

# Bulletin

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TEN CENTS

**NOW  
12  
PAGES**

## NATIONAL LONGSHORE STRIKE THREATENS

**----- Letters From a Seaman----- Vote Morrissey Ticket! -----**

As the 80 day 'cooling off' period invoked against striking East Coast longshoremen at the end of September draws to a close on Dec. 20, chances are that once again, the militancy of the dockworkers will force the I.L.A. leadership to call a strike. I.L.A. President Thomas Gleason has urged a rejection of both variants (two and three year contracts) put forward as the 'final' offers of the New York Shipping Association. At the same time threat of a West Coast strike looms as well.

There is no doubt that the government will bend all efforts, as it did in response to the Sept. 30 strike, on behalf of their common aim with the stevedoring bosses of containerization-automation-modernization of cargo handling, at the expense of the longshoremen. This process is well on its way already on the West Coast. Of course, both the industry and the government recognize that they can reverse the U.S. balance of payments deficit if they can cheapen exports by cutting overall shipping costs through containerization which in the long run would eliminate not only longshoremen's jobs but entire ports as well as jobs in trucking and other areas of transportation.

The biggest danger facing the East Coast longshoremen now is that the I.L.A. leadership, despite the militant sounds it has been making, will go for a deal, perhaps based on higher wages and fringe benefits, accepting the stevedoring firms' offer of a 40 hour

week work guarantee, while at the same time ALSO accepting the conditions placed by the bosses on this 40 hour week offer. We know that this is what has taken place on the West Coast where only some of the labor force has this job protection while the bosses are free to do with the rest of the force as they see fit.

The employers have made clear that their offer of a guaranteed annual income of 2,860 hours (40 hours a week) is made ONLY with the proviso that 'work rules are revised' and 'abuses eliminated'. The implication, of course, is that after the bosses decide how many men will do how much work, where, when and how (revising work rules and eliminating 'abuses to maximize productivity) then and only then there be a 40 hour guaranteed income.

The bosses offer also leaves open the possibility that not only will new workers and casual labor be employed without any guaranteed income, but that the owners will be free to limit employment at or even phase out of existence any of the smaller ports from Maine to Texas. The contract offer of the New York Shipping Association is made on behalf only of the ports of New York, Baltimore, Boston, Hampton Roads and Philadelphia.

The only kind of deal that longshoremen can make which will not be used against them is an agreement that the dockworkers and not the bosses or superagen-

( Continued on page two )

### **in defense of marxism**

### **MANY THEORIES OF L MARCUS**

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### **NEGROES AND NATION**

**SF STATE -- NYC SCHOOLS -- SHERWOOD CASE  
HOSPITAL STRUGGLES IN NYC AND TWIN CITIES**

# NIXON PLANS RECESSION

BY FRED MUELLER

## CON ED STRIKE --THE LESSONS--

Charles F. Luce, President of Con Edison expressed his views on the recent strike in a speech to the New York Chamber of Commerce on December 5th. His remarks give us a clue of what the bosses are planning for the future. Luce proposed that an anti-strike law like the Taylor Law be passed to cover workers in private industry as well as curbs on union democracy.

Let us examine what the New York Times reports:

"The Legislature, Mr. Luce said, should reexamine 'the legal machinery' to cope with strikes that affect the public interest. He suggested that the lawmakers consider whether 'the duly elected leadership of the unions should not be given final authority to bind memberships to the results of negotiations'."

We have been warned! We couldn't ask for a clearer warning of the kind of attacks the bosses have in mind to prevent the rank and file of the trade unions from engaging in struggle for their demands. They intend to take away the elementary democratic right to ratify contract settlements. So much for democracy, when it gets to be a little expensive as far as the bosses are concerned.

The bosses are getting worried these days as they see that it is not just the lower paid workers who are striking but also the higher paid, skilled workers who are being hit by inflation and who won't take this attack on their living standards. While Mr. Luce screams for state control of the unions, we say that Con Edison with its guaranteed profits, profits from the sale of one of life's necessities, should be taken over by the public under trade union control and run not for the profit of a few but for the needs of the millions of people in this city.

