struggles. We demand from the capitalist state unconditional, unlimited unemployment compensation and massive programs of public works, planned and carried out under union control. We demand of the labor movement the creation of *union* unemployed committees and that all seniority rights be preserved indefinitely.

But we seek to direct the fight toward eliminating the real cause of the crisis, the capitalist system of production for profit. Thus, rather than jobs or income, Trotskyists demand "jobs for all," through a shorter work-week *with no loss in pay*. Rather than divisive schemes like "reverse seniority layoffs," "voluntary retirement" or preferences for particular groups (women or minorities), we demand "no layoffs": factory occupations (sit-down strikes) must be labor's answer to plant shutdowns and mass layoffs. Against inflation we demand full cost-of-living escalators for all workers, welfare recipients and pensioners. Rather than reformist plans for taxing the corporations, we call for expropriation of industry without compensation, and for workers control.

Such a program is one of militant class struggle rather than tailing after the liberal politicians and capitalism's labor lieutenants in the union bureaucracy. It must be fought for through intervention in the struggles of the masses and by painstakingly building a new leadership in the unions, through opposition caucuses based on a full transitional program. This includes the need for a class political alternative, an independent party of labor counterposed to the twin parties of capital, i.e., a workers party based on the unions, to fight for a workers government. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

includes SPARTACIST Enclosed is \$5 for 24 issues
 Enclosed is \$1 for 6 introductory issues

order from/pay to: Spartacist Publishing Co./Box 1377, GPO/NY, NY 10001

SUBSCRIBE TO Young Spartacus

Monthly paper of the Spartacus Youth League, youth section of the Spartacist League

\$2

11 ISSUES

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Make payable/mail to:
Spartacus Youth Publishing Co., Box 825, Canal St. P.O., N.Y., N.Y. 10013

FORUM

The Middle East: National War or Socialist Revolution

Speaker: LEN MEYERS

Tuesday, January 28, 7:30 p.m.
University of Illinois

Circle Center \$.50 Donation

CHICAGO

For information call: (312) 427-0003

Continued from page 12

...ILWU Local 10

have been full members, for firing because they had been critical of the union leadership.) Some of the victims subsequently took the union to court, a move that Gow and Keylor now point out was an error which will only hurt the union.

Gow came into the ILWU in 1959 in Local 10. Both he and Keylor were at one time supporters of Longshore Victory, a now-defunct opposition group, and initial backers of Mills and Stout. Experience has shown, they point out, that simple honesty and good intentions are not enough—it is program that is decisive.

Gow and Keylor campaigned on a program "to make the ILWU defend its members' real interests and to put the working class in control of society." They called for international working-class solidarity, including use of labor boycotts to support the struggles of Chilean workers, farm workers in the U.S., etc. They demanded nationalization of the longshore-transport industry, without compensation, and called for workers control.

Their joint program also called for a struggle to build a workers party based on the unions, a struggle directed at ousting—not simply pressuring—the present pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy. Finally, they denounced appeals to the courts against the union, such as the B-men suit and a Mills-Stout suit to stop Bridges' hall-grabbing.

"The question of B-men and the hall has to be fought out within the union. To rely on the government to come in and do it for us is worse than futile.... Opening the door to the government is opening the door for it to smash us. The worst enemy of the ILWU and of all labor is the capitalist government." —"Defend the ILWU—Stop Bridges' '75 Contract Sellout," 31 December 1974

The new officers quickly made a ruling which kept both Keylor and the other candidate tied for last place off the executive board. Formerly it had usually been the practice that the five full-time offices (president, secretary-treasurer, business agents, etc.) are filled by members who also run for executive board. Since officers sit on the executive board ex-officio, those that are elected to both positions have been replaced on the board by the five candidates who received the next highest votes.

Application of this principle has varied in the past, however, thereby creating an opportunity for bureaucratic abuse by the officials. In this case, instead of calling a run-off election to resolve the tie for last place, the new officers decided to leave the vice president on the board. Thus Local 10 officials were relieved of an opponent on the executive board, and the membership was deprived of the right to choose its representatives.

