Workers Must Rule Iran!

Down With All the Ayatollahs!

APRIL 23—The false sense of national unity following the victory of the Shi’ite cleric, oveturer Shah Pahlavi has quickly dissipated. As the first decrees of the new theocratic regime issued from the pen of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, they were met with protests by tens of thousands of women and bloody protests revived by the Kurdish and Turkmen minorities. The fanatical Muslim strongman had hoped to impose “harmony” with a 98 percent vote for an “Islamic Republic” at the end of March. But last week his rule faced a new challenge as 50,000 students and workers rallied at Tehran University against the puritanical vigilante and vicious attacks. The leftist had proved just as treacherous as their previous idol. On Friday Taleghani broadcast a contrite submission to Khomeini. During the Khomeini/Taleghani agreement with Khomeini’s Koranic fundamentalism. For example, Taleghani declared that even if a democratically elected parliament voted to allow women the right to abortion, “it will be overruled by Islamic tenets.” Despite his much-touted “tolerance” of the left, the Iranian left proved just as treacherous as their previous idol. On Friday Taleghani broadcast a contrite submission to Khomeini, endorsing the activities of the khomeini regime.

The bourgeois politicians of the National Front such as Prime Minister Bazargan and Foreign Minister Sanjabi have been increasingly irked by what they call “the other government inside the Government,” as it has become clear that real power rests with the secret Revolutionary Council of mullahs. During the Khomeini/Taleghani rift Sanjabi tried to pressure Khomeini by resigning his post in protest against the khomeini’s actions.

The Mojahedeen guerrillas, whose Islamic religious-terrorist headquarters were the target of a thousand armed Muslim fanatics at the office of the pro-Taleghani, also enthusiastically supported the so-called “Red Mullah.” They hailed Taleghani as Iran’s “prime minister-judge,” placed their men under his command and demanded that he be made commander over all khomeini militia forces. Together with the National Front they demanded that Khomeini reveal the identities of the members of the Revolutionary Council, seeking a “reformed,” more accessible theocratic state.

Taleghani’s opposition also intersected the discontent among the unemployed. Before his withdrawal from the Government, a large delegation of the unemployed had appealed to Taleghani over the head of the Minister of Labor. With one out of two factories in Iran shut down there may be as many as four million Iranians out of work. Thousand of jobless occupied the Ministry of Justice and a thousand more were protests in Khorramshahr and Isfahan where at least one demonstrator was killed. The government’s “solutions” has been the wholesale expulsion of thousands of Pakistanis, Indians and Afghan workers.

Although the pro-Taleghani demonstrations had illustrated the growth of anti-Khomeini sentiment, the protesters’ hopes were dashed after their hero returned from a meeting with Khomeini in the holy city of Qom. Taleghani agreed to reopen his Tehran office and appeared on television to shamefacedly announce, “the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini is not only accepted by me but the world has accepted it.”

In reality there was nothing leftist about this “Red Mullah,” who is in full agreement with Khomeini’s Koranic fundamentalism. For example, Taleghani declared that even if a democratically elected parliament voted to allow women the right to abortion, “it will be overruled by Islamic tenets.” Despite his much-touted “tolerance” of the left, Taleghani has no desire to become the spearhead for any kind of democratic, secular opposition to his cherished Republic. As Khomeini haughtily observed, “These people who raise the issue with noise and shouts, was it really for Mr. Taleghani? The one who does not believe in God—ahah!—he continued on page 9

“Fatima Khalil. He is the Truth on Iran

“In Islamic society, women are not considered human beings. I remember when I was a young girl and went to class to study the Koran. I was told that if I did not cover my head, I would go to hell and every strand of my hair would turn into long snakes... It is no accident that when Khomeini took power he immediately outlawed abortion and imposed the chador. What he is trying to do is control the masses under the ‘Islamic spirit.’ The veil is a symbol of women’s oppression under Islam and an instrument of that control.”

Fatima Khalil, a Near Eastern communist woman of Muslim origin, is currently on a US tour organized by the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League, she is speaking in ten cities in a little over three weeks. Continued on page 6.
Healyites: Kill a Commie for Qaddafi

In May of last year, 21 members of the Iraqi Communist Party (CP) were executed on charges of forming cells within the army. This judicial murder was part of a major crackdown on the mass party of the Iraqi proletariat by the bourgeois-nationalist Ba'athist regime. According to Iraqi CP leaders, some 15,000 party members are now alive in jail. Though the pro-Moscow Stalinists still seek friendly relations with the Baghdad butchers, they are obliged to go through the motions of protesting the persecution of the Iraqi comrades. So the British CP press, the Morning Star, has run a few articles exposing anti-communist terror in Iraq.

In response the following recently appeared in a certain British paper: "At the obvious instigation of the Kremlin, the Communist Party of Great Britain has become the centre of an immense slander offensive against the bastion of the Arab Revolution—the Republic of Iraq and its revolutionary vanguard, the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party (including its armed wing, the National Liberation Front)." And this is from a paper which, though not Stalinist, makes no bones about its pro-Soviet policy. So much for Britain's "free press".

The purpose of these articles is to smear the Iraqi revolution and to discredit the struggle for revolution in the Middle East. For this purpose, they make the following use of the bureaucracy of Stalinism and its apologists: They identify the Iraqi Revolution as a "reactionary" and "anti-democratic" movement and use this to justify the persecution of the communist party. They also use the "anti-Stalinist" label to discredit the Iraqi communists and to link them to the "fascist" Qaddafi regime.

In response, the Iraqi communists issued a statement in which they condemned the British press for its smear campaign. "It is clear," they said, "that the British press is simply repeating the same old lies that have been used to discredit the Iraqi Revolution for decades. But the Iraqi Revolution is not afraid of such smear campaigns. It is determined to continue its struggle for freedom and democracy."
Racist Hysteria Targets "Turn 'Em Loose Bruce"

The wolves are out again after NYC criminal court judge Bruce Wright. They began howling for blood when the liberal black judge released without bail a black college student accused of slashing the throat of a white decoy cop. The Patrolmen's Benevolent Association (PBA) immediately went on the warpath, clamoring for the cop's removal from the bench of the man they call "Farn 'Em Loose Bruce." Predictably, Murdoch's New York Post blew up a grisly photo of the cop with his 8-inch running scar on its 13 April front page. And seeing a new opportunity to let loose a salvo of "law and order" rhetoric to boost his poll ratings, Mayor Ed Koch attacked Wright's decision as "bizarre" and "disturbing."

As it turned out, the wolves picked a real loser of a case to nail Wright on. Despite all the racist hysteria, the evidence was clearly on the judge's side. The D.A. had failed to hand down an indictment within the 72-hour time limit because he couldn't get a straight story out of the cops. Wright then released the suspect, Jerome Singleton, on his own recognizance. Moreover, Singleton is married with two children, an honorably discharged veteran, and a student at Manhattan Community College—hardly the type to take a police cudgel to the head. Wright's decision to pay very little attention to this, but under capitalist justice the whole judicial system necessarily discriminates against the black.