The lesson of the Con Ed strike is: Keep up the fight for rank and file democracy in the unions! The bosses and the government stand exposed as the defenders of bureaucracy, not the rank and file! Throw out the bureaucrats for good and show the bosses what workers' democracy is all about!

Any illusions retained by American workers in the incoming Nixon Administration are going to be quickly dispelled. Through the election campaign and in the weeks since his victory Nixon has made quite clear the kind of policies he has in mind.

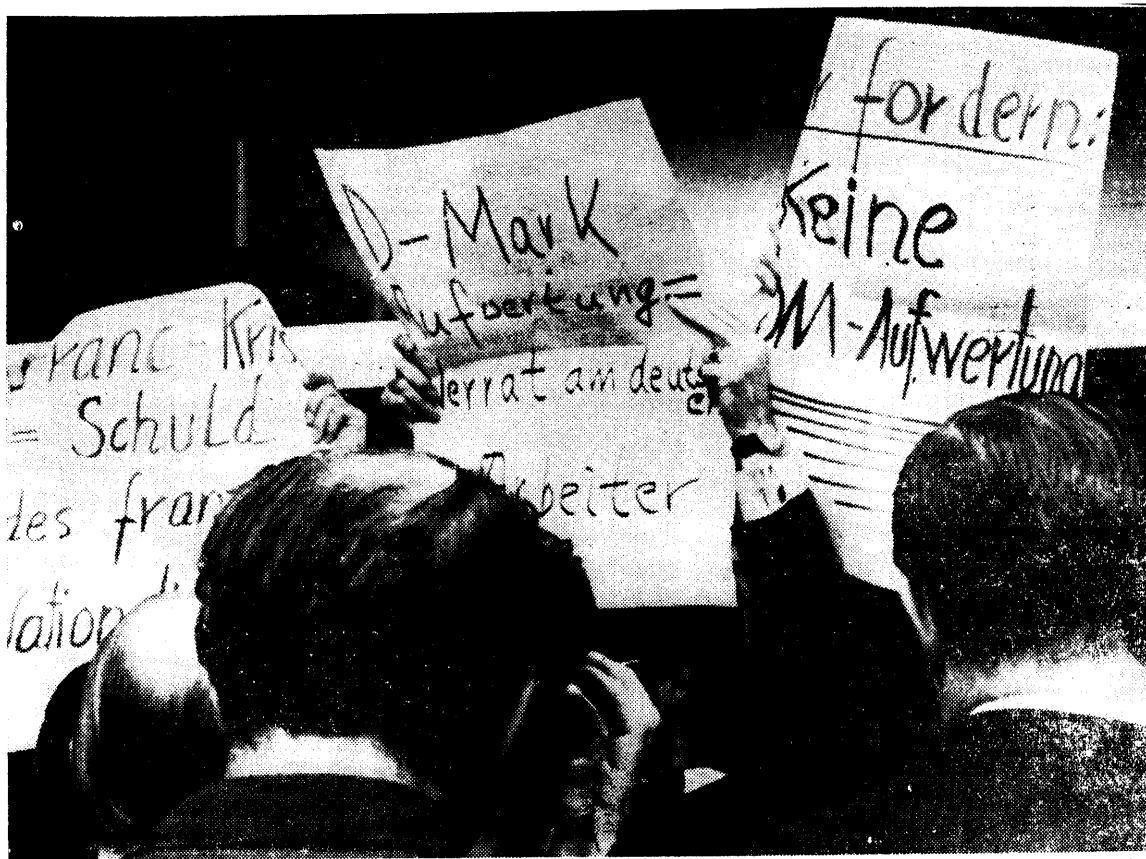
Nixon's plans to deepen recessionary policies are no secret. His advisers are openly speculating whether a 'temporary' 5% unemployment rate will accomplish the goal of significant improvement in the trade balance and the balance of payments, along with smaller inflation. In the 1957-58 recession unemployment mounted steeply while inflation continued. Now Johnson has publicly warned Nixon that a repetition on a more serious level of unemployment plus inflation is threatened. If you aren't careful, warns Johnson very candidly, you will throw so many workers out of jobs that greatly increased political unrest will result.

We don't want 'the haves' fighting the 'no haves' for precious jobs', says Johnson. He doesn't say of course that even with the relatively low level of unemployment at present competition for jobs is intense and many thousands of jobs in the mass production industries are being killed by automation.