The new president of Local 10 is Larry Wing, a business agent in the previous administration. Wing was brutally beaten last September by a goon squad of Bridges supporters who were demanding that the leadership turn over its keys to the Local's hiring hall. It was also Wing who first authorized and then called off the "hot-cargo" boycott of LASH barges belonging to Alioto's Pacific Far East Lines. The boycott by Local 10 members was in solidarity with the Stockton Local, which had been denied longshore work on the barges.

Perhaps because of his reputation as the most militant member of the Mills-Stout team, Wing received the highest vote—850—of any candidate in the election (his pro-Bridges opponent got 753). Wing's lack of an alternative program for the union was shown, however, when he called off the boycott while it was still going strong. Moreover, he has done nothing to oppose the new move to deregister (and thus fire) those B-men with the least hours worked in 1973.

Besides Wing, the chief business agent is also an anti-Bridges member. The other three officers, however, are pro-Bridges. In the key race for secretary-treasurer—who signs the checks for payments to the Local's separate hiring hall ownership corporation—a Bridges man with a notoriously unreliable reputation was elected by a single vote, 761 to 760. The winner, Carl Smith, played a prominent role in the first purge of B-men in 1963. Smith may now be in a position to force sale of the hall by simply refusing to make payments necessary to meet hall expenses.

The executive board was divided between the various factions in the

Local. Marshall, one of the International supporters accused of participating in the goon attack on Wing, was elected with 362 votes. Archie Brown, a well-known supporter of Communist Party positions, was elected by 416 votes and also returned to the Publicity Committee, where he runs the Local's news sheet.

At the Local meeting following the election, in an apparent reference to rumors of irregularities, Brown made a token attempt to question the election committee's report certifying the election as proper. However, he did not pursue the subject, thereby "making the record" while avoiding a serious attempt to track down rumors.

At the first meeting of the new executive board yesterday, the new leadership already revealed its bankruptcy in the face of mounting attacks jointly engineered by the International and the employers' Pacific Maritime Association. In the face of the Coast Caucus' capitulation to Bridges, who has already stated his willingness to arbitrate any differences in order to ram through a hurried-up contract, the PMA began openly provoking the union by ordering "steady men," who are only supposed to do maintenance and other specified work, to work in the holds of ships. (Steady men, who work regularly for one employer rather than being assigned jobs through the hall, were first allowed by Bridges in the 1966 contract.) Instead of acting against this threat to the union hiring hall, the executive board voted, 20 to 7, to refer the question to the International.

Meanwhile, star chamber proceedings have been scheduled by a joint union-management labor relations committee to "hear" the cases of B-men threatened with deregistration. These men, who should be full members and who have met contractual requirements of availability for work, are now supposed to testify as to why they should not be fired!

Gow and Keylor had prepared motions for an immediate mobilization against this attack: for an immediate halt to deregistration proceedings, for granting full "A" hiring status to B-men immediately and for full union membership for B-men. However, their motions were shoved to the last place on the agenda, and consideration of them conveniently avoided through adjournment. An immediate fight must now be taken to the membership to stop this illegal and undemocratic rail-roading of working longshoremen and union members.

In their last leaflet issued before the election, Gow and Keylor made their position clear on the question of support, critical or otherwise, to the "militant, democratic" opposition to Bridges.

"Many brothers in Local 10 have asked us if we are supporting some of the anti-International candidates like Wing, George Kaye or Archie Brown. No. None of them offer any real alternative program to Bridges. We went through it once with Stout and particularly Herb Mills and learned that in relation to events like the goon squad and the monitorship [semi-receivership of the Local instituted by Bridges], being honest and democratic isn't enough.... "Those of us that have been around long enough remember that Archie Brown actively supported the deregistration of the B-men in '63 and that he threw his full prestige behind the treacherous M&M contract.... Then, just before the 1973 contract, Brown

retreated from his previous total opposition to 9.43 [a contract clause providing for "steady men"] and made a resolution for an equalization of hours formula."

