Iranian Leftists Tail Islamic Reaction

Smash the Shah’s Reign of Terror!

Exactly twenty-five years after the Shah of Iran was returned to his throne in a CIA-engineered coup, the massive upheaval against Reza Shah Pahlavi’s brutal dictatorship has resumed with undiminished fury. After the upsurge in May—when bazaars and universities were shut down across Iran, protesters battled police and troops in the streets and the Shah was forced to postpone a scheduled trip abroad to take personal command of the army—it seemed as though the intensity of the protests had receded.

But on the night of August 10 the protests were rekindled following a police attempt to disperse a meeting at the home of Hossein Khademi, a prominent ayatollah (religious leader) in the city of Isfahan and a follower of the anti-Shah ayatollah Khomeini now in exile in Iraq. Several of the participants at this protest meeting were chased down by the police when they attempted to resist. Demonstrations began again at noon the following day in this industrial town. As the protests spread there were reports that the Hotel Shah Abbas, the refuge of many Americans, was stoned and a number of banks and stores were attacked.

While the Shah blustered that he would “strike the instigators of these disorders with an iron fist,” tanks and armored personnel carriers moved into the city to enforce a dusk-to-dawn curfew. For the first time in 25 years martial law was declared in Isfahan as troops were used to try to force the city’s shops to remain open and prevent a general strike from developing. By August 12 similar clashes were reported from Ghazvin, an industrial town west of Teheran, and Shiraz, in southern Iran, as police battled demonstrators demanding the release of Jalaloddin Taheri, a religious figure branded a follower of the anti-Shah National Front by the regime—Isfahan, a prominent ayatollah (religious leader) in the city of Isfahan and a follower of the anti-Shah ayatollah Khomeini now in exile in Iraq. Several of the participants at this protest meeting were chased down by the police when they attempted to resist. Demonstrations began again at noon the following day in this industrial town. As the protests spread there were reports that the Hotel Shah Abbas, the refuge of many Americans, was stoned and a number of banks and stores were attacked.

Two days later four more cities in southern Iran were placed under martial law. But protests had also spread northward to such cities as Mashad, Tabriz and finally the capital itself—Teheran. On August 13 troops in Teheran opened fire on protesters and on the following day attacked a meeting of striking merchants held in the city’s bazaar, arresting a mullah (religious teacher) who was addressing the crowd.

Iran was not catapulted onto the front pages of American newspapers, however, until a fire in a movie theater in the southern port city of Abadan took the lives of nearly 400 persons. The regime immediately claimed that the fire was the work of reactionary Muslim reactionaries opposed to the Shah’s pro-Western modernization, particularly his “liberalization” of the role of women in Iran, as the source of the current opposition. The religious character of the opposition gives the Shah the opportunity to portray one of the most repressive regimes in existence as “pro-progression.”

But the reactionary element within the opposition has not been invented by the regime’s propagandists. The targets themselves point to a confused mixture of hatred for the American backers of the Shah and the reactionaries opposed to the Shah’s pro-Western modernization, particularly his “liberalization” of the role of women in Iran, as the source of the current opposition. The religious character of the opposition gives the Shah the opportunity to portray one of the most repressive regimes in existence as “pro-progression.”

The Shah and his loyal followers in the international media have made much of the “unholy alliance” between left and right in the recent Iranian upsurge. Government press accounts regularly blame clerical

Demonstration in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz, August 13.
Letters

SWP “Not Serious About Revolution”

EDITOR’S NOTE: We print below two letters dealing with the question of membership in the Trotskyist organizations—Spartacist League/Spartacist Youth League and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). The first is a letter of application from comrades Don B. reflecting the considerations involved in joining the SYL and the second is a letter from MITA, a Trotskyist group, submitting their recent Oberlin conference, billed as an “action-oriented” conference. The SYL gathering failed to do trade unionists and gave the author a stark presentation of the SWP.

The second is a long letter addressed to Don B. from Tim B., the person who introduced him to the SYL. The letter makes clear that the SYL is not a Trotskyist organization and the recent Oberlin conference was an attempt to introduce its Milwaukee local.

Today’s pitch of the SYL is especially with a Trotskyist program for the SWP because of the expulsion of the Revolutionary Tendency from the SWP, and the recent Oberlin conference.

My impression was on the basis of your press: “The SL/SYL has a substantial presence at Oberlin. SPWPers, their sympathizers and contacts bought hundreds of copies of IF. Yet references to the SL were conspicuously absent from almost all presentations. Where possible, it is the policy of the SWP to pretend that the SL does not exist. It will surprise no one who has ever attended a “Militant Forum” to hear that the “educationalists” were excoriating boring. Class after rinky-dink class testified to the fact that the SWP has no interest in educating its membership. The theoretical level was abysmal. For the wholesale revisionists of the SWP leadership, confusion is the methodology whereby dissemination in the ranks is “resolved.” These “theoreticians” deliberately concoct phrases in discussions, misrepresenting everyone’s positions, including their own, most often couching them in the incoherent babbling of the “dynamics” and “dialectics.””

Cuba is fine example. The SWPers at Oberlin were all over the map on this question of Cuba and the Cuban Revolution. But of late, the confusion among the ranks has run to epidemic proportions, forcing the leadership to tone down its long-running period on Cuba over the next month, hoping to patch it up.

The passage of the SWP into reformism in the mid-1960s compelled its leadership to downplay its critical support to Castro, since guerillazism was hardly popular in the U.S. liberal circles. Many SWPers are consequently surprised to learn the real position of their party on Cuba as a healthy revolutionary state—a position which flies in the face of the obvious similarity of Castro to the Cuban masses in a political revolution to oust the bureaucratic and establish workers democracy.

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Mao Tse-tung once summed up the international political situation with the words: "The world is divided under heaven and the situation is excellent." But since Mao's death and the defeat of his main rivals in the Maoist camp were anointed by no less than Chinese party leader Hua Kuo-feng, the situation is downright dismal.

When the leader of the slavishly Peking-loyal Communist Party Marxism-Leninist (CPML) of the U.S., Michael Klonsky, was personally appointed by no less than Chinese party leader Hua Kuo-feng, the CPML, many rivals in the Maoist camp were thrown into turmoil. Particularly hard hit by Klonsky's elevation was the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), once the largest Maoist group in the U.S., which split two last January between pro- and anti-“gang” factions. Into the void has stepped the Workers Viewpoint Organisation (WVO), one of the predominantly Asian-American sector and now a contender for the leadership of the CPML.