### BUST

Another, more official adviser to Nixon, Arthur F. Burns, made the statement which may have prompted Johnson's later comment. Burns warned that inflation was the most serious problem and that if it were not checked 'an economic bust may become unavoidable.'

Meanwhile the Labor Department has announced that wages continued to rise much faster than labor productivity in the third quarter of 1968, thus continuing the increase in unit labor costs which began to rise early in 1966 and has continued since. This is a very concrete proof of the increasing pressure on the rate of profit, at the same time as workers' real wages have



WEST GERMAN DEMONSTRATORS DENOUNCE REVALUATION AS "BETRAYAL OF THE GERMAN WORKER"

actually fallen slightly in the last two years. This factor is the key to the end of the boom period. A much more intense attack on the trade unions and living standards is required in this period, and this is precisely what the warnings of 'economic busts' are all about. The increasing talk of anti-strike and other anti-labor legislation is directly related to this deepening economic crisis. The repeated warnings of the BULLETIN in this respect are going to be proven correct. Now is the time to prepare to fight back against the attacks.

### WORLD

The U.S. economy is part of the world economy and the crisis here is part of the overall crisis of the capitalist system. The boom throughout Europe and North America is finished. There have been three major monetary crises within the last year, each time involving the major currencies of the capitalist world. Speculation on further devaluation of the pound, devaluation of the franc and revaluation of the mark has begun again only two weeks after the latest stop-gapsolu-

tion and in spite of the various measures taken by Germany, Britain and France, which can only have the effect of contracting world trade and deepening recessionary tendencies in all of these countries.

Everywhere this economic crisis is deepening alongside the political crisis, alongside the class struggle in the factories. It is the fighting capacity of the working class in all of these countries, the fact that it has not suffered any major defeats in the post-war period and is stepping up the fight for its economic demands, which is intensifying the bosses' crisis steadily.

This is the meaning of the French situation, the parliamentary and industrial crisis plaguing Italy, and the growing fears of the German bosses. In Britain the experienced betrayers in the old and well-established trade union bureaucracy have so far managed to hold off any serious explosions on a national scale, most recently in the sell-out over the pay claim of three million engineering workers. But time is running out for them.

The U.S. is not separate from this crisis. Nixon is

going to have to deal with an organized working class engaged in a wave of strike action unparalleled in almost two decades. Now utility workers and state hospital workers have joined the offensive in New York State. As the economic crisis deepens the economic offensive and strike wave is bound to deepen as well.

The crisis is also expressed in the growing militancy of black workers and youth and of the students in the high schools as well as on the campuses. In the U.S. as well as in Western Europe what is required is revolutionary leadership, which relates the struggles of different sections of workers and students to the international crisis, which fights for theory and program based on an international strategy and not on isolated struggles, and which shows in the course of the struggle that the economic fight must also be a political one or lead to defeat. It is workers power or crushing defeat, there is no middle way out of the crisis which is developing so rapidly now, with great shocks and developments on an almost week to week basis.

## NATIONAL LONGSHORE STRIKE THREATENS

(Continued from page one)

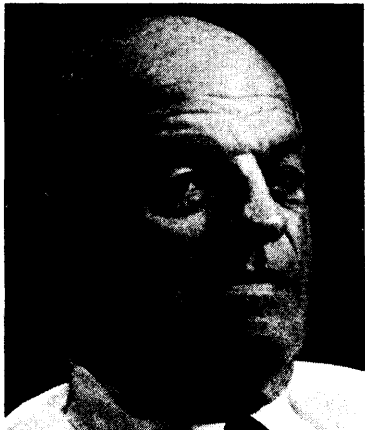
cies like the Port of New York Authority and the Waterfront Commission, get the FULL benefits of the productivity increases achieved by containerization and other modernization measures. This means that rather than the bosses' 40 hour week guarantee, the I.L.A. should fight for a shorter work week -- a 30 hour week at 40 hours pay! Cash bonuses should accrue directly to all workers based on the increased tonnage handled by containerization. Other ways in which the benefits of containerization should be distributed to dockworkers are through extended vacation time and 20 year retirement, with contributions to the pension fund to be based on tonnage handled per capita, not on hours worked.