The leaflet called for the formation of a caucus on a class-struggle program, to construct a union leadership which will not capitulate to capitalist politicians like Alioto, to the bosses' anti-labor laws, which outlaw militant actions such as labor boycotts, or to the employers' drive to maximize profits. It is precisely the lack of a class-struggle program which causes immediate capitulation to the companies and the class-collaborationist policies of the union bureaucracy by even those militants who begin with honest intentions to fight for the rank and file's interests.

Gow and Keylor made clear that they would base the struggle for such a program on the mobilization of the membership (as over the boycott of Alioto's barges) rather than reliance on the bureaucracy of the International or on "militant democrats" (no better than Stout-Mills-Wing in Local 10) in power in other locals such as Los Angeles. They have thus begun to lay the basis for the building of an alternative, class-struggle leadership throughout the ILWU. This struggle within the unions is a vital support to the building of a revolutionary vanguard party which alone can lead the working class to victory over capitalism. ■

Continued from page 12

...Oakland Strike

picketing) was criticizing the inadequate terms of the KNC settlement, the microphone was seized from him by a supporter of the leadership. In addition, according to a leaflet distributed at East Bay warehouses today, at the end of the meeting ILWU International secretary-treasurer Lou Goldblatt "warned" Mandel that a move was afoot to expel him from the union.

The class-collaborationist ILWU officialdom, like the rest of the union bureaucracy, is committed to the conception that management and labor must live in harmony. These defeatists and professional capitulators argue that if labor fails to make peace with the employers it will be crushed by them and their government. Not only must class-struggle oppositionists therefore be silenced, but the workers must be mobilized in support of the interests of the employers.

Thus Goldblatt spoke at length at the meeting on the theme that "foreign" money is "turning the U.S. into a colony." This is a bald-faced attempt to whip up national chauvinism in preparation for inter-imperialist trade rivalries and wars in which all workers will be the losers. Moreover, the immediate effect of Goldblatt's line is to drive a wedge within the Local 6 membership itself, portraying Spanish-speaking workers (such as the KNC strikers) as the "enemy within!"

Only the building of a new class-struggle leadership, counterposed to the class collaborationism of the Bridges, Goldblatts and McLains, can spread the militant methods of the KNC strike, in order to stop future "Borons" and strengthen international labor solidarity. ■

Spartacist Local Directory

BALTIMORE/WASHINGTON, D.C.
P.O. Box 4398,
Arlington, VA 22204

BAY AREA (415) 653-4668
Box 852, Main P.O.,
Berkeley, CA 94701

BINGHAMTON
c/o SYL, Box RCY, SUNY
Binghamton, NY 13901

BOSTON (617) 282-7587
Box 188, M.I.T. Sta.,
Cambridge, MA 02139

BUFFALO (716) 834-7610
c/o SYL, Box 6,
Norton Union, SUNYAB,
Buffalo, NY 14214

CHICAGO (312) 427-0003
Box 6471, Main P.O.
Chicago, IL 60680

CLEVELAND (216) 621-3379
Box 6765,
Cleveland, OH 44101

DETROIT (313) 921-4626
Box 663A, General P.O.,
Detroit, MI 48232

HOUSTON (713) 926-9944
Box 9054,
Houston, TX 77011

ITHACA (706) 277-3211
c/o SYL, P.O. Box 578
Ithaca, NY 14850

LOS ANGELES . . . (213) 485-1838
Box 26282, Edendale Sta.,
Los Angeles, CA 90026

MADISON
c/o SYL, Box 3334,
Madison, WI 53704

MILWAUKEE
Box 6061,
Milwaukee, WI 53209

NEW HAVEN (203) 776-5953
c/o SYL, Box 1363,
New Haven, CT 06505

NEW ORLEANS . . . (504) 866-8384
Box 51634, Main P.O.,
New Orleans, LA 70151

NEW YORK (212) 925-2426
Box 1377, G.P.O.,
New York, NY 10001

PHILADELPHIA . . (215) 667-5695
Box 25601,
Philadelphia, PA 19144

SAN DIEGO
P.O. Box 2034,
Chula Vista, CA 92012

TORONTO (416) 366-0871
Canadian Committee of the Inter-
national Spartacist Tendency
Box 6867, Station A,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

VANCOUVER
Canadian Committee of the Inter-
national Spartacist Tendency
Box 26, Station A
Vancouver, B. C., Canada

SL/SYL PUBLIC OFFICES—*Revolutionary Literature*

BAY AREA

Friday
and
Saturday } 3:00—6:00 p.m.