Like the RCP, the WVO has maintained its silence in its press about China since shortly after Mao's death. WVO shares with the RCP a "secret" position that the Chinese revolution is a "community work," "nonantagonistic contradictions." Like BusStop, the WVO opposes "forced" busing while calling for "equal" facilities in all schools as per the Jim Crow law. But unlike the RCP, the WVO has not suffered a debilitating split on this crucial question. Instead the WVO expanded its influence through a series of fusions in 1976-77 with local Maoist collectives and, more importantly, with the black-based prominent New York Times. Its newer members, largely minority youth, have been recruited since that time by a combination of apolitical "community work," mindless activism and low-level "fight-back" politics.

Through its proliferating front groups, which include the Revolutionary Youth League (YRL), the African Liberation Support Committee (ALSC) and the National Coalition to Support African Liberation (NCSAL), the WVO has attempted to win a super-militant support of some of the serious Maoist groups, WVO contingents at demonstrations are now invariably the most apolitical to be found. With flashy demonstrations, catchy but meaningless slogans ("We're Fucked Up, Can't Take It, No More!") red banners and semi-military YRL uniforms, the WVO tries to cultivate an image of "revolutionary" macho.

But the WVO's radical veneer is a political line which has put the WVO time and again on the side of anti-busing radicals and anti-gay bigots. And it was this glaring contradiction between the "fightback" veneer and the实际行动 of the Spartacist League/Spartacist Youth League (SL/SYL) comrades in Los Angeles repeatedly exposed.

BusStop's Left Ally

In Los Angeles WVO/YRLers and their RCP comrades have been at loggerheads with the WVO's left faction which split in two last January, with both sides calling themselves "BusStop." In the race Scenario for the July 13 elections with the racist "BusStop" group headed by LA school board member Bob Butler and Teng Hsiao-ping is traveling down the "capitalist road." But unlike the RCP, the WVO has had no suffering a debilitating split on this crucial question. Instead the WVO expanded its influence through a series of fusions in 1976-77 with local Maoist collectives and, more importantly, with the black-based prominent New York Times. Its newer members, largely minority youth, have been recruited since that time by a combination of apolitical "community work," mindless activism and low-level "fight-back" politics.

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Voices from the Ivory Tower: Genovese's Anti-Marxist Perspectives

“We seek to revitalize Marxist thought”—with this modest ambition a group of university professors in the United States attempted to reverse the appearance of their new journal, Marxist Perspectives. In an editorial statement penned by Eugene D. Genovese (the editor and the chairman of the Department of History at the University of Rochester), the very first issue (Spring 1978) proclaims that the editors have taken upon their thin shoulders a rather Herculean task: no less than the resolution of what they call the “crisis” of Marxism.

No ordinary journal this, its goal is nothing less than to salvage the left from the “deformities in ideology” which, we are told, “no honest Marxist, whatever his political tendency, can any longer defend.” Far from these fine gentlemen to soil their hands with the living struggles of the working class and to plunge into a genuinely revolutionary party, the authors inform us that, “the painful history of these organizations and parties needs no review here.” What follows is an unabashed display of academics reveling in their university sinecures.

The editors of Marxist Perspectives cast an admiring glance at William Appelbaum, the history department at the University of Wisconsin historian, who served as their mentor when they were his graduate students in the 1960's. Since that time, however, many of the journal’s contributors were drawn into active political movements around the issues of civil rights and the Vietnam war. For these academic Marxists the demise of the New Left was the signal for a complete retreat into the universities. Having made no substantive political decisions other than furthering their own careers, they of course place the blame upon the “Marxists” who, they of course place the blame upon the “Marxists” who, they of course place the blame upon the “Marxists” who,

“...is not we who are thrown into a tizzy by the sight of Stalinists and the studen ts in the United States; it is not we that undertake to edit out the polemical thrusts; or accusations of revisionism; polemics; factional attacks; holier-than-thou treatises; or denunciation of the fair and the good.”

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“The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it.”

—K. Marx

“An anonymous wit reflecting on the revolutionary upheavals of our age, has parodied that Marxists have hitherto merely changed the world, whereas the point is to interpret it. Fair enough, so far as it goes.”

—E. Genovese

The great armies of labor are no longer marching forward, as they once seemed to, growing, increasingly united, and carrying the future with them.


So, by the way, this is Marxism, Marx theory to be revitalized?

Not only are there no “perspectives” to be found here, but the editors reject outright the revolutionary core of Marxism. Genovese’s brazen editorial statement asserts, “We are not a partisan political journal. Those who thrive on polemical politics will have to publish elsewhere.” Lest there be any misunderstanding, Genovese continues, “We shall not entertain ill-mannered polemics; factious attacks, baseless calumnies, gratuitous denunciations of revolutionaries, dogmatism, adventurism, tautology, Stalinism, Trotskyism, Bernstienism, rotten liberalism, or any of those other wonderful devices for avoiding reasoned response to honest arguments.”

The irony of this statement is that in this journal entitled Marxist Perspectives Marx himself would not fit the criteria for publication. Would Genovese undertake to edit out the polemical “excesses” of Capital? The Manifesto, the Critique of the Gotha Program or Engels’ Anti-Duhring? What Marxist Perspectives cannot contain is that with the publication of new foundations can simply polemics because the substance of the political debate matters. Marx, Lenin and Trotsky spent much of their time writing polemics in the process of trying to forge political organizations capable of changing the world. For those that cannot stomach “ill-mannered polemics,” the prospect of making the world “rise on new foundations” must simply be beyond the realm of thought.

In 1915, Lenin wrote that, “Strong ideas are those that shock and scandalize, evoke indignation, anger, and animosity in some and enthusiasm in others.” Judged in this light, Marxist Perspectives offers only a series of weak ideas. With the exception of Genovese’s editorial and an amusing piece by Gore Vidal on the American Bicentennial, this new journal contains virtually unreadable tracts ranging from Hobson’s article on religion and the rise of socialism to an insipid review of Yves Saint Laurent’s latest fashions!

The pity is that many of these scholars have published very valuable and thought-provoking material elsewhere, including: Hobson’s Primitive Rebels and (under the pseudonym Francis Newton) The Jazz Scene, Christopher Lasch’s insightful New York Review of Books essay “Narcissist America”, and Genovese’s perceptive works on slavery, as well as his fine polemics (ill-mannered or not) against the fairy tale history books of Communist Party hack Herbert Aptheker and others black nationalists. While these works are not to be slighted, collectively these people add up to far less than their individual academic contributions.