A fight for this program to save the jobs and conditions of longshoremen must be part of a fight for a uniform national contract. In addition, this means that U.S. dockworkers and seamen have a vested interest

in preventing the flight of shipping to foreign flagships by demanding union protection and wage parity for all foreign seamen and portworkers.

The fight to save jobs and conditions throughout the maritime industry is more and more a fundamental political fight. The plans of the government and shipping moguls to cut costs at the expense of the workers and to weaken the maritime industry unions are still in their infancy. Without the government intervention, including Taft-Hartley and possible new legislation to meet 'national emergencies', the ship owners are lost.

The support of the labor bureaucracy and men like Thomas Gleason to the Democratic Party thus becomes one of the biggest gifts these union leaders give to the bosses. It is clear that the only way that labor can really fight for itself in face of the government-employer attack is to break completely with the Democrats and organize its own independent labor party.



JOSEPH CURRAN, NMU HEAD  
BY DAN FRIED

A very significant battle against the entrenched bureaucracy of President Joseph Curran is shaping up in the National Maritime Union. The focal point of this battle is the upcoming election of the major national officers and local Port Agents of the NMU. The election, which will be held during January and February under supervision of the Department of Labor, had been ordered by the Federal courts following a suit charging that the NMU's restrictive election requirements violated the Landrum Griffin Act.

The Bulletin has, on a number of occasions made clear our strong disapproval of reliance on government forces to fight bureaucracy.

#### CLOUD

But perhaps the cloud of government intervention has its unintended silver lining in the case of the forthcoming

election. The floodgates of pent-up opposition to the leadership is the so-called Morrissey group -- the Committee for N.M.U. Democracy whose leaders, including Chairman James Morrissey, fought for the new elections and have long been a dissident thorn in Curran's side. The Committee, whose leaders have stood up to the most reprehensible acts of intimidation and hooliganism directed at them by the Curran machine, is running a slate against Curran.

The election of these men can be an important step forward for the rank and file seamen and can pave the way for the development of a political and economic program worthy of the N.M.U. There is no doubt that the Curran regime, with its 100,000 dollar presidential salary, fleet of Lincoln Continentals for the bureaucrats, its understandable fear and hatred of the ranks -- has got to go before there can be any real progress toward this program. It is on this basis despite our oft-stated disagreement with the Morrissey group that we support the opposition candidate.

As noted in The Call, the publication of the Morrissey group, Curran's empire is

crumbling as the ranks more and more boldly are challenging his domain. Curran's biggest trump card in maintaining his power is has packing of the electorate with large numbers of workers who are certified to vote even though they never set foot on a ship. These people are only paper members of the NMU, many of whom are undoubtedly 'protected' by some sort of sweetheart paper contract rigged up by the bureaucracy.

#### TIN-PLATE

Ironically, the Federal Court which called the election, has refused to rule on the eligibility of the shoreside workers. So the silver lining has shown itself to be made of tin-plate. What the State giveth with one hand, it taketh away with the other.

This action has forced Morrissey to do what he should have done from the beginning -- to fight on a rank and file basis with Curran. The opposition has sponsored a demand for a secret referendum to decide the question of opening the NMU books to these non-seamen. Naturally, Curran, in violation of the NMU Constitution, has turned thumbs down on the holding of a referendum. In response, the Call is circulating a petition de-

nouncing Curran for this action

#### RESOLUTION

Typical of the resolutions now being passed by dissident ships' crews is the following statement passed by the crew of S.S. Santa Elena: 'WHEREAS: The National Maritime Union is an organization of merchant seamen and not of Brassiere, laundry and pocket book workers. No shore side workers shall be given classification in our union as merchant seamen. That we, the crew of S.S. Santa Elena reaffirm our belief that N.M.U. officials can legitimately hold office only on the basis of the consent of the governed, in this case sea going NMU members voting in NMU election. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That since we believe that others are entitled to the same rights that we claim for ourselves, that such groups as Panamanian workers and office workers have their own autonomous union, so that they too may be first class union members.'

Morrissey is optimistic. He is reported to have said that 'The greatest change in the NMU is that the membership is no longer afraid.' The Call is confident: 'The spell has been broken, the long nightmare is ending. Seamen

are determined to return the NMU to the membership.' To this end the BULLETIN and the Workers League is also pledged to fight.

At the same time rank and file seamen must fight for a real caucus of their own within they can thrash out a program to fight back against the bosses. Among the program points we propose to seamen are:

A fourth watch system as the answer to shrinking jobs with automated ships.

Wages equal to or superior to the West Coast unions.

United action with longshoremen, truckers, railroad and air workers to be sure the workers and not the bosses benefit from containerization.

An international struggle to raise seamen's wages in all countries to U.S. levels as the answer to the foreign flag threat.

No government interference in the NMU. Complete independence of the union from the state and complete control of the union by union members and union members alone. Build a labor party to stop the bosses from using the government to force union-busting and job-losing contracts on our union and all other unions.

## BRIDGES' SELL-OUT ROLE -- ON THE GULF TANKERS

### two letters from a seaman

(The following two letters were received from a working seaman who at one time was a member of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). We urge other seamen and longshoremen to send in letters commenting on this and other articles on the crisis in the maritime and longshore industry and the role of the present union leaderships as well as on their working conditions.)

Dear Editor:

The following appears in the latest issue of 'Longshore News', organ of the International Longshoremen's Association:

'ILWU TO RE-APPRAISE CONTAINER POSITION. The West Coast longshore pact with the Pacific Maritime Association has long been considered a model agreement by East and Gulf operators. The International Longshoremen's Association recognized it for what it was -- a dangerous precedent which would seriously jeopardize job security for West Coast Longshoremen. The International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen Union (Ind.) has called a major caucus to reconsider its position on containerization in light of a tremendous erosion of man-hours on West Coast piers. 'It was inevitable that the effects of containerization would be felt on West Coast piers sooner or later,' stated International President Thomas W. Gleason. 'The ILA rejected the West Coast concept of 'free wheeling' years ago. After eight years of man-hour erosion ILWU President Harry Bridges admits the ILA position on containerization was right all the

time.'

Thus we see Harry Bridges, still the favorite 'labor statesman' of the Communist Party, exposed once again as a proven agent and stooge for the shipowners. Steady readers of the CP-owned 'Worker' and now the 'Daily World' have never found a critical word against Bridges ever written by George Morris, the so-called 'Labor Editor'.

A close personal friend of sell-out Harry, George Morris originally got his pie-card job on the Daily Worker as far back as 1934 because of the propaganda work he did for Bridges. They both wear the same 'old school tie' and take trips to Moscow together.

Walter Winchell in his syndicated column, predicts a nationwide longshore strike as a possibility when the ILA injunction expires December 20th as Bridges feels the pressure from his rank and file.

One thing is certain. There will surely be an ILA strike on the East Coast as the ILA rank and file are completely disgusted with growing unemployment. There has not been a longshore strike on the West Coast since 1948. There has been seven strikes on the East Coast by the ILA due to rank and file pressure during the same period.

Which is the more militant union?

Dear Editor:

I do not agree with all of your political positions but I admire your trade union policy. I really read your paper

for your trade union news.

I am over fifty now and in my time I have been in several unions. I have five years actual seetime and now am a member of the NMU.

I wish I had the ability to describe a seaman's job the way H. Brooks does in your December 2 issue. Let me just say: I made my first trip with a 'trip card' on a Gulf tanker as a wiper. There was not much to do. I carried rags and mopped up the oil stains. Wipers are really carried for emergency purposes, to replace a vital oiler or fireman who misses the ship, is injured or is unable to 'turn to'.

I did a lot of painting in the engine room, swallowed a lot of salt pills to make up for all the sweating I was doing. Tankers seem to exude heat; I slept in pools of sweat regardless of the small fan.

Tankers are forbidden to enter many large ports because of fear they may blow up. This condemns the crew to a lousy time ashore, as tankers make a quick turn around and the seaman finds himself in a small out of the way place where he has to pay a big cab fare for a quick trip to the nearest large town where there is some 'action.'

What the public doesn't realize is that the seaman is different from other workers. He does not go home when his job is finished like the average worker. He is a prisoner; monotony is his enemy. Where can he go when he is 'off watch'? Play cards,

read or gossip.

I prefer passenger ships; there are only about six left now. The trips are not long; then there are movies and you usually can buy beer or whiskey from the bartender. I switched from the engine room to the steward's department because I couldn't stand the heat and the steward's department always makes the most overtime although I agree it is 'blood money'. I have sailed as messman, galley utility, porter, dishwasher, and now waiter.

The main beef of NMU members is not so much wages, they are high, but working conditions. The speed-up is terrific; on the passenger ships you have two settings. That means a waiter must serve two groups of passengers at different times and he must clean up his station, get his silver scoured. The dishes which come in many sizes must be washed quickly to be ready for the next sitting.

While I support Morrissey against the Curran 'pie card' and goons, I don't think he is going to win. His group operates like a closed corporation; it never calls an open meeting.

Morrissey first became known in the NMU as a leading member of the old 'Rank and File Caucus', almost 20 years ago, which smashed the old Stalinist machine. That caucus was composed of former Communists like Keith and Drummond and Lawernson who claimed they were 'real' Communists, the others they considered hacks, and

Shachtman Trotskyists, Cannon Trotskyists, old Wobblies, anarchists, ACTU (Catholic trade unionists), and non-political rank and filers like Morrissey.

They backed Curran for president when he broke with



HARRY BRIDGES, ILWU HEAD

the CP. Once in power, Hamhead Curran split the Caucus by throwing the most militant members out of the union and corrupting the others. He had the help of the FBI, the Coast Guard, Navy Intelligence and the shipowners.

What prompted Morrissey to buck the Curran machine? What is the background of his legal adviser? Where will he get the finances to conduct a proper campaign?

He is right when he says the membership is disgusted with Curran and is no longer afraid of his goons.

I'm going to campaign for Morrissey but I wish I could do it in an organized way. The election starts in January. There is not much time to do the job that needs to be done.

# HOSPITAL WORKERS FIGHT BACK

SPECIAL TO THE BULLETIN

MINNEAPOLIS -- Hospital workers in Minneapolis and St. Paul, organized into the Hospital and Nursing Home Employees Local 113, A.F.L.-C.I.O., are looking ahead to the re-opening of their contract next March 1.

The three thousand members of this union represent a potentially very powerful force. They are the sole bargaining agent for all twelve private hospitals in Minneapolis and all six private nursing homes in St. Paul, plus several large nursing homes in the area. In Minneapolis all organized hospital employees, except nurses and engineers, who have their own unions, belong to 113. In St. Paul even the engineers are included in the local. Moreover, 113 is closely linked with the strong labor movement in the Twin Cities through its membership in the delegated bodies of the unions, the Minneapolis Central Labor Union and the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly.

Yet despite the union's obvious strength and favorable strategic position, wage rates and conditions of work remain perhaps the worst in the unionized sector of the Twin Cities. Under the existing contract, starting wages are \$1.87 an hour and only after 24 months of steady employment is the rate increased to \$1.96 per hour.

Ninety per cent of the total work force is composed of women. The hospital bosses have taken full advantage of this fact by imposing a wage differential between men's and women's rates. Thus they constantly play the two groups

off against each other. In virtually every hospital women have been increasingly assigned to men's work, without getting men's rates. Only in Minneapolis' St. Mary's Hospital have a firm core militant shop stewards with the support of the workers demonstrated how to fight the hospital's efforts to chisel away at this section of the contract.

## BURDEN

Hospital work is among the hardest in the world, as anyone who has ever worked in a hospital or nursing home knows. The bosses have taken complete advantage of the service aspect of hospital work. Wage rates are so low it is difficult to attract and keep experienced help. This puts a double burden on the regular force. First they have to break in and assist a never ending chain of new employees. Second, because the hospitals are so often understaffed, the experienced workers are under tremendous pressure to speed up and intensify their work so as not to cause suffering to the patients. This is a terribly unfair burden the hospitals have thrust upon their wor-

kers. And this burden is one of the issues that has to be confronted in the pending negotiations.

That the long-time head of 113, Norman E. Carle, has offered no leadership to the local must be clear to all workers who have seen their wages drastically cut by inflation while their conditions of work have steadily deteriorated. What is the point of denouncing the employers in words when a program that can seriously challenge the hospitals and advance the genuine interests of the workers is not at the same time advanced?

Carle asks the members who have suggestions for changes in the contract to write them down and mail them to him for his examination. What kind of leadership is that? Real leaders must draw up a program that seriously and realistically takes into account the current needs and future interests of the hospital workers. Then only can the fight for such a program rally the militant support of the ranks required to win it.

## PROGRAM

The needs of the workers are clear and must include at least the following demands:

1. \$100 a week minimum as won by hospital workers in New York City.

2. A cost of living escalator clause.

3. Equal pay for equal work. No more division of men and women members!

4. Cost of living bonus and all new benefits to apply to pensioned members. An end to the division between active and retired workers!

5. Inspection and supervision of work conditions by union shop committees. Enforce the contract!

6. A decent hospital and medical plan. Those who care for the sick must get adequate care when they are sick!

7. Increased fringe benefits of all kinds: vacations, holidays, etc. Benefits must equal those enjoyed by unions with the best contracts in the area.

8. An annual contract. No more three year freezes!

## WIN

To raise these demands is clearly not enough. The workers must be prepared for the crocodile tears shed on behalf of the patients by the capitalist press, radio, TV, and the pulpit. And they must

further expect direct counter-attacks from the bosses' government, their courts and police. The Workers League program for winning this struggle requires winning it without increased hospital and medical costs to the working people. For a central part of a successful struggle by the hospital workers requires the maintenance of unity with our natural allies, the rest of the Twin Cities' working class.

The next article of struggle of 113 for a decent contract will deal with the financing of the demands through a realistic program of socialized medicine and insuring its political success through the building of a Labor Party based on the unions. So as not to miss any of the future articles dealing with the hospital workers, a special introductory offer of the BULLETIN has been made available: 10 issues for 25 cents. Or if you want to be sure to get all issues on a yearly basis, the price is \$2.00. Address your request to the Workers League, P.O. Box 14002, University Station, Minneapolis, Minn. 55414

Be sure to enclose your money, name and address, and zip code.

davis plays with split, black nationalists

## 1199 LAUNCHES ORGANIZING DRIVE

BY A HOSPITAL WORKER

NEW YORK--The National organizing campaign of Local 1199 is gaining momentum throughout the country. The union is now organizing hospitals in Detroit, South and North Carolina, Florida,

Philadelphia, Connecticut and Baltimore. This organizing campaign is a great step forward in the fight to raise the wages and working conditions of one of the most exploited and underpaid sections of the working class.

In a relatively short period of time 1199 is quickly growing into a powerful national union of hospital workers. It is a direct outcome of the 1968 July contract struggle when the workers forced the hand of the hospital bosses and won a \$100 minimum wage. This show of solidarity and strength made an impact on workers and members of District 65 in NYC take up this demand but telegrams were received from hospital workers all over the country asking to be organized into 1199.

This is not just a task for the leadership. Every trade union militant should involve himself in the campaign. If there is little rank and file participation in this the understanding of the importance of this drive will be completely lost. The experience gained by the workers will be invaluable in strengthening 1199.

But this campaign is not taking place at a time when organization will solve the problems facing the union. On the contrary there is a tremendous crisis building up in the labor movement that is reflecting the crisis of the system itself.

## EXPELL

Although it has not been explained by the 1199 leadership there has been talk of possible expulsion of 1199 from the AFL-CIO.

Elliot Godoff, Director of the Organizing Campaign, has

stated that there can be expected friction with the RWD SU, the international union of 1199.

The successful organizing drive must become the impetus and the basis for a stepped up fight against the bosses, a fight to take the victorious struggle for the \$100 a week minimum further. The ranks must take up this fight to make sure that Davis and the bureaucrats do not allow this fight to be dissipated by using the organizing drive to avoid the real confrontations on wages and working conditions, and as an excuse to split the labor movement, and to maneuver with Meany.

While the 1199 organizing drive represents a tremendous step forward in uniting workers, the organized and the unorganized, at the same time the trade union movement is being faced everywhere with deepening divisions between black and white workers. While the bureaucrats have launched this organizing drive, they have completely capitulated to those forces which have attempted to split the labor movement by breaking the black workers from it.

Davis and the 1199 bureaucracy refused to support the teachers and capitulated to the demands of "community control" and dual unionism. At a demonstration by bureaucrats at Van Arsdale's office during the teachers strike, Theodore Mitchell, a vice president of 1199 said, "those who are black and Puerto Ricans and Hispanic will set up our own labor movement." Lester Roberts, general organizer for District 65, 1199's

sister union said, "If we have to split the labor movement and go our own way we will."

Clearly, this is what the bosses and the government would like. This is why the Ford Foundation and all the politicians are behind the demands for "community control" to divide and weaken the powerful trade union movement in this country and divert the workers from the real fight against their employers. Black Nationalism and what follows, dual unionism for black workers, represents a concession to racism. Rather than fighting against it, it is accepted as a reality that cannot be changed.

While Davis poses as the "progressive" labor leader, he plays the same role as Shanker whom he attacks, in splitting the labor movement. Shanker has absolutely refused to take up the struggle for the Negro people and has encouraged the backward prejudices of the workers in the UFT. At the same time Davis while giving lip service to a fight for the Negro workers, supports the reactionary separatist demands of the black nationalists.

Neither of these leaders pose the real alternative of the unity of black and white workers, the fight against racism, against the bosses and their government by the entire trade union movement. The real solution lies in the labor movement taking up the fight against racism, for the demands of the Negro workers for jobs, job training, upgrading, decent housing and schools not separately but as an integral part of the fight of the union movement.



1199 ORGANIZER SPEAKS WITH HOSPITAL WORKER IN HOBOKEN, N.J.

# MANY THEORIES OF L MARCUS

## PART ONE -- PRIMITIVE ACCUMULATION

BY TIM WOHLFORTH

The construction of the revolutionary party the United States is primarily a theoretical task. Precisely because of the great potential of the American working class and because the very future of world capitalism will be decided ultimately on American soil, the United States has become the very center for every form of revisionism, every attempt to distort Marxism, to challenge the most fundamental theoretical conquests of the world working class.

This is the home of Herbert Marcuse; Ernest Mandel, discredited in Europe, tours America speaking before large audiences; obscure European anarchist theorists find supporters among Columbia University's building seizers. Just as America has become the home for astrology, scientology, witchcraft, and even the most obscure Indian guru clutches his Air India ticket to the states, so too with our Marxistscholars and metaphysicians. And, as we shall see, we even have a few home grown ones, too.

One major reason for this growth of revisionism in the United States is the fact that the Marxist movement in the United States from the pre-World War I Socialists through the early Communists and the American Trotskyist movement has been dominated by an anti-theory pragmatism--a concern with what 'works', with narrow empiricism, a disdainful attitude toward theoretical questions, a neglect of Marxist philosophy and the study of the Marxist method. At a time when Europe is only 8 hours and \$300 away, when world capitalism is more and more an interdependent system, where decisions on Wall Street effect the fate of workers in all corners of the globe, at such a time when an international outlook is indispensable to American revolutionists, this pragmatism creates a huge gulf between theoretical thinking in America and the development of Marxist thought in Europe beginning with the Communist Manifesto through the Russian revolution and its aftermath, the rise of Fascism, etc. This theoretical gap is much harder to cross than the Atlantic but it must be crossed if a serious American revolutionary movement is to emerge.

### NEW LEFT

This problem is particularly acute with the new generation of radical intellectuals which likes to call itself the 'New Left' or the 'Movement.' This new generation has developed its interest in socialism under conditions of an almost complete break in the continuity of Marxist thought and the struggle to build the Marxist party. The responsibility for this break lies primarily with the Socialist Workers Party, which after Trotsky's death abandoned any serious attempt to develop Marxist theory and thus a revolutionary party, and therefore has been unable to bring to the new generation of radicals the struggles of the Third and Fourth Internationals and their theoretical conquests. This task has fallen upon the shoulders of the Workers League which as part of the International Committee of the Fourth International emerged from the SWP in 1964 after a principled struggle for the very fundamentals of Marxism the SWP leadership had abandoned.

When it comes to the central question of bridging the gap between the pragmatic American socialist movement and the continuity of the international Marxist movement, Lynn Marcus stands foresquare in between. He picks bits and pieces of theory from Marxist traditions, in particular from Rosa Luxemburg, develops these in a one-sided schematic way, with the result of throwing out in a most cavalier manner some of