The racist hysteria over Wright's ruling produced a wave of anger in black neighborhoods and a new salvo from the liberal judicial establishment. "There is murder among New York's finest," the judge said, and police "have a license to hunt down blacks and kill them with impunity." Crusading for his favorite cause, Wright said he released the suspect because the Eighth Amendment prohibits punishment of a defendant "merely because the public is indignant over this, but under capitalist justice the whole bail system necessarily discriminates against the blacks.

Koch's Cossacks

Mayor Ed Koch has declared war on NYC labor, and he wants everyone to know it. Striking tugboat workers, school bus drivers and Teamsters deliver meds have all been met with a combination of anti-labor propaganda and out-in-the-streets violence by the bosses. Mayor turned the cops against us and allowing the scabs to move in on the pickets outside Sunnyvale Farms dairy in Brooklyn.

The 500 Teamster strikers outside the Sunnydale Farm dairy in Brooklyn had no deliveries on the 13 April 1979. The boss's negotiator had promised to run a load of scab milk into the dairy, the bosses negotiated secret contracts with the milk and cream union, and the cops escorted the milk to the Sunnydale farm. When the cops showed up on the picket line, they began to clash with the workers.

Bruce Wright at rally outside Tombs, 17 April. To his right Crown Heights minister Herbert Daughtry, mayor, who was elected on a racist death penalty campaign and since then has not missed a chance to hammer the coffin nails into the career of murder. Koch got a ruling produced a wave of anger in black neighborhoods and a new salvo from the liberal judicial establishment. "There is murder among New York's finest," the judge said, and police "have a license to hunt down blacks and kill them with impunity." Crusading for his favorite cause, Wright said he released the suspect because the Eighth Amendment prohibits punishment of a defendant "merely because the public is indignant over this, but under capitalist justice the whole bail system necessarily discriminates against the blacks."

"Turn 'Em Loose Bruce" was a smart move that brought out thousands of worshippers and the entire precinct crowd as well. Two days later he mobilized some 700 people to demonstrate in support of Judge Wright in front of the Tombs. One picket sign asked significantly, "Why Didn't Koch Find the Torsney Decision Disturbing?" (This referred to the white cop who was acquitted for gunning down unarmed black teenager Randy Evans on Thanksgiving Day, 1976.) On the weekend former Harlem civil rights activist Jesse Gray tried to make a comeback after 15 years in the doldrums by rallying the old Sutton machine in Harlem.

All the assorted support demos served up the same warmed-over liberal fare. At the Toombs Daughtry called for a federal investigation of "everything, the whole judicial system." The call for more black cops ran through the entire affair, from the presence of a black ex-cop who had been knocked off the force after being shot by one of his white counterparts, to a statement of support for Wright by the Guardians Association (the black police union, the white precinct cops). All demanded the reappointment of Wright when his term expires at the end of the year.

Bruce Wright is a liberal who has had the courage to stand up against the onslaught of trigger-happy cops, scaring workers to a plant where no deliveries were expected and allowing the scabs to move in on the pickets outside Sunnyvale Farms dairy in Brooklyn.

Koch's Cossacks on the striking Teamsters and the brutal cops were designed to terrorize and intimidate the city's unions. It was a bloody confirmation of the elementary Marxist truth that capitalist government and its cops are neutral. The blue-shirted thugs who rode down the Sunnydale picketers were 100 percent on the side of the bosses. "New York's finest" strikebreakers attacked the white, American flag-waving workers with the same ferocity they have always used against ghetto youth and leftist demonstrators. The bruised and bloodied Teamsters who got to their feet shouted "Sieg Heil" and cursing the cops as "fucking Nazis" should not forget this lesson in bourgeois justice. The vicious cop riot at Sunnyside, the police escorts for scab buses and the injunctions directed at tugboatmen should have been answered only with protests from every union in the city. Mass picketing should be reinstalled, with the NYC unions mobilized to beef up the lines. A mass demonstration of all NYC labor should be organized to demand, "Hands Off the Unions! No to Koch's Strikebreaking!!"
The Deer Hunter has done what The Green Berets could not a decade ago: it has moved audiences to actively root for the American military fighting the Vietnamese sadists. The Deer Hunter was shown to drunks in Vietnam in 1966 it drew not cheers but bitter ironic laughter. At home it drew pickets of antiwar activists who saw the film for what it was: a crude Pentagon apologia for the war aimed at the hearts and minds of an increasingly disaffected American public.

The Green Berets missed its mark because the conventional incorporation of weapons and cinematic cliches of the World War II heroic genre were overwhelmed by the"arming of the""tragic""officers, the terror-burning of villages, the crucial lies exploding on nightly TV newscasts. College campuses were ablat with protest; winter patriots were arming against a sea of fake news and.""nervous Nellies"": even a definite right wing of the U.S. bourgeoisie was unhappily debating in the Senate, "“Vietnam in Vietnam?" In that polarized climate the ""good guy/bad guy"" images of Hollywood simply felt out.

The Deer Hunter, while no obvious John Wayne flagwaver, has purposes no less conscious and reactionary. But unlike The Green Berets, it has realized those purposes, despite its flaws and melodramatic pretensions (it are deep and grandiloquent), despite its lies (they are big and outrageous) and despite its clear reactionary sexual politics. The Deer Hunter is the most artistically serious popular film yet produced on the subject of America and the Vietnam war. With its recent Academy Awards victory, it has become the signal occasion for a deep, long overdue national redemption for the ""sin"" of Vietnam, a popular focus for U.S. imperialism's moral rearmament in its Marching defeat. Now, says Time magazine (23 April), ""the psychological time-lock on Vietnam seems to have expired."" And in a six-page spread entitled ""Vietnam Comes Home,"" Time explains why The Deer Hunter is the key to the obvious time-lock.""The Deer Hunter presents a version of the American experience in Vietnam that is utterly at variance with the view of ""a nation of William Carlos Williams."" As the U.S. government builds up militarily and toots about ""human rights,"" the word ""doves"" unified on the need for a mighty high ground for the film's loyal political defenders. From a certain point of view The Deer Hunter does not simply reflect the depoliticization of the ""me"" decade; it is an active advocate of that process and perhaps an important artifact of the period. It is the quintessential 1970s film: slick, colorful, stylized, romantic, superficial and deep­ly reactionary politically in the name of being anti-political, beyond ""mere"" politics.

From a certain point of view The Deer Hunter is not complex enough to be a good political film, it is an adolescent good guys/bad guys movie filled with what liberal film critic Pauline Kael called ""boys book values."" It surely insists on those values with its mythic tests of bravery and strength, its emphasis on male bonding and the hunt as preparation for war. In fact, the film is an epic wonder of nearly all known reactionary social attitudes, from a glorification of the provincial xenon­phobic ""purify"" of the cloister ethnic community to the most vicious an Asian racism, meandral foot soldiers, not fire-breathing gook-killers.