330-40th Street
(near Broadway)
Oakland, California
Phone 653-4668

CHICAGO

Tuesday 4:00-8:00 p.m.
Saturday 2:00-6:00 p.m.

538 So. Wabash
Room 206
Chicago, Illinois
Phone 427-0003

NEW YORK

Monday
through
Friday } 3:00-7:30 p.m.
Saturday 1:00-4:00 p.m.

260 West Broadway
Room 522
New York, New York
Phone 925-5665

WORKERS VANGUARD

Workers Vote for Class-Struggle Candidates in ILWU Local 10

SAN FRANCISCO, January 25—While a major longshore contract betrayal loomed in the background, elections for officers and executive board members held recently in the Bay Area waterfront local of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union failed to provide a way out of the impasse facing the union. With about two thirds of Local 10's 2,400 members voting, key offices were divided between supporters and opponents of ILWU president Harry Bridges.

Support for the anti-Bridges forces in the Local slipped somewhat from last year's elections, in which an entire slate of oppositionists under Mills and Stout had been elected. In addition, questions were raised in the minds of some members over the handling of the election when a key Bridges supporter was elected by only one vote and an outspoken opponent of both wings of the Local leadership was maneuvered out

of a seat on the executive board after having tied for last place.

Local 10 has been the center of resistance to the International leadership over the last four years as Bridges has allowed automation to drastically erode jobs and working conditions. Recently he has also attempted to force the sale of the Local's hiring hall to commercial developers aligned with his friend, S.F. mayor Joe Alioto.

The Mills-Stout regime, although a nuisance to Bridges, was completely unable to lead the Local in a qualitatively different direction. It folded under pressure instead of mobilizing the ranks to defend a spreading boycott of work on automated LASH barges (owned by Alioto's shipping company) which had been worked by non-longshore labor. It also capitulated to Bridges' demands for an immediate contract settlement (six months ahead of schedule!) at the recent December meeting of the Coast

Longshore Caucus. And it bowed to a new plan by the International to railroad hundreds of B-men (second-class members) out of the union, despite a contractual clause requiring their elevation to full membership this year.

Increasing support for a class-struggle alternative was revealed, however, in the votes for two militants, Stan Gow and Howard Keylor, for executive board. Gow and Keylor, who between them have 37 years on the West Coast docks, ran as a team counterposed to both the pro- and anti-Bridges wings in the Local leadership.

The two militants called for resistance to the impending contract sell-out, a sliding scale of hours to make more jobs with no loss in pay and immediate full membership status for all B-men. They also denounced the leadership's alliance with Alioto, calling for a break with the Democrats and Republicans and the building of a

For a Militant ILWU



Stan Gow



Howard Keylor

4498 Convention and Caucus Delegates
20447 Board of Trustees
Publicity Committee
Executive Board
Grievance Committee Executive Board

6 hours work for 8 hours pay!
A workers party to fight for a workers government!

workers party to fight for a workers government. Gow, who was a member of the outgoing executive board, was re-elected with 239 votes, an increase over his vote last year. Keylor tied for last place, ahead of 19 other candidates, with 221 votes (also an increase in his showing in Local elections).

Keylor came into the union in Stockton in 1953. He helped lead opposition to the first purge of B-men in 1963. (Bridges at that time singled out 82 working longshoremen, who should

continued on page 11

Labor Solidarity Halts Union-Busting in Oakland Strike

OAKLAND, January 28—Mass picketing initiated by militants in the warehouse local of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union has stopped a union-busting drive which could have been the spark for a similar assault on all of Bay Area labor. The employer, KNC Glass Company in Union City, had sought to repeat the crushing blow delivered to ILWU Local 30 by U.S. Borax last fall.