This is hardly surprising. Implicit in Marxist Perspectives’ magnumous recognition of “many Marxism” is an adorrence for the inescapable pro-grammatic conclusions of Marxism leading to the battle for the dictatorship of the proletariat (the term itself is anathema to most academics). Marxism provides the world’s best way to interpret and change the existing society; it cannot exist independently of communist poli-tics and organization.
Denied U. of Maryland Post, Right Wing Witchhunts Bertell Ollman

The appointment of a university department chairman is not normally a fit subject for newspaper headlines. In the case of the chairmanship of the political science department at the University of Maryland at College Park, however, the selection of an avowed Marxist became a political hot potato in the Maryland gubernatorial race. After initially selecting Bertell Ollman, the University of Maryland Board of Regents announced that he would not be a candidate. Ollman’s "Class Struggle" game on display at struck Brentano’s bookstores.

"This巫women's a political climate of American campuses: for left-wing professors, ranging from black sociologist Harry Edwards to Herb Boyd of Wayne State University, securing tenure or even holding onto their jobs is often a major battle. Ollman's defenders in this case have gathered an impressive array of supporters, from local Maryland politicians to reports that even Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, backed his appointment. The New York Times (2 May 1978) also editorialized in support of Ollman's appointment, citing in particular as proof of his respectability Ollman's firm commitment to the vigorous marketing of his popular board game "Class Struggle," which he touts as the socialist alternative to "Monopoly." Ollman himself, eager to allay the fears of his right-wing opponents, announced "I want to prove to academia, and even to the American people, that a Marxist can be a good and fair administrator."

Unfortunately for Ollman, as for all "academic Marxists," the class struggle exists as more than a game. His Marxist credentials were badly tarnished during a recent strike at the Long Island outlets of Brentano’s bookstores. Employees fighting the $2.50-4.00 an hour wages, and trying to unionize were outraged to find Ollman's game in prominent display at the bookstores. Asked to cancel his contract with Brentano’s (which is marketing "Class Struggle") for the duration of the strike, Ollman refused. An indication of his lack of political seriousness came in an interview with the New York Times (1 August, 1978) in which he flipantly commented, "The game is socialist, but the business isn’t."

Ollman's attitude toward the basic dividing line of the class struggle, the picket line, speaks volumes about the authenticity of his brand of Marxism. But we solidarize with him in his fight against the McCarthyite witchhunt at the University of Maryland. While genuine Marxists are not interested in administering, fairly or otherwise, the bourgeois universities (as opposed to teaching), the refusal to grant Ollman the post solely on the grounds of his left-wing views must be protested. Give Bertell Ollman the job!

Marxism has its own logic—even for these self-styled "interpreters." Not only have the two issues to date prominently featured articles on behalf of Eurocommunism, but a Marxist Perspectives-sponsored New York symposium on "The Communist Experience in America" in May of this year proved to be little more than a platform for right-wing social democrats of the Michael Harrington ilk. For these scholars who reject revolution and the Leninist party and wish to apply aspects of Marxism or to be known as Marxists, the situation would be simply to stay out of politics. Much better if Genovese, Lasch and Hobshawm could stick to their own scholarly researches rather than dabble in the cynical anti-Marxist of the Marxist Perspectives editorial statement. Academic Marxism, insofar as it organizes itself as a tendency, can only become part of the periphery of social democracy—the defender of a comfortable status quo.

The fact that much of our critique of Marxist Perspectives can be drawn from quotes of Marx and Lenin is far from accidental. The attempt of academic leftists to decay revolutionary struggles in the name of "revitalization" is hardly a new phenomenon. Trotsky best summed this up in a 1923 speech at Sverdlov University on the "Tasks of Communist Education" (reprinted in *Problems of Everyday Life*). More than half a century later it retains its full applicability to today's academic Marxism. "Academization in the sense of the belief in the self-contained importance of theory is doubly absurd for us as revolutionaries. Theory serves collective humanity; it serves the cause of revolution. "It is true that in certain periods of our social development, there were attempts to separate Marxism from revolutionary action. This was done under the so-called legal Marxism in the 1900's. Russian Marxists were divided into two camps: Legal Marxists from the journalistic salons of Moscow and Petersburg, and the underground fraternity—imprisoned, in penal exile, emigrated, illegal. "The legalists were as a general rule more interested than our group of young Marxists in those days. It is true that there was among us a group of broadly educated revolutionary Marxists, but they were only a handful. We, the youth, if we are honest with ourselves, were in the overwhelming majority pretty ignorant. We were shocked sometimes by some of Darwin's ideas. Not all of us, however, even had occasion to get so far as to read Darwin. Nevertheless, I can say with certainty that when one of these underground young, 20- or 30-year-olds happened to meet and collide head-on with a legal Marxist, the feeling invariably sprang up among the young people that, all the same, we were more intelligent. This was not simply pride arrogance. No. The key to this feeling is that it is impossible to genuinely master Marxism if you do not have the will for revolutionary action. Only if Marxist theory is combined with that will and directed toward overcoming the existing conditions can it be applied to and aid. And if this revolutionary will is absent, then the Marxism is pseudo-Marxism, a wooden knife which neither stabs nor cuts. And this is what was under the direction of our legal Marxists. They were gradually transformed into liberals. "The willingness for revolutionary action is a precondition for mastering the Marxist dialectic. The one cannot live without the other. Marxism cannot be academism without ceasing to be Marxism, i.e. the theoretical 'foil of revolutionary action.'"
On their maps of Africa the European and American media color it bright red. It has been variously compared to Lenin’s Russia, Robespierre’s France— and Pol Pot’s Cambodia. But it is also the Ethiopian regime itself, and not only the archenemies who stand behind every bush in Africa, who call the daily killing in the streets of Addis Ababa the “red terror.” Fidel Castro also calls the February 1977 shootout in the Derg (the ruling junta) “decisive.” It is Castro who says of strongman Haile Mariam Mengistu’s liquidation of his rivals on the Derg, “From that moment, the Left and the authentic leaders of the revolution took the reins of power...” (Africa-Asie, 16 May 1977). And it is the 5,000 Cuban troops currently garrisoned in Ethiopia combined with the USSB’s staging of one of the most massive airlifts in history last winter which has kept this “revolutionary” African ally in power.

Yet despite this massive Cuban/Soviet presence, the Carter administration cautiously attempts to entice the Derg away from the Soviet diplomatic orbit. Can this army, which drives Soviet tanks, wears South Korean uniforms and drops Israeli-supplied napalm and cluster bombs from its MiGs on the nationalist-liberation forces of Eritrea, really be the African exemplars of Marxism-Leninism?

Needless to say, the American mouthpiece for Brezhnev and Castro, the Communist Party, answers yes. The pages of the Daily World are filled with turgid rewrites of the Cuban press’ fulsome praise for Mengistu. Despite such accolades in the left press, the Derg this summer once again demonstrated the fundamental continuity of its rule with the deposed “Lion of Judah,” Emperor Haile Selassie. In June the junta began the largest offensive in years against the Eritrean guerrillas—opening the roads south of Asmara, the provincial capital of Eritrea, and relieving the besieged city, as well as such towns as the port of Massawa. While Castro’s emissaries continued to bleat about the desirability of a “political solution” in Eritrea, thousands of civilian refugees were once again forced to flee before the Ethiopian onslaught. Ostentatiously withheld from actual combat, several thousand Cuban troops remain in Eritrea and the neighboring Ethiopian province of Tigre and the Cubans continue to provide decisive logistic and communications aid as well as strategic advice.

Cuba has thrown its weight behind a regime which gunned down the leftists of the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party (EPRP) after they paraded through the streets of Addis Ababa carrying portraits of Che Guevara. Thousands of corpses littered the streets of the city as Mengistu liquidated the threat from the left posed by these young Guevarists. Cuba came to the aid of Mengistu after this butcher had cut through the Byzantine factionalism of the Derg with the same methods he employed against the EPRP: wholesale slaughter of his opponents.

Amnesty International’s report of December 1977 indicates the scope of the so-called “red terror.” In April and May of last year large numbers of students and children (some only eight years old) were rounded up as suspected EPRP supporters. About 500 of these youths were massacred on April 29, 1977. By the end of last year, nightly killings of up to a hundred suspects occurred in Addis Ababa and at least several thousand took place in December alone. The victims’ bodies, often mutilated and left exposed in such public places as “Revolution Square” in Addis Ababa, serve as a grim reminder of what the Derg’s “socialism” means for the impoverish Ethiopian masses.

Mengistu: Left-Talking I Am In

The espousal of “Marxism-Leninism” in Addis Ababa has thrown the American left for a loop. While many speak of the so-called anti-imperialism of the “Ethiopian Revolution,” the genocidal war of the “progressive” Ethiopian officers against Eritrea has proved a thorny problem for those who do not simply parrot the Kremlin line.

Like Angola, the “Marxist” regime propped up by Cuban arms, the Ethiopian junta hides behind clouds of pseudo-Marxist phrases. While Mengistu has the Seder group for a “Marxist” mouthpiece and promises to one day unveil a full-fledged vanguard party, the ruling group in Angola, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), has already announced the creation of the “vanguard party of the working class and leader of the nation which will guide the country to socialism” (Guardian, 8 February 1977).

Socialist rhetoric is extremely cheap in Africa, where every petty tyrant is a self-proclaimed “anti-imperialist.” The continent even boasts the world’s only “socialist” emperor, Bokassa I of the Central African “Empire.” Mengistu and Neto are merely trading in shop-worn “African Socialism” for “Marxism-Leninism.” The tremendous social upheavals which accompanied the MPLA and the Derg’s coming to power require something more militant sounding to appeal to the toiling masses than “African Socialism,” which denies the existence of classes or class struggle altogether.

Unlike the MPLA, the Derg does not trace its origins to a petty-bourgeois nationalist formation battling for state power. It is simply the core of the now deposed state apparatus of Haile Selassie—the army and police—which has jettisoned the most hated and expendable excessences of the old dictatorship: the monarchy itself, the Crown Council of royal advisors and the captive Parliament. Although incessant factional bloodletting has halved the original membership of the junta, this no more changes its class nature than do the continual coups in various Latin American military regimes. The Derg’s core of American-trained officers remains intact. Furthermore, Mengistu especially relies on the elite Nebelbab (“Flame”) regiment, which was trained by Israeli advisors, as a praetorian guard.

Restoring “Order”

From the beginning the Derg was confronted by a massive plebeian upheaval. Exasperated by the yoke of semi-feudal oppression, widespread government corruption which sabotaged famine relief, and rampant inflation, thousands of students, teachers, workers and rank-and-file soldiers demonstrated against the monarchy in February of 1974. Under the pressure of its ranks the leadership of the Congress of Ethiopian Labor Unions called a general strike on March 7 of that year involving several million workers. During the strike, armed peasant groups seized the land while workers took over factories and plantations. Soldiers at Asmara and the Negelle—military base mutinied and arrested their officers. But it was the junta, a committee of lower and non-commissioned officers, supposedly elected by the ranks of the army, which “provisionally” took power. Above all, the junta sought to repress the labor movement and restore military discipline.

In September 1974 the Derg banned all strikes and “unauthorized” demonstrations, and broke up student demonstrations calling for civilian rule and the court martial of Haile Selassie. In fact, the Derg even attempted to block the abolition of the monarchy. In order to gain some credibility, the junta removed the worst feudal remnants, arresting some 160 officials and aristocrats in a “creeping coup,” while proposing that the partially paralyzed Crown Prince Asfu Wossin replace his father on the throne.

The Derg’s goal of restabilizing bourgeois rule via a few cosmetic changes was described by one officer in a candid interview with the German magazine Stern: “Listen, we had offered the Emperor, to place himself at the head of our movement he refused. We reminded him of the Shah of Persia, who made a revolution from above, as his throne and land were endangered by a revolution from below—the old man didn’t listen to reason.”...—quoted in Combat (Ethiopian Students’ Union in North America) March 1977

National Liberation for Eritrea and the Somalis!

Nowhere is the Derg’s continuity with the monarchy more clearly demonstrat ed than in its unbridled devotion to Ethiopian national oppression. From the beginning of its rule, the Derg continued the genocidal war against the Eritrean secessionists. After the junta promulgated the “National Democratic Revolution Program” promising the right of self-determination to the op-
pressed nationalities, it organized the infamous "red march" into Eritrea. Some 30,000 Ethiopian peasants were hastily armed, told that "Arabs" were invading the country and promised land and plunder. If they were unwilling to face the Tigre and Eritrean guerrillas, the conscripts were driven on at gunpoint. The "army" soon disintegrated under the impact of numerous mutinies and mass desertions.

This spring, the Derg's MiGs continued to rain napalm and cluster bombs on Eritrean villages in an attempt to break the sieges of Massawa and Asmara. By the beginning of 1978 one million Eritreans (one-third of the population) had fled to southern Sudan.

On the one hand, the Derg parrots the claims of the monarchy that Eritrea belongs to Ethiopia because it was allegedly incorporated (i.e., occasionally forced to pay tribute to the monarchy) in one or another medieval Ethiopian empire. On the other hand, the Derg dons its "Marxist" mask to denounce the Eritreans as "tools of imperialism" and "Arab reaction."

The Derg's claims are devoted to suppressing the real history of Eritrea's national oppression. While under the colonialist domination of Italy from 1899 to 1941, Eritrea's economic development was clearly distinct from that of Ethiopia. There was far more industrial development and a specifically Eritrean proletariat emerged. When the British took over the Italian East African colonies after World War II, one of the earliest African trade unions, the General Union of Labor Syndicates, appeared during the struggles against the new imperialist masters.

With U.S. backing Eritrea was ceded to Ethiopia "provisionally" without the slightest consultation of the Eritrean public. Under Haile Selassie's barbaric rule Eritrea was forcibly annexed as an Ethiopian province. By the time of the 1962 annexation, all political parties, trade unions, the parliament, the constitution and all national newspapers in Eritrea were suppressed—resulting in the commencement of the 16-year-old war for national independence. Moreover, since industrially backward Ethiopia coveted Eritrea's relative wealth, entire factories were dismantled and carted off.

Although Eritrea is not a homogenous national entity, this vicious oppression bred armed resistance forces ranging from petty-bourgeois radicals, to conservative bourgeois nationalists. While we militarily support these groups against Ethiopia, we entertain no illusions that once in power their policies will be any different from that of the Derg. As we wrote in April 1975: "The continued enforced union with Ethiopia can only result in the further devastation of Eritrean society through brutal economic, linguistic and cultural oppression.... Thus we support the democratic right of Eritrea to secession. We call for military victory to the Eritrean independent forces, while pausing no confidence in their petty-bourgeois and communalist leaderships."

"Eritrean Independence
Struggle Intensifies" Young Spartacus No. 31

Eritrea is not the only captive province in the Ethiopian "prison house of peoples." The Derg also launched a deadly campaign against the ethnic Somali of the Ogaden province. Earlier this year Cuban/Russian aid had to be rushed to win back the Ogaden from Somalia. Marxists view the Ethiopian/Somali war as a just war for the national liberation of the Somalis of the Ogaden who sought to become part of ethnically homogeneous Somalia. The Ogaden rebels and the Somali army were not seeking to conquer the Ethiopians state and oppress the Amharic people. While we militarily support these "Arabs" into Eritrea, we do not advocate the annihilation of borders. This "principle" of course divides the borders, drawn by European colonialists, which arbitrarily divide various tribal or ethnic groups into fictitious national entities. While we do not advocate the "Balkanization" of the African continent, Marxists are opposed to the forcible reduction of minority peoples within these states. Those who join with the assertive despoits and demagogues of the OAU in maintaining Africa's current frontiers set the basis for the Biafran massacre, themods of U.S.-backed warlord for Eritrea's Amin's butchery of various minority peoples within Uganda.

"Red Terror" Against the Working Class

After the strike wave of 1974, the junta tried to restore "order"—i.e., ensures that there would be no independent working-class mobilizations. In September 1975, the EPRP working through the Central Ethiopian Labor Union (CELU) attempted to organize a general strike against the high cost of living. The Derg unambiguously announced: "Our Revolution will not be disturbed by strikes." On September 25, troops stormed a CELU meeting and gunned down several of the delegates. After a number of scattered strikes, the army entered the factories accompanied by informers to weed out the militant workers. Some of the militants were immediately shot; others interrogated and tortured in front of their fellow workers. Like the much-touted Angolan "workers committees," the Derg's factory committees are sham "consultative" bodies which can only discuss collective bargaining plans in order to increase factory output. According to Article 19 of the penal code, any deviation from this advisory function is a punishable offense. Worker discussion groups were also set up—as a stratagem to weed out suspected members of the EPRP.

Similarly the nearly 300 neighborhood "kebeles" which were long used as terror gangs against the working people than the Angolan "peoples' committees," which were long considered the base of the "Trotskyists" and Pan-Africanist opponents of the MPLA leadership and subordinated to this aim. Given the organization of the kebeles on a "natio­nal" basis, many are not surprising that they are dominated by the unorganized. By 1976, the unemployed had become the main social base of the Meisone (the All-Ethiopian Socialist Union), a Stalinist grouping which had thrown its support to the Derg the previous year.

The Meisone was soon organizing and arming its unemployedCompulsory detention of workers as terror gangs against the EPRP. First, however, the 1976 elections held in June were/postponed in order to break the influence of so-called "counterrevolutionary ele­ments" (the EPRP). Many of the kebeles became little more than assassination squads for the junta. According to the June 1976 New African magazine, "At least half a dozen have a well-deserved reputation for concentrating on weeding out counterrevolutionaries and of attacking them with extreme brutality and in some cases totally barbarously." Each of the kebeles has its own prison, some of which can hold up to 700 Prisoners. Estimates of the number detained range from 30,000 to 100,000. The prisoners are tortured into revealing the names of three "accomplices" (the EPRP is believed to be organized into cells of three or four). The Meisone, however, soon reaped the fruits of its sordid collaboration with the Derg. When the Meisone raised the question of a civilian government and the creation of the "Marxist-Leninist" party it was purged from its role of counterinsurgency to the junta and hundreds of its members were jailed and killed. The Derg will seek to destroy any left or labor grouping, no matter how service, which exists independently of the state apparatus.

The Derg and the Peasantry

It is not only the proletariat that suffers the repression of the junta. In the imperialist epoch, the petty-bourgeois nationalists are incapable of carrying out even such basic democratic tasks as giving land to the tiller, unlike, the Cuban petty-bourgeois guerrillas, they own vast capitalist property relations.

The junta cannot meet the needs of Ethiopia's peasantry, despite its demagogic promises. In 1974 the Derg decreed a sweeping land reform in the hope of appeasing the massive peasant revolt and buying the time necessary to destroy or capture the independent peasant organizations. The junta also hoped to destroy some of the barriers to capitalist development in agriculture (a step recommended by the World Bank in 1974) by homogenizing the forms of continued on next page
Ethiopia...

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since its own to compensating the owners of the
interest on government bonds, on the other hand, in foreign capital in both good and bad years, even if it requires great sacrifices in the
population. Compensation payments thus have the effect of transferring resources back into the country.

—The Colonial Revolution— Capitalist or Socialists? (1960)

The Diplomatic Merry-Go-Round

The third round of the U.S. military mission to Ethiopia in September 1977, the cancellation of U.S. military aid and the current role of Soviet/Cuban forces in Ethiopia, do not in fact mean that Ethiopia has irreversibly broken with world imperialism. Nor does it imply that the country is now dominated by "Soviet social imperialism," as is

MPLA head Neto.

The U.S. then permitted delivery of $11.1 million worth of trucks and armament to the Derg's military at the end of last May. But nearly $6 million in military hardware remained frozen as a result of the decision by both the NATO and the Derg into breaking with the USSR.

The more far-sighted representatives of American imperialism are obviously hoping for a repeat of Sadat's dramatic break with the Soviets in 1972 and its reconciliation with the U.S. The case of Egypt is instructive, for it illustrates Trotsky's apocalyptic that "imperialism is not gunboats in the Yangtze River... but the political and economic bonds linking the native bourgeoisie with foreign capital."

Soviet diplomacy is a strategy of relentless pursuit of the supposed "democratic" or "anti-imperialist" elements of world capitalism, a policy of accommodating the bourgeois forces in all the so-called "borders of socialism in one country." The Soviet Stalinists and their Cuban allies committed to belief in "imperialism" have refused to back away from their position. If a peaceful solution to the Cold War cannot be found, then the socialist bloc bloc will not be the Soviet bloc. Even before Nasser's death, "de-Nasserization," i.e., a return to a market-oriented economy and to ties with the U.S. had begun. This was consummated by Sadat's expulsion of the U.S. military aid that sale had been frozen since 1971. Since there is no such thing as "Soviet social imperialism" the Sadat revolution, initially reasoning, the Mauritanian bourgeoisie can even break the Soviet connection and reaffirm their role as client states with the "imperialist" bourgeoisie outside the bloc. As for China, it of course currently denounces the Derg's Soviet orientation, with its links to the USSR. But in September 1975, Peking hailed the idea of "national and democratic socialist revolution" and "socialist achievements" in opposing imperialism and colonialism. In the midst of the bitter inter-Eritrean war, the Chinese Stalinists had the gall to proclaim that the Derg "supports national liberation movements!" Even beyond this, the Maoists' treacherous Stalinist diplomacy, in essence no different from that of the Indian leaders, has done nothing to aid the Eritrean rebels and establish friendly relations with Haile Selassie in Ethiopia.

Permanent Revolution or Permanent Slaughter

The blood-drenched Derg has all too many analogues across the African continent, which the economically backward world expresses the appetite of the petty bourgeoisie to become a full-fledged bourgeoisie. The Stalinists' and petty-bourgeois radicals' counterposition of this nationalism to imperialism is fundamentally false and denies its oppressive and even genocidal consequences.

To imperialism can be mobilized by the proletariat in the struggle to end all oppression and exploitation by the overthrow of capitalism. But the national antagonisms which the imperialists fostered to maintain their rule are entrenched by bonapartist like Mengistu in an attempt to prevent the masses from uniting in order to overthrow the privileged military cliques.

Despite its heroic struggle against the Derg, the EPRP remains tied to the Stalinist dogma of the "two-stage" revolution. They call for an alliance of the proletariat, peasantry and urban petty bourgeoisie on an equal footing, and "permanent revolution." Neither the rural nor urban petty bourgeoisie can play an independent role, however, in a "democratic revolution" is merely a left variant of the Stalinist recipe for a bloo on the Workers' and Peasants' Revolution or the course of class struggle from China in 1927. And today, the situation created that such a bloc will realize neither national liberation from imperialism nor such fundamental tasks as bringing land to the tiler.

Genuinely Leninist vanguard parties in China and the rest of Africa can only be built in struggle against such illusions, and for the Bolshevik perspec­tive of the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry and other oppressed strata. Independence for Ethiopia and the rest of East Africa!

Spartacus Youth League Directory

Ann Arbor: SYL, Box 89, Room 1301, Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, or call (313) 662-6612.
Bay Area: SYL, Box 273, Civic Center Station, Oakland, CA 94610, or call (415) 863-4996.
Boston: SYL, Box 1, M.I.T. Station, Cambridge MA 02139, or call (617) 495-9151.
Chicago: SYL, Box 4667, Main P.O. Box, Chicago, IL 60680, or call (312) 427-0003.
Cleveland: SYL, Box 6642, Clevel­land, OH 44101, or call (216) 566-7800.
Detroit: SYL, Box 20035, Ferndale, MI 48220, or call (313) 442-9292.
Houston: SYL, c/o SL, Box 26474, Houston, TX 77027.
Los Angeles: SYL, Box 29135, Los Feliz, CA 90027, or call (213) 229-7229.
San Francisco: SYL, Box 444, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013, or call (212) 925-5665.
Toronto: SYL, Box 6642, C.P.O., Toronto, ON, or call (416) 366-4107.
Vancouver: SYL, Box 26, Vancouver, B.C., or call (604) 733-8845.

Trotzkyism

League of Communists

Toronto: 4100 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, or call (416) 366-4107.

Vancouver: 26, Station A, Vancouver, B.C., or call (604) 733-8845.
Iran

(continued from page 1)

Islamic imperialism rampant in the protests. What is clear, however, is that the recognized leadership of the current protests is far from the "bourgeois" that the Shah's primary base of support. (the Shah's primary base of support) that the oppression of women. According to the of law which emerged from the struggle anniversary of his regime was a com­

archy. Virtually any social gathering generally listless spectators did not join the curious onlookers, but public enthu­

siasm for the Shah's celebration of the 25th rock in Tabriz in 21 August) reports: The Shah's domination in the troops' shouts of "Javid shah! For an Iranian other words, have been successfully sup­

nited by the dictatorship. While

example, have been successfully sup­

... the need to combat Pan-Islamism and prosecution as "unfortunate." According to one anonymous campus official, "The trial was a humiliation and really shouldn't have hap­

pended. Some people felt that John official for the trial was improper."

Sander Johnson...

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Sander Johnson...

ment, Circle Women's Liberation Un­

nance was raised by the substantial, and the students are running for office. According to the Shah, the "liberaliza­tion" would have to be "modified" if the agreement is to be signed.

Proof of the Peacock Throne's intent to liberalize its dictatorship was sup­
pelled by a recent reshuffling of the Iranian cabinet. In June, an important post was distri­

consumed. One of the Shah's main strategies is to create a "tobacco SAVAK" in the country. In fact, the Shah has

Charred ruins of Abadan theater in which 400 died.

to the pro-Moscow Tudeh party have refused to wage a political struggle against the increasing political/religious influence of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie on the proletariat. (The most hard-line China loyalists can barely protest as "anti-Shah" militants in the upsurge of revolutionary fervor.) The Russian tsars.

For Workers Revolution in Iran

The predominance of the ayatollahs in the current struggles is in large part a product of the revolutionary development of the Islamic state. As the first step they call for workers and peasants government in Iran!.

The rapid growth of Iranian industry in the past few decades has led to an influx of rural and urban petty bour­

the butcher Shah! For an Iranian example of how the Stalinist dogma of the "anti-imperialist alliance" will bring disaster down on the Iranian people. For it was there, in 1965, that more than half a million Communist and working­

students. The leaders of the Communist revolution of 1978 and declared that this created a

the "inquisition" which stands on the heritage of the Stalinist dogma of the "anti-imperialist alliance". Considering the importance of the Islamic state, the Shah has a "social democratic" tendency, and the Shah's primary base of support) must be on guard against any mass assembly. The Shah's celebration of the 25th anniversary of his regime was a com­

party Marcos and on its liberal and prosecution as "unfortunate." According to one anonymous campus official, "The trial was a humiliation and really shouldn't have hap­

pended. Some people felt that John official for the trial was improper."

Sander Johnson...

s did not spread across the border into Iran. Simultaneously, the Shah has announced its support to the measures

that, while there is no doubt that large numbers of workers have been drawn into the current struggles in the country, participation is based upon subordi­

the Shah's domination in the troops' shouts of "Javid shah! For an Iranian other words, have been successfully sup­

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**Friends Like These...**

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and then immediately afterward, a deformed workers state requiring all rev's [revolutionaries] to demand a position in it. Of course, it should've had a defense of this state against imperialism seeing that the Am. [american] bourg. was taking active steps to invade Cuba (which they in fact did) and credit the results of the revolution; and (ii) could the Cuban leadership at that time (or even today) meaningfully be called "Socialists." Compare MB #4 (on Cuba) with the Ed. for Soc. [the SL's Marxist Bulletin and SWP's Education for Socialists bulletin entitled The Nature of the Cuban Revolution. The second article in this pamphlet by Hansen is invaluable—brilliant. It is also of special use to you since it directly addresses the positions of M. Wohlforth, and Robinson. If you read nothing else, I urge you to read (and study) this pamphlet in its entirety. Keep in mind that Trotsky watched the Soviet bu-reaucrats throw away the gains of October for about seven years before he came to the conclusion that they were undermining the revolution in response to specific historical events—the victory of fascism in Germany and the Kremlin's responsibility for it. A revolution accomplished without a Trotskyist leadership in its public organ, WV, fulfils their revolutionary obligations towards the substance of those proclamations. In so doing, they completely miss the fact that Lenin and Trotsky were describing in an essential (i.e. abstract) manner what the comrades of the International should be putting into practice. They miss the provision that says: "There is no such thing as a revolution without a proletariat." There is no such thing as a revolution without a proletariat therefore that they've publicly arrested in 1917 and cannot move until socialism triumphs. Between socialist revolutionaries there is absolutely no gradations (they have stated this explicitly) and from totalURREALITY, the w-[working class] of the U.S. will be moved in (a series of mystical leaps) to embrace their project in its entirety.

One final consideration, even if the SWP were the everything the SL says it is, they could not prevent them from "entering" the SWP to win comrades from the bureaucratic leadership? The British example. What did Trotsky write in 1934 about the French section's proposed entry into the Socialist Party? Under what conditions did the CLA fuse with the Musettes in 1934, or enter the Ameri­cans later? In short, how does the SL hope to win cadres with the SWP, DSOC, the CP, and even minuscule "Trotskyists" groups like the RCL, WL, IS, etc. standing in the way?

There is only one way the SL can justify their refusal to "enter" the SWP—by concocting outrageous myths about the nature of the SWP:

- there is no internal democracy
- they no longer defend the Soviet Union
- their [sic] tail the democratic party
- their membership is not worth getting for the SWP has been recruited to bland reformism.

Do not all of these things apply to your typical Socialist Party? Did it prevent Trotsky from advancing entry under such conditions? Let me tell you,

Don, that stark of tactical differences, I hold (with a few exceptions) the same basic political convictions I did a year ago. And I tell you, that I have seen with my own eyes hollow slanders based on a phrase here or a sentence there and blown out of proportion in the SWP press. I hope you won't be offended by what I'm about to write, but then again, this is not a novel feat for the Socialists. I can help but notice in your letter a similarity to Trotsky's letter to Shachtman in 1928.

**Letter on SWP...**

(continued from page 2)

...of importance of each particular plant. If the ranks can get hired and if the plant is unionized, "throw 'em in". Original SWP projections were to have half the membership of every local colonized in the rank and file. As of Oberlin one local had reached its quota. The leadership has understandably encoun­tered great difficulty in recruiting the SWP..."Congress..."

One should be fooled by the SWP's belated proletarian turn. The SWP members who survive this turn will simply play the role of a left cover for the betrayers of the trade-union bourgeoisie. Early in the Trotskyist tradition program cannot be the programmatic basis for those endeavoring to become the "leaders of the vanguard" of the proletariat. That's why it was rarely even mentioned at Oberlin.

What perspectives can there be in the steelworkers union, for example, when the SWP actively supports the ongoing policies of Sadikowski in Chicago—the former head of a union district which lost thousands of jobs without a fight?

You are very bright, and undeniably sincere just as many of the SL'er's best comrades are also bright and sincere. Your handling of this political issue is praiseworthy. You political outlook is overwhelmingly literary. Please do not bank the world on one page. The SL is a very isolated group and if you choose to join the SL, you will be operating within a political framework that is inherently consistent and for that reason, very compelling. There is moreover a superficial similarity between the Trotsky of the October revolution or Liebknecht's break from the SPD and the SL's break from the "social-democratic" influence. The problem with this period is contained within their name. The "Socialist" is opening and is itself an appeal to an anarchist approach to politics rather than an objective analysis of the class forces, using the principles of Trotskyism. The SL on most occasions does not thing to see the world as a wonderful machine of words but which gets tossed around like a paper lantern who won't be missed.

If you join the SL, at any rate, you will find it very hard to break from their overwhelming literary approach. But keep in mind that habit (as Trotsky often said) is the teacher of the mind more convincing than the best arguments, the most convincing historical facts. I ask you in your letters that you are able to distinguish between the two cases, and you are right. But I would go further and re-study the development of that fa­mous split to decide whether the SWP's attitudes were simply matters of principle, or only of degree.

I have to admit that in reading your letter, I was also reminded of what Marx wrote at the beginning of The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte in refer­ence to the French Revolutions of 1830 and 1848. He said that a great historian once wrote that historical events have a way of repeating by themselves. (This is not to say that this historian forgot to add that they occur the first time as "drama" and the second time as "farce." The arguments I've given you against Trotskyism are misleading in at least one case. They create the impression that there is a crucial, ongoing debate between the SL and the SWP over the nature of the Trotskyist tradition. This is not true. As already we may observe, the figures of the reformists: the Social Democrats and the Stalinists. Sectarianism, by its very nature is always self-defeating. It is a bad way to be completely truthful. I have no taste for arguments any longer: I have moved to reply because I did not want to see you waste your enormous energies on an organization that obstructs the progress of the class struggle, something that George Novack called a "corrosive acid on the workers movement."

**Young Spartacus**

NEWSPAPER OF THE SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE

[Article continues on page 3]
Charges Against Sandor John Dismissed

SYL Victory in Chicago

"Outside Agitator" Trial

“Nine months after my arrest and after a
dozens court appearances, numerous
demonstrations and press meetings,
and the expenditure of many hundreds
of dollars, we have gotten what should
have come at the beginning: the dismis­
sal of the case against me.

This decision represents a modest but
very real victory in the fight to defend
democratic rights. The administration
of the University of Illinois Chicago
Circle campus has been prevented,
at least for the time being, from keeping
a (?) activist off the campus and from
carrying through their intention of
convicting me for the so-called supposed
'crime' of helping make the revolution­
ary views of the Spartacus Youth
League known on campus.

So ended the “outside agitator”
prosecution of SYL activist Sandor
John. On August 15 Circuit Court
Judge John J. McDonnell formally
dismissed the criminal trespass charges
stemming from John's arrest at the
University of Illinois Chicago Circle
campus on November 22. On a
motion by John's attorney, David C.
Thomas, McDonnell ruled that the First
Amendment freedoms protect the right
of non-students to distribute
literature in the main lobby of the
campus Center, which he characterized as
a "public forum." After innumerable
delays, the judge’s decision reflected
what the SYL and the Partisan Defense
Committee had been saying from the
beginning: the university had no case—
John's arrest was pure and simple
harassment.

After the announcement of the
judge’s decision, John stated:

"This victory was made possible by the
vicious campaign carried out by the
Spartacist League and Spartacus Youth
League in collaboration with the Partis­
an Defense Committee. We did not
receive any support from either of the
campus courts but rather publicized the
case widely and won support from the
left and labor movements and defenders
of democratic rights through the initiation
of an Ad Hoc Committee to Stop
Administration Harassment. We do not
forget for a minute that for every
acquittal of left-wing activists there
have been many convictions that this
system of American law and order
carrying through the brutal police
murder of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark
in this city, and the legal murder of
Sacco and Vanzetti, the Rosenbergs
and many others.

This victory in the fight to defend
democratic rights strikes an important
blow at the vicious witchhunters of the
Circle administration. These would-be
Joe McCarthy’s had broadcast far and
wide their intention to use the cops and
the bourgeois courts to run "their"
campus the way them wanted: without
"outside" reds sitting up "trouble" among the minority and working-class
students under attack by the notorious
and racist "Selection Index" admissions
plan.

In a prominent story on the John
case, the Chicago Sun-Times (16 Au­
 gust) quoted vice chancellor Richard
Ward as saying: "At stake is the question of our right to control our

promises and maintain order." Al­
though Ward claims that UICC "will
abide by the decision" of the court, the
university has already announced its
intention to fight the SYL’s more far­
reaching civil suit against UICC admin­
istration harassment.

Stop the Harassment at UICC!

The victory in the Sandor John case
should be used as a springboard to fight
the university’s vicious prosecution of a
group of Palestinian and Latin Ameri­
can students arrested at a May 11 anti-Zionist
demonstration (again on criminal tres­
pass charges) and its escalating threats
against anti-Shah Iranians (see “UICC
Admin. Does SAVAK Dirty Work,”
Young Spartacus No. 65, Summer
1978).

As John pointed out: "It is important to note, while the Circle
administration has been frustrated in its
attempt to convict me for being what
the McCarthyite witchhunters used to
call an "outside agitator," that the same
administration is now carrying out a
seditious prosecution of a group of
Arab and other students, as well as
vicious harassment of Iranian students
— again because of their political
activities and views. We demand that
the charges against these students
immediately be dropped!

"From the beginning of this case, when the
Circle administration banned me from
campus and then when they
arrested me, we have emphasized that
this attack on our organization is part of
a broad assault by the Circle adminis­
tration on democratic rights. Left-wing
faculty members such as Julia Le Sage
are being run out; an ever-growing
mountain of anti-democratic and ab­
surd regulations is being imposed on
student organizations; and now attacks
on foreign students have reached truly
ominous proportions.

"The racist attack on my administration
struck out at the SYL is
that we are the most active and vocal
left-wing group on campus. We have
become known as energetic fighters of
the Selection Index and proponents of

labor/black defense to stop racist
attacks against black schoolchildren on
the Southwest side. We publicized the
case of Bennie Lenard, a black auto
worker beaten almost to death by the
Minneapolis Park police. At the University
of Chicago and around the country
we became known as the organization that
opposed the law and fought against the
attacks given to the Chilean junta by Milton
Friedman."

Haggling Through the Courts

The campaign to defend Sandor John
combined legal defense with the mobilis­
ation of protest in the form of demon­
strations, meetings, and wide publicity. When John was first banned from Circle
on October 27, the SYL initiated the Ad
Hoc Committee Against Administra­
tion Harassment on the basis of the
slogans: "Stop, the Administration's
Anti-Communist Ban on Sandor
John!" and "End Administration Ha­
rassment of the Left and Campus
Organizations!" (After the arrest the
Committee adopted the additional
slogans "Defend Sandor John" and
"Drop the Charges!") The Committee
was endorsed by Circle Student Govern­
ment.

Victory to NYC Press Strike!

AUGUST 29 — As Young Spartacists
went to press, New York City is en­
shrouded in the most important
newspaper strike in the U.S. since
the Washington Post broke the
Pressmen’s Union in a bitter 1975-76
strike. The Printing Pressmen’s
Union struck the New York Times,
Post and Daily News on August 9
after the publishers of the three
two main dailies posted new work
rules, designed to throw half their
members
out of work.

Since that time the papers have been
shut down tight by an effec­
tive show of union solidarity. Jour­
nalists and craft unionists in the
Alien Printing Trades Council have
honored the Pressmen's picket lines
from the beginning of the strike.

Paper Handlers, Mechanics, Ma­
chinsts, Electricians and the News­
paper Guild have also declared
strike. These workers or more of the
papers and other unions are consid­
ering such a move.

What is at stake in this strike is the
evivisibility of the printing trades
unions in New York City. For years
newspaper publishers have mounted a
union-busting offensive through­
out the country. In city after city,
including Los Angeles, Miami and
Portland, these workers have defeated
and broken. The destruction of the
Pressmen’s Union at the Washing­
ton Post through organized scab­
hing is the model that the New York
City publishers, headed by notori­
ous union-buster Rupert Murdoch,
would like to emulate. But their
plans have been frustrated by the
determination of the Pressmen and
their allies to defend their jobs and
unions.

Wages, jobs and services in New
York City have been drastically
slashed through the successful anti­
labor campaign of the bankers and
their friends in the city government,
a campaign abetted by sellout union
misladders like Victor GObraum
and Albert Shanker. A labor victory in
the newspaper strike could be the
turning point in this vicious class
war being waged against the workers
of New York City. Victory to the
Newspaper Strike!