Is it true that the characters in this film do not talk about politics. The three main characters join up to fight in Vietnam and say nothing about it, nor does anyone else question their decision. The bits of behavior a dialogue are supposed to suggest only feelings; no overt ""thinking"" is allowed to get in the way, and certainly no argument. Michael Cimino, the American director of this British-financed film, told Le Monde (29 March) that The Deer Hunter is ""not about ideas, it's a film about people."" This is a nice counterpo­ sition from the most talented graduates of the Deits Hara school of moviemak­ing. But Cimino has idea all right: ""A film that takes too obvious a position may force you to think and argue, but it prevents you from feeling anything."" Indeed the primacy of feeling is what Cimino's romantic aesthetic is all about. And the denigration of reason and glorification of unverba­lized ""pure"" emotion is self-characteristic of a fascistic political coloration.

Cimino the filmmaker is in the business of manipulating feelings and not ideas. But this manipulation is put in the service of a complete set of reactionary ideas. As mass-culture craftsman, Cimino offers us characters whose personal consciousness is aggressively non-political—increed, non-political for people who are supposed to exist in a period of burning political polarization. It serves his purposes. He cleverly goes to the heart of the 1970s antipathy to periods of the most vicious right-wing propaganda on film since the McCarthy era. And he succeeds in drawing his audience in—to the point of cheering—through an acute sense of mass psychology, technically efficient film editing and a calculated and profoundly cynical disregard for historic truth. Since the film appears to probe deeper than ""just"" politics to concern itself with the ""real"" psychological-mythic roots of war, the viewer is not supposed to concern himself with mere ideas. The main questions of who tortured in Vietnam The Truth Matters

The successful impact of The Deer Hunter may be due to the connection with which director Cimino financially assaults the truth. There are in fiction what can be cabled or simultaneous reactions, imaginative constructions—and there are lies. The Deer Hunter lies. And so it must be or it could not portray the As Americans the good guys in Vietnam. The scene of the biggest lies this biggest lies. Cimino subjects the ""buddies"" to some of the most melodramatic scenes of torture on film—scenes explicitly designed to make the audience squirm with fear and loathing—he lets us get to ""know"" the heroes in their home town. The first part of the film concentrates with care upon daily life in Clairmont, Pennsylvania, a fictional small steel town of a working-class Ukrainian-American ethnic community (these scenes were actually shot in a real Ukrainian-American community in the industrial ""flats"" of Cleve­land's near West Side). Cimino's camera allows us to observe his ""good buddies"" and their family and friends. He attends to this business of life and death, the recognizable symbols and choreography of social gesture: sex and marriage, birth, family, work and food, war and binding, the hunt. He picks up the smallest details of working-class life and sends them up against the largest mythic landscapes.

Of course Cimino presents his heroes as ""regular guys"" just trying to survive, uprooted and plunged into a horrible situation which they do not understand for which they are responsible. The ""non-political"" concept, which makes audience identification with the heroes possible, is at the heart of their experience in Vietnam as a struggle with the ultimates of life and death. The are about the business of life and death, the recognizable symbols and choreography of social gesture: sex and marriage, birth, family, work and food, war and binding, the hunt. He picks up the smallest details of working-class life and sends them up against the largest mythic landscapes.

As the mountains, Cimino cuts roughly and suddenly to Vietnam (actually shot in Thailand), where we are confronted by an American legion political fantasy. We see massacres of Vietnamese villagers—but it is the Vietnamese who are the mass­ murdering, and the Americans who are defending the helpless, just like Mother Theresa defending the helpless. We are stunned by a familiar image: a Vietnamese holds a pistol to the head of a terrified woman and then opens the woman's head. Is it Nguyen Ngoc Loan, Saigon police chief caught by a UPI
photographer in the act of executing a "suspected Vietcong"? No, it is the way around—"a Vietcong about to blow the head off a helpless South Vietnamese citizen." Cimino has taken the very images that galvanized American antitrust sentiment and turned them inside out. More than a lie, Cimino perhaps has developed an aesthetic perversion. His technique is more insidious than the old-fashioned technique of telling the big lie and telling it often. Leni Riefenstahl (Triumph of the Will) could pick up some modern-day pointers from Cimino & Co. One can only wonder if he learned his stuff in one of the army intelligence psy-war "brainwashing" schools. Familiar images are presented with exactly the opposite content of what they are known for—result: disorientation. Identification with the heroes, for fear of survival, shock—and rational historical judgment is overwhelmed by feeling. Jarred out of rational perception, black becomes white, the victims become the persecutors, the tortured become the torturers. The Vietnamese guerrilla torturers in The Deer Hunter conform to the most vicious, racist, "yellow hordie" stereotypes. They precisely fit the description presented in Indoctration lectures by intelligence officers who told inductees that the "VC" were the most sadistic creatures on earth, who would "nail your dogtags to your forehead and send it home to Mother." Cimino's guerrillas wild and sadistic, but they torture for sport. The Americans are kept in small, rat-infested bamboo cages in a river, from which they are dragged and forced to play Russian roulette with live ammunition. The "VC" have a splendid time betting on the outcome of this game.

Now first of all, this Russian roulette torture has no basis in fact, and even Cimino admits it is purely a romantic invention. But by the scale of The Deer Hunter this amounts to a small untruth. The prison cages, for instance, are clearly described as "tiger cages." But the tiger cages were the device of the ARVN! (And how did three home town buddies wind up in the same "tiger cage" anyway? This too is but a small lie by the standards of Cimino's gross distortion of the realities that dominates and conditions all the others is the portrayal of the NLF as the torturers and the U.S. as the torturers. The torture scene is of central importance in The Deer Hunter, as it is in the lives of its three main characters. Each is personally tested by this hideous experience. They all learn the bounds of human endurance. Only Michael (De Niro)—the Hemingway-style "switchblade" of the film—comes through intact. The groom, Steven (John Savage), is mutilated; Nick (Chris Walken), the mailman, is drive-bombed and eventually—as he relentlessly reenacts the Russian roulette torture-as-sport—to the point of madness. Cimino knows what he's doing when he goes directly to the center of the liberal moral revolution with Vietnam for his inverted images. He is after more than a "war is hell" pacifism or Catch 22/Mystic River somberness. He knows the truth and it matters, even as he tries to convince his audience that his film is an apolitical metaphor of survival. His ideological position demands he run the process of truthful discovery backwards.

Who Tortured Who

The truth is that it was the U.S. forces and their Saigon allies who did the torturing in Vietnam, and not the NLF. This statement is categorical. It is not a question of the random brutality associated with individual soldiers in the field of war—acts that tend to be the result of pressure and personal spirit—but of torture as a policy in Vietnam. As such it was avoided necessarily by the NLF/DRV, which relied heavily upon its base of support in the peasantry and its extensive political infrastructure. The policy of torture for the American government and the ARVN, however, came out of Vietnam with vague charges of mistreatment of American soldiers. But they could never make the charges stick. Mark Lane published a book of interviews with GIs recounting the most brutal torture by the Americans. The State Department denied it. In these times of post-Watergate liberal cynicism, it is worth remembering that it was the government's Vyets which excavated the "credibility gap.

The bourgeoisie, the "hawks," got into the act. When in 1970 two Congressmen went to Vietnam they found not NLF torture but American torture on an incredible scale. It was true: there were "tiger cages" on a "Devil's Island" of Con Son 60 miles from Saigon, where tens of thousands of prisoners were kept without trial in five-by-five hellholes. Rep. Karkin told a press conference: "There were as many as five people in an airless pit... Many are forced to drink their own urine. Most of the men could not stand up, their legs having been amputated by bearings and by being shackled to a bar about one or two feet off the floor... There are buckets of lime dust above the cages, and the guards throw the dust on the prisoners when they beg for food and water."—Washington Star, July 1970

So the American public learned from the media of the unspeakable horror. They learned it was systematic and sophisticated. They learned that the American military was training the ARVN in the most advanced techniques of electro-torture. They learned that the tiger cages did exist and that, when the old bamboo wore out, a California concrete company was contracted to rebuild them to the exact specifications of the time-worn dimensions of a tiger cage. Now Cimino wants his audiences to unlearn the truth.

Catharsis and Bourgeois Hypocrisy

For the left wing of the antiwar movement, the exposure of the U.S. policy of torture confirmed what they already knew: that there was a class war in Vietnam. The workers and peasants had no one side except U.S. imperialism—holding up the enfeebled Vietnamese capitalist class—was on the other. The Phoenix program was the model for "Vietnamization": the counterrevolutionary war was necessarily "dirty.

But for the liberal "doves" the torture was a dirty policy—as if that war could have been fought on a better, "human rights" basis. American liberals felt guilty. They wanted to get out of that dirty place where "our boys" were becoming corrupted by drugs, by the Saigon brothels, by the torture. It is this guilty moralism which the new Vietnam films seek to address and purge.

Both The Deer Hunter and the liberal Coming Home start from a strictly American perspective—"what has the war done to Americans." As the old arguments of "hawks" and "doves," they chart different courses to come to terms with the demoralization following the defeat of U.S. imperialism. The sentimental nostalgia of Jane Fonda's cinematic and real-life liberalism identifies with the mutilation, embraces it. Thus in Coming Home she is miraculously cured of her non-organic state. To the imperialist "doves," what mattered about the war was the "moral" question of how you felt; the purpose of the Fonda film is to help you feel better.

The Deer Hunter, of course, couldn't care less about women's orgasms—or about women. Its concern is men as hunter-warriors. As its filming of the last days of Saigon shows, Cimino's film is concerned with the Vietnam defeat as a demonstration of weakness. If Coming Home identifies with weakness and sympathizes with the suffering, The Deer Hunter celebrates heroic strength. And if Coming Home is an echo of the 1960s' exhortation to "make love not war," The Deer Hunter tries it the other way around. In the closed ethnic community of Clairton, elaborate social rituals are the mechanism for benignly working out repressed sexuality (The Deer Hunter presents the longest continued on page 9
Fatima Khalil (continued from page 1)

Her message to the American left: the working class must lead the women, national minorities and peasants in revolutionary struggle against the Muslim clerical reactionaries in power in Iran. The alternative, becoming clearer day by day, is theocratic barbarism.

Already well before the overthrow of the bloody U.S.-backed shah, the international Trotskyists had warned that replacement of the hated dictator by the Khomeini-led opposition would be no gain for the working masses, that the ayatollah's forces are anti-working-class Persian chauvinists seeking to return to the Koriamic iteration of the 7th century. Now that the mullahs have won, our warning has been dramatically confirmed. Women take to the streets of Teheran protesting imposition of the veil and ethnically discriminatory forces rise in revolt around the country. Based on her own experience as a student activist and trade-union organizer in the region, Fatima Khalil draws the urgent revolutionary lessons of the Iranian crisis.

For the SL/SYL, the decision to bring Comrade Khalil to speak in this country was based on our understanding of the situation in Iran today. She poses a major test for the entire working-class movement, just as did the beginning exactly what he wanted. "Today in Iran there are Islamic courts. We have no tears for the generals and SAVAK, the people who were killed by the mullahs. But why is it that only the mullahs have the right to speak in these courts? Organizations like the Fedayeen were pervert by the shah and these people are not allowed to speak because they are not part of the Iranian nation' according to Khomeini."

"Centering her talk on the oppression of women under the shah and now under Khomeini, Khalil pointed out that according to Islamic law women do not have rights as human beings: "When they are young they are defended by their fathers; when they get married they belong to their husbands. On a legal basis two women are considered equal to one male witness. And this idea is based on Islam and the Koran," she said. "As far as children, really--are often exchanged for a goat."

"The Koran says if you show your finger to a stranger man, you have to cut it off."

Because it doesn't belong to your husband more, and therefore it doesn't belong to you."

The bourgeois revolution meant a great deal for women as well. If the state they gave Iran women the right to work as part of the token reforms of his "white revolution" in 1963, it was to provide cheap labor. But the mullahs want to go back to the Middle Ages: "After Khomeini, took power, he said that about 300 women who are married to non-Muslims be deported from the country, and foreign workers from Afghanian and Arab countries, too. Today in Iran if you use alcohol the punishment is whipping. Khomeini also abolished the veil."

As the only real example of the emancipation of women from the medieval oppression of the Koran, Khalil pointed to the early Bolshevik work among women of the Soviet East. Laws against forced marriage, early marriage and polygamy were actually effective, in contrast to the commonplace reforms of bourgeois nationalism like the Limited Franchise and anti-vaxx orgs were murdered for their fight against the veil. "In those mass meetings where they burned so many books women had the vote, they burned their veils. They were the first supporters of the Bolsheviks in China and Asia."

On the basis of this experience, pointed to the tremendous revolutionary potential of Muslim women, in a genre already led by the speaker: "And this, moreover, means that the Eastern woman, who is the most emancipated, the slave of slaves, that she, today poses a major test for the entire workers movement of the world."

Chilean popular front in the early seventies. At that time the Spartacist League stood alone in refusing to give political support to Allende's class-colluding government in the name of the way for the bloody Pinocchio coup. Now once again the SL has acted as a beacon on the left by uniquely putting into practice the rise of Islamic reaction with our now-famous slogan, "Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs!"

A “thunderous litany that all Trotskyists had studied earlier SL/SYL forums, however, significantly, those who spoke up for or of Spartacist positions were mainly women and members of oppressed nationalities. Thus one woman in her speech made the followingstatement: "As an Iranian woman, I would like to thank the Spartacist League for being the only one to stand up in the media to see the class analysis of Iran, saying that Khomeini was never a progressive and that an Islamic society would not only be dangerous for the workers and women in particular."

An Arbror a Baluchi spoke against the pro-mullah thugs who had attempted to stop earlier Spartacist League forums: "I am here from Iran, senting to and singing for the people of those Iranians who participated with those who distorted Young Spartacist meeting [at Michigan State Uni­versity]. I am here to report the latest news of the Iranian, and the ideas of Communism, than the issues that are coming from this country, what is the correctness of our Marxist program in this crucial test can lay the basis for a new wave of recruitment for the international Spartacist tendency."

Across the U.S. hundreds have already turned out to greet Fatima Khalil's stand against turning back the clock of history in Iran to the time of Muhammad. Her speeches have also drawn threats of physical attacks and disruption attempts from Iranian Mus­lims and Maoists. Defense squads composed of dozens of American trade unionists have ensured Khalil's right to speak to the public. Her tour has also received attention in the media. The Near Eastern Trotskyist militant was interviewed on WGIC and WYON in Chicago, as well as on the SL/SYL forums, earlier had announced that if Khomeini wins, he would like to see the one to take the sword and do it, was back on the scene. Repeating his thunderous litany that all Trotskyists were "CIA" and "SAVAK agents," he baited the speaker for being on tour in the U.S. and not in Iran. To this Comrade Khalil responded: "If you ask what you are doing here? Why are you in Iran? Don't you say where you stand, just repeat slanders. But you are one of the people who last time called the bourgeoisie police on us. That shows your position. We are proud to be with the women who said, 'Down with Khomeini!' Your place is with Khomeini, ours is with the Iranian proletariat."

At the same meeting a Muslim woman denounced the speaker for daring to criticize the ayatollah, who had studied religion "for 40 years."

WVON Interview

WVON: Fatima, would you tell us first of all why you are here in this country? FATIMA KHALIL: I was invited by the Spartacist League Youth League to give a forum on Iran, to tell the truth about what's happening in Iran. WVON: What's happening in Iran? FATIMA KHALIL: Today Khomeini is in power. People had said he would bring democracy to Iran, but I don't believe that he was fighting for the people's interests. That's not true, factually. If you read the press you can see that the Iranian masses are oppressed by Khomeini, Kurdish people who are fighting for their national existence. Many Kurds have been killed by Khomeini's Islamic soldiers. Women came into the streets and were abolished. The question is, Khalil, we don't want the veil. Khalil is trying to crush that movement. It is not correct to say that Khomeini is progressive. The Spartacus Youth League said that the shah is a dictator and he is against the Iranian people and working class. They fought to overthrow the shah's regime in Iran, but of course, they don't want to replace that regime with Islamic reactionaries.

WVON: If Khomeini is overthrown, what kind of government do you want in Iran? FATIMA KHALIL: A socialist government—a workers and farmers government that would give demo­cratic rights to the oppressed peoples in Iran, democratic rights for women. Khomeini is not able to do that because he is fighting for power for the Islamic hierarchy. The working class is in a completely different situation from Khomeini's interests. The Spartacist League said that Khomeini was not able to do that. That is the case. That is why the Spartacist League is trying to make clear what is happening in Iran today and what is the program to overthrow the reaction­ary regime in Iran, and to fight for a workers and peasants government which would represent the interests of the Iranian masses and the proletariat. In no case do you want to replace that regime with Islamic reactionaries.
SYL Wins—Mullah Lovers Cringe

Immediately the SYL demanded a hearing and issued a leaflet denouncing this flagrantly undermoticiform victimization and declaring: “Now the MSA [Michigan Student Assembly] is coming to Khomeini’s followers . . .”

Inside of 48 hours more than 150 people had signed a petition demanding that the charges be dismissed and the fine dropped, that the SYL’s rights be restored and Fatimah Khalil be allowed to speak. At the hearing almost two dozen people representing a broad range of campus organizations showed up to defend the SYL against the attempted victimization. Meanwhile the university administration was also obviously having second thoughts about being only the school in the country to ban a Near Eastern woman revolutionary speaking against the veil. So after squirming in their seats through the testimony, the board receded and came back ten minutes later with a statement lifting the SYL’s suspension, reinstating their right to use forum were met at the elevator by five burly trade unionists who assured them of their safety. At the entrance another team searched all participants and escorted them to their seats. Inside the hall the chief marshal announced that the defense squad, made up of members of seven trade unions, would ensure equal time for all to speak, including those defending the viewpoint of the Islamic clergy. However, noting that if such a meeting were held in Teheran Khomeini would have the Marxists shot, he warned, “If they try to disrupt this meeting here, they will get a fist in the face.” There were no takers.

I to be with the women who said, ‘Down is with the Iranian proletariat.’

I

Detroit News Feature —20 April 1979

Attack on Iran regime
She calls veil a ‘prison’

By MARTHA MINDES
New York City

To abruptly thyroidal Medmen, a woman without a veil in Khomeini’s Iran is a criminal. For more information call:

27 APRIL 1979

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No Socialist, No Alternative

SWP Runs Scab Pulley for Chicago Mayor

Reporter: "If you were actually elected, what would you expect the mayor to be able to do in a city like Chicago?"

Andrew Pulley: "...busying could be carried out to bring about some equality in Chicago. I mean the city without fundamentally changing the economic realities of this city. A real genuine affirmative action program could be conducted...."

Reported: "In other words, we wouldn't have any alteration of the structure of our political system or our economic way of doing things?"

Andrew Pulley: "Well, yes you would. I would propose my new tax plan before the City Council."

This is socialism? No, it's the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidate for mayor of Chicago, responding to liberal black columnist Vernon Jarrett during a televised "candidate's panel" March 29. Although Jarrett may have been confused by a supposed socialist claiming his program could be carried out "without fundamentally changing the economic realities of this city," it comes as no surprise at all below the SWP's wretched reformist practice.

Andrew Pulley, a long-time SWP party back, presented himself in this campaign as the voice of the workers and poor, a militant black steel worker. In contrast to all but a cabal As a Socialist League leaflet on the SWPs Chicago mayoralty campaign pointed out...

"Pulley personally certified his loyalty to the United Steelworkers (USWA) District 31 Women's Caucus sabotaged an anti-Weber demonstration that they themselves sponsored outside the Federal Building here on March 31. The Women's Caucus, a pressure group made up of fake-left supporters of the Soddowski Baianoff bureaucracy of District 31, had intended to turn its protest into a celebration of union-busting "affirmative action" programs. But faced with a sizeable contingent led by the Spartacist League/Spartacist Youth League (SL/ SYL), the sectarian reformists simply walked off to form their own picket line.

The SL denounces the racist court suit by Brian Weber (which alleges that a program for upgrading of minorities at a Louisiana steel plant resulted in "reverse discrimination" against the white lab analysts), while at the same time opposing government-ordered programs which overturn union contracts and seniority systems. At the Loop demonstration SL/SYL signs included: "Defeat Weber! Government Order a Union dismissal!" "For Union Minority Job Recruitment--Not Government Union-Busting affirmative action!" "For the Union Newspaper Hall--First Come First Served on All Orders"

These signs already dismayed the Soddowski Baianoff apologists, but when the SL began to chant "Dump the Burress'aways--Build a Workers Party" they recoiled in horror. Pulling their picket lines away, they suddenly shifted the picket line in two and formed a rival demonstration with some 30 participants only a few feet away. One supporter of the Maunier Workers Vanguard, a Chicago-based union, was co-opted over the SWPs refusal toalter the liberal wing of the USWA bureaucrats, who physically threatened a woman steel worker who was marching with the Spartacist League. Prominent among the sabotage were leading members of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), including Pat Grogan (a Women's Caucus member who crossed picket lines of striking railroad clerks last September). Grogan's comrades were distributing "Pulley for Mayor" literature calling for a labor party as a united front to join the SWP's candidate for a workers party and against the_class-collaborationist: union bureaucrats. Also present was a delegation from the Shachtmanite Revolutionary Socialist League which wandered aimlessly between the two picket lines without joining either.

SWP: For a Five Percent "Alternative"

The SWP gave the Pulley campaign front-page billing in the Militant, trumpeting the fact that the Chicago Defender, the major black liberal newspaper in the city, had run a full-page poster backing the SWP candidate and proclaiming its goal as 5 percent of the vote. By crossing this threshold it would realize its cherished goal of a socialist "ticket."

As a leader of the working class, Pulley has set an example of union backstabbing and class treachery--he should be afraid to look honest working people in the eye let alone run for mayor on a 'socialist ticket.'

SWP Flees Anti-Weber Demo in Chicago

CHICAGO--Driven into a frenzy by the presence of class-struggle politics, leading officials of the United Steelworkers (USWA) District 31 Women's Caucus sabotaged an anti-Weber demonstration that they themselves sponsored outside the Federal Building here on March 31. The Women's Caucus, a pressure group made up of fake-left supporters of the Soddowski Baianoff bureaucracy of District 31, had intended to turn its protest into a celebration of union-busting "affirmative action" programs. But faced with a sizeable contingent led by the Spartacist League/Spartacist Youth League (SL/SYL), the sectarian reformists simply walked off to form their own picket line.

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SWP's solution to the crushing blizz...
Deer Hunter... (continued from page 5) 

At the structural center of The Deer Hunter is the central figure of the anti-war sport: the Russian roulette torture/gambling game in Vietnam and the deer hunt. The language of the ritual organization of sport is part of the film's stress on the need for war preparation. CIA director Michael Collins (the hero of the hunt), becomes the hero of Vietnam. Tested by the game played in the mountains, he achieves the moment of survival in the Southeast Asian jungles. Just as he leads the deer hunt, he leads his friends to survival in a supreme super-leader who draws his strength from the "community" and upon whose shoulders rests collective survival. On this plane The Deer Hunter is a simple plea for a strong military ethics to save the world.

The repression expressed in the film is strong homosocial (sleeping with men or being a woman as a game). The locker-room and barroom scenes are organized around the theme of bonding, the highest expression of love and loyalty in a warrior society.

With the Buzescu, the young military hero comes home from the war he ascends the mountain again, in a scene which dramatizes the conflict of a homosocial, homophobic, nationalistic aesthetic. Above the mist of the highest peak with shoulders rests collective survival. On the other side, the film's stress on the need for war preparation.
French Trotskyists Denounce LCR on Iran

"For the Ayatollah You Sacrifice Women!"

We reprint below the remarks by a spokesman of the Ligue Trotskyste de France, a group opposed to the international Spartacist tendency, at a forum on Iran sponsored by the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire et Socialiste (LCR) at the Mutualité meeting hall in Paris on March 19. The meeting was addressed by Michel Rocard, leader of the LCR's weekly newspaper Rouge, who was accompanied by a team of reporters from sections of the newspaper's "secret executive committees" (UECs) that visited Teheran in mid-February. In recent weeks a pseudotrotskist "eye-witnesses" have been四处 spreading the gospel according to Khomeini to the suburbs of Paris, withJean-Philippe Cazeneuve Jacques justifying the wearing of the veil as an act of resistance to the shah, rather than a return to medieval practices of female seclusion. In England I/Get Brian Grogan proudly announced that the LCR had "disarmed" the ayatollah and carried a portrait of the Islamic fundamentalist ayatollah la 'Khomeini around with them.

The LCR's Rocard was less effective in his praise for the "Islamic Revolution" in Iran than the "community committees" (the koni) led by Shi' a religious leaders (mullahs) as possible precursors of a more fundamentalist form of society. What are some problems, he reported, such that the fact women have not the right to speak or the veil? During his speech, Rocard noted: "The neighborhood committees were formed in the winter 1978--79 (December on, often at the initiative of local women who were aware minimal supplies of bottled gas during the oil workers strike. Later these neighborhood committees were the framework for an organized, what was called in the press the mullahs march."

The most serious [limit] is to doubt women's right to speak. In a meeting of a neighborhood committee, mullahs do not have the right to intervene. There is a certain hostility between the mullahs and the men. At the most they pass small notes among themselves.

"So the future of these neighborhood committees, if they are not to be a threat, advance toward the organization of women's groups, depends on several factors.

These factors include dealing with questions of sewage, lighting, day care and the protection of their neighborhoods, according to the LCR speaker. But not of the need to break with the mullahs, to oppose the theocratic Islamic Republic of Khomeini, there was not a word. The communique replied:

Some months ago when you held your first meeting on Iran, we inter­
tended to say that Khomeini was against agrarian reform, against communism, against the liberation of women; that he was reactionary and that it was neces­
sic to oppose the masses against both the shah and Khomeini. You answered—as usual—that Khomeini was "ambigiuos" and even represented the "democratic movement."

At that time, and in the absence of a real proletarian leadership, it was the mullahs who profited from the masses' hatred for the shah. And if groups like the Fedaeyan today are armed militarily, politically they are disarmed. It's difficult to effectively struggle against Khomeini after you have been disarmed by him. Today, tragically, they are impotent before Islamic fanaticism.

And now the supreme cretinism: the fake-Trotskyst organization in Iran [see itself is prepared to assist in abolishing ayatollahs for demands which they never promised to fulfill. Quite the contrary! Khomeini promised anything but repression of women and a return to the Middle Ages. Against the racist, the anti-Semitic, he promised only more retrograde barbarism! Every time I read the articles on Iran in Rouge, I remember when I intervene in the LCR's feminist meetings to fight for the class line instead of the sex line, and I was booted by the feminists of the LCR. But for the ayatollah they are ready to sacrifice the women!

Who the hell is the U.S. trying to fool? Sections of the U.S. Left took part in the all-out support for Khomeini, including pro-mullah forces. The sec­
tions of the international Spartacist League in the U.S., Canada, Germany, in France, in our struggle against the shah have always insisted that the ayatollahs were no alternative, that the powerful Iranian proletariat must regain the masses behind it and against the ayatollahs. Of course, the pro-mullah forces don't like this much, but when they wanted to kick us out of their demonstration in England and called the cops, the IMG [British U.S. section] shut up and stood back—which says a great deal about the United Secretariat.

So you think the ayatollah is "ambigiuos"? The problem isn't that the LCR had illusions, it's that they closed their eyes to the real, the permanent revolutionary strategy in the U.S. is tailism, tailism, tailism. That's why the Trotskyists who are siding with those who co-opt the revolution, those who are sidetracking the proletariat in Iran, the United Secretariat hasn't even talked to them. Sometimes there's at least a vaguely "progressive" facade on what is really a total capitulation to Iran's blantly medieval barbarism, the "anti-imperialist" holy war that this "demo­

We Spartacists think the principal task in Iran was and is still to build an independent proletarian revolutionary party which alone can satisfy the democratic aspirations of the masses, the peasants, the women, the nationali­
ties, as was shown by the Russian Revolution. And for this there must be the organization of the masses to form their own organs of workers power—soviets—organized by the masses themselves, not not by the mullahs like the neighbor­
hood committees, women who don't have the right to speak. To think you can fight for democracy without having fought against Khomeini, without fighting against Iran, is social-democratic cretinism. The ques­
tion is not whether or not the ayatollahs hold power, and it's Khomeini who's winning—in part thanks to the political disarray of the proletariat.

Healyites... (continued from page 2)

betrayals. To put it in perspective, we will use an analogous analogy. The Chinese Revolution of 1925-27 was decisive both in the development of Trotsky's theory of Permanent Revolution and in the historic division between Stalinism and Trotskyism. From the Healyites' point of view, the Chinese Communist Party's liquidation into the bourgeois-nationalist Kuomintang as successor to the genuine working-class party has worst predictions had been born out, he fully solidarized with the Commu­

nists when the bourgeois nationalists turned on them.) The Healy/Banda position in Iran is equivalent to supporting Chiang's 1927 massacre of the Com­

unists on the grounds that they had "betrayed the Chinese Revolution." And this is more than an analogy. The Communist Party of Iraq is not merely a Kremlin publicity agency. It is the mass party of the proletariat, centered on the strategic oil workers. And its mass base has a history of resisting Moscow's "peaceful coexistence" with imperialism and alliance with bourgeois nationalism—namely in the 1958 revolution.

In July 1958 the Hashemite monarchy of King Faisal was swept away by a popular uprising, following close on with a nationalistic grouping in the officer corps under General Kassem. Under pressure from the West, the Kassem government took the CP into opposition to Kassem and sections of the party were pushing to return to the West, not in line. So as not to disturb the "spirit of Camp David," the Kremlin openly supported Kassem, denounced the Iraqi CP for "ultrafetishism" and demanded a purge of its left wing. As Isaac Deutsch­

er wrote at the time: "Since the far-off days of the middle 20s, when Stalin ordered the Chinese communists to serve as the "Kuomin­
tung's, no Communist Party has been exposed to quite so abrupt a humiliation."

"Russia and the International Communist Movement," in China, Russia and the West: A Communist Case Book 1933--


Encouraged by Moscow's support and supernatural optimism, the leaders of the Com­
nist ranks, Kassem moved against the opposition. He outlawed all parties affiliated to international anticapitalist movements. Using this reactionary law he purged the CP from the Kassem party underground. The 1963 Ba'thist coup intensified the repression. Such Kassem had begun. Presumably the Healyites retrospectively support the Kassem/Ba'thist attack against the Communist Party because of the latter's "international affiliations!"

With practiced cynicism the News­

Line tells us: "It is not people with Trotskyism that we defend workers, whether they are Stalinists, monarchists or bour­

geos, from the attacks of the capitalist class alone."

But, as the facts show, that has nothing to do with the incidents in Iraq.

Do the Healyites really mean that Ba'thist Iraq is not a capitalist state? Or perhaps they mean that they defend the workers' movement against state repression only for groups which don't do anything illegal, like organ­

ize strikes? In case the CP for "ultrafetishism" to its logical con­
decision between its "Trotskyist" preten­
sion and the dictates of its Libyan "international affiliations"! Hence, the Kassem/Bandites are a hundredfold more courageous than Qaddafi's yellow journalists in Clapham High Street. The WRP's fake-Trotskyst oppos­

ites are naturally scandalizing it for its support to counterrevolutionary terror in Iraq, thrilled with the chance to oppose the WRP from the left. But the myriad British centrist groups are by no means champions of proletarian class independence in the Near East (or elsewhere). They too support bourgeois nationalism in backward countries, though now less flamboyantly than the Ba'thist. They also uphold the "Arab Revolution"—that most curious "revolution" which is directed not against the Arab governments and ruling classes, but externally against Zionist Israel. Like Healy/Banda, they supported Kassem as "progressive," "democratic" or "anti-imperialist." But now it is Healy/Banda who have taken the "Arab Revolution" line to its logical conclusion—opposition to any expres­

sion, however partial or deformed, of nationalist consciousness which disturbs the Arab rulers, up to and including support to its bloody repression.

We warn the WRP and its supporters in the rump "International Committee" to wake up! The repressive programs of the Libyan and Iraqi military dictators has conse­

quences. Whereas Stalinists similarly accommodate foreign domination in the interest of their left-wing opponents by bourgeois na­

tionalists (e.g., India, Gandhi, Nepal, Vepaska) as prescribed by the bureaucrats of the deformed workers states, the Healyites have gone one step further in mimicking this class treason on behalf of bourgeois regimes directly. For a small propaganda group without a significant mass base, moreover, program is decisive in determining a group's class character. In the case of Healy/Banda organization, the contra­
diction between its "Trotskyist" pretens­
ions and its bourgeois-nationalist or bourgeois-nationalist pat­
ions has repetitively come down in favor of the latter.
Newport News...  

(continued from page 12)

The police riot was one of the factors which caused the picketing at the shipyard gates. On April 13 the union membership had successfully blocked the company’s proposal for conditional surrender to the company, which would have cost the majority of the Local 8888 executive board under pressure from the International. They had the union membership vote, if the leadership continued to capitulate, refusing to strike. Hower and Wayne Crosby, who showed up on April 16, obviously bussed up by Friday’s victory, were defeated. The steelworkers had learned the lesson of the strike tactics of the bureaucracy, under which scans were generally free to enter into secret deals with the company. Only a fraction of the local’s membership, true to the spirit of the Newport News strike, followed the leadership after that. The company’s picket line for victory. When on April 9 the federal courts ruled in favor of a four week strike, the government, the Local 8888’s executive board and negotiating committee voted to order the membership back to work. Claiming that the company had not been able to return to work the following Monday. Instead a vague resolution was passed, which the substance that there be no return to work unless the shipyard lifted its “conditions.”

One week later, and subsequent to the police riot, Steelworkers leaders again ordered the membership back to work. It is clear that the strike is the humiliating pledge. This “concession” is nine-tenths window dressing. While the USWA bureaucracy played it up as a big victory, this in no sense prohibits the shipyard from refusing to concede militancy and using any number of excuses to implement discriminatory transfers and downgrades. As we go to press, Newport News workers yesterday #1 calling upon reporting back to work they were sent home, pending company recommendations.

At times, of course, it is necessary for even the best of trade-union leaders to carry out tactical retreats in order to preserve the organizational life and strength of the union and not the strength of the company. The union was prepared to resume its strike after the NLRI investigation, International staff representatives bulldozed the union, the USWA leadership’s decision to return to work.” The union mounted effective mass picket lines. One of these workers confronted an SWP member who walked the BRAC picket lines with the SWP, “You can’t do this to the USWA. It is not because they had the guts to demand more for the workers.”

In the end, however, the union was defeated. The NLRI investigation was completed, the union was permitted to return to work. The way forward for the working class is a solution to racial oppression! A real socialist program and no more discrimination! A real program against the government! A real program of the workers! A real program of the workers!”}

Steel Haulers Wildcat...  

(continued from page 12)

The way forward for the working people of Chicago does not lie with these scabbers who casually cross picket lines. There were steel workers who refused to cross the picket line. One of these workers who fought for the honor of the lines. One of these workers confronted Pulley at an SWP forum last fall, exposing the SWPs real appetites. “For the SWP, it’s being one with the bureaucrats. If the bureaucrats talk to the workers, scabs, they say, ‘we’ll scab.’”

The Spartacist League stands with the international working class struggle displayed by those USWA members who walked the BRAC picket lines with the SWP. We are committed to the class struggle. The SWP cannot claim to represent the militants nor to be a “real” alternative to the sectional bureaucracies. The SWP is not a real program of the workers. The SWP and the USWA bureaucratise the struggle. They are still the agents of the bureaucracy.

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Scab Pulley...  

(continued from page 8)

a solution to racial oppression! A real socialist program that proposes low-cost, publically-funded housing throughout the city, a real program, based on the unions, “but

Even more damning, however, is TDUs parochial strategy, which confused the significance of the strike by the steel haulers with the rest of the workers covered by the MFA. “We’re Not Frightened—Strike the Steel Convoy!” Bulletin No. 9 proclaimed to the strikers. “The freight settlement has nothing to do with steel haulers.”

The fight is not the USWA’s, but the struggle of all workers for a better future. The way forward for the working people of Chicago does not lie with these scabbers who casually cross picket lines. There were steel workers who refused to cross the picket line. One of these workers who fought for the honor of the lines. One of these workers confronted Pulley at an SWP forum last fall, exposing the SWPs real appetites. “For the SWP, it’s being one with the bureaucrats. If the bureaucrats talk to the workers, scabs, they say, ‘we’ll scab.’”

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Cops Rampage—60 Picketers Arrested

McBride Stabs Newport News Strikers in the Back

On April 22 local and international officials of the Steelworkers union (USWA) ordered 15,000 workers striking the Newport News Shipyard and Dry Dock Company back to the job without a contract. Although union officials are claiming that the bitter three-month strike was ended on "our terms," the dismissal of pickets unmistakably marks a defeat for the shipyard workers. Moreover, it could well cripple organizing efforts at the huge shipyard over the next few years unless the workers are able to rapidly rally the pace.

That the Newport News battle is a triumph of labor's ability to organize the South is indisputable. There has been no comparable unionizing drive in this anti-labor bastion for decades. Despite the enormous odds faced by the strikers—the multi-million dollar Tembec conglomerate, hordes of state and local cops eager to enforce Virginia's scab-picking "right to work" laws—responsible for this setback, as well as for the continuing inability to organize the South, lies squarely with the American trade-union bureaucracy. To understand the tragedy of this strike it is sufficient to examine closely the last week of the battle, for within these few days the enormous gap between a rank and file eager to fight and the conservative, cowed McBride leadership of the USWA was exasperatingly evident.

On Monday morning, April 16, as the strike raged, Virginia police were dragging its eleventh week. Virginia police using Nazi stormtrooper tactics attacked the strike headquarters building of Steelworkers Local 8888. Strikers were stopped out of the building and beaten bloodily. One worker was thrown through a plate glass window, and then while lying on the ground bleeding he was savagely clubbed. To stop the raid on their strike headquarters on the second floor, union members blocked the stairwell with their bodies. Using anything they could get their hands on—chairs, tables and fire extinguishers—they successfully defended their hall. When it was all over 14 strikers were sent to the hospital, one with a concussion, another with a fractured jaw and yet another with a broken leg.

Just before the unprovoked attack on strike headquarters, local police and state troopers in riot gear with attack dogs had launched a sweep against picketers in front of the shipyard gates. After brief defensive skirmishes the strikers fled along Washington Avenue pursued by the cops. As they ran into restaurants and down side alleys, they were dragged out, handcuffed and beaten, often as police dogs were biting their arms and legs. The bloodthirsty cops, intent on crushing the strike, didn't stop to check for union cards. Anyone in the area, news reporters and bystanders, was given the same treatment. Before "Bloody Monday" over nearly 50 strikers had been injured and more than 60 arrested, according to Local 8888 vice president John Townsell.

Steel Haulers Wildcat Over FitzSellout

Just a week and a half after it began, the "longest national trucking strike in U.S. history" ended abruptly on April 10 with a tentative agreement between the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) and trucking industry bargainers. Immediately following the announcement of the pact, Teamster president Frank Fitzsimmons ordered the membership back on the job, trampling on the fundamental trade-union principle that the shipyard workers were on strike. The new agreement is fundamentally the same as the wage package offered before the strike, except that the union won its demand for one extra cost-of-living payment in the third year of the contract and the provision that the money be deferred until after the contract expires. Otherwise, none of the significant issues faced by Teamsters—70-hour workweeks, greasing schedules, stepped-up disciplinary procedures and mushrooming of non-union outfits—were resolved.

Due to its enormous social power the IBT was able to outlast Carter's wage guidelines without much difficulty, although with the present skyrocketing inflation rate even Teamsters will be lucky to stay even. Weaker unions, however, not to mention millions of unorganized workers, will not obtain exemptions so readily when their wages and working conditions are on Carter's 7 percent chopping block. With a militant strike, the Teamsters could have obliterated the guidelines on behalf of the entire working class and fought for demands representing the actual needs of the membership, including a big wage increase, full cost-of-living protection and a slashed workweek with no cut in pay. But a militant strike necessarily entailed a struggle with the capitalist government, and to Fitzsimmons that is unthinkable.

The Midwestern steel haulers covered by the Iron and Steel "rider" to the Master Freight Agreement (MFA) pose the chief threat to Fitzsimmons' intended settlement. In Pittsburgh, Youngstown and Canton the haulers, whose own contract supplement had not been settled, refused to return to work. Their unsanctioned strike rapidly spread throughout much of the Midwestern steel belt and resulted in thousands of layoffs at mills in the region. As the rank-and-file walkout gained strength through much of the Midwestern steel belt and resulted in thousands of layoffs at mills in the region. As the rank-and-file walkout gained strength Fitzsimmons reportedly promised to sanction the strike but refused to accede to the strikers' demand for a separate vote on the Iron and Steel rider. Since the union tops are presently unable to crush the steel haulers, Fitzsimmons' main concern is to isolate them and thereby prevent their resistance from sparking a generalized rebellion by the rest of the 800,000 workers covered by the MFA.

Unlike the aborted breakaway "strike" led by FASH last fall which was aimed at splitting steel haulers away from the IBT, the current walkout should be supported by trade-union militants. The central demand, however, of the Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), which has played a leading role in the walkout, is merely for a return to the pre-1976 pay formula for steel haulers, namely a flat 75 percent of the revenue from each load for owner-operators or 26 percent for drivers operating company rigs. But this is precisely the demand raised by the IBT during negotiations. Un-