In that strike, management used several hundred scabs to keep its mine in Boron, California, operating. Borax also sent a warning letter to its striking employees, threatening them with permanent replacement if they didn't return to work immediately, without a contract. The threat worked because AFL-CIO craft unions crossed the picket lines and the ILWU International failed to organize solidarity actions, even within the union itself. Thus, ILWU longshoremen in Los Angeles were forced to ship scab borax. As a result, hundreds of workers were thrown out of their jobs and other union gains were sacrificed.

The Boron strike was held up as an example to all employers by a feature story in the December issue of *Fortune* magazine. The pattern is familiar—scabs, cops and the passivity of the trade-union bureaucracy—but this open union-busting is a sharply increased danger in the present period, as unemployment swells the pool of potential strikebreakers.

The KNC strike looked like it would become a Boron in the Bay Area, paving the way for a general anti-labor assault by the Distributors Association (the warehouse employers' group) during contract negotiations approaching in the

next few months. The company kept its offer low, hired notorious strikebreaking guards and sent a Boron-style ultimatum to the strikers: go back without a contract or be fired. The ILWU leadership under Local 6 president McLain also followed the pattern, by failing to respond with militant union action to stop the scabbing.

However, a class-struggle program raised by three warehouse militants, Bob Mandel (a member of the Local 6 executive board), John Dow and Pete Farrugio, pointed the way forward. Denouncing the do-nothing policy of the union leadership, they demanded mass picketing and a "hot-cargoing" labor boycott of material going to and from the plant. Response to their leaflet was impressive: hundreds of workers from surrounding ILWU shops joined the picket lines over a period of days. Local 6 and even International leaders were forced to show up.

Teamster officials—themselves feeling the pinch of employer union-busting through increased owner-operator trucking—turned out despite their bureaucratic rivalry with ILWU officials over warehouse and longshore container jurisdictions. And militants from several other unions also appeared, including members of the Militant Action Caucus of the Communications Workers and the Committee for a Militant UAW from the Fremont GM assembly plant.

Mass picketing by 75-100 workers and union officials on January 9 stopped the scabs, but the company sought an injunction to put an end to picketing. This had been anticipated by Mandel and the other militants, who tried to get the Local 6 stewards council to



ILWU members defend picket line against scabs, cops in KNC strike.

WV PHOTO

defy the injunction. But members of the stewards council influenced by the Communist Party and Revolutionary Union helped the ILWU bureaucracy table Mandel's motions.

Nevertheless, sentiment among the ranks for defying the injunction—and thus confronting the leadership's class collaborationism head-on—mounted rapidly. ILWU members from the Local hiring hall, from the longshoremen's local and from shops such as Associated Grocers and St. Regis Paper continued to man picket lines, keeping out scabs in defiance of the injunction. Emboldened by the court action the professional strikebreaker guards became increasingly vicious, waving guns and unleashing dogs. In response, members circulated petitions in a number of Local 6 houses demanding shop meetings with union officials to organize defense. At Associated Grocers workers voted to walk off their jobs if necessary to defend the strike.

The mass support for KNC strikers impressed both employers and the union leadership, neither of which had any desire to see it spread and influence upcoming disputes. The company backed off from its attempt to break the

union while union leaders hastily accepted a slightly improved management offer. Despite a personal show of militancy on the picket line, and despite his complaints about the ILWU International's failure to wage a militant defense of the Boron strike, when the chips were down in his own Local McLain refused to further mobilize the members for the achievement of lasting gains in the KNC strike. Thus this plant is still saddled with a substandard contract which holds down the wages of other Local 6 members. Furthermore, it has no cost of living provision whatsoever and no attempt was made to give KNC a contract termination date together with the majority of Local 6 agreements.

Workers Vanguard interviews with KNC workers revealed the important lessons that were learned during the strike. It was the solidarity of other workers in the union, and of other locals and industries, which made the limited victory possible. A subsequent Local 6 meeting showed that the leadership had also learned something from the strike. While John Dow (one of the militants who had initiated the mass

continued on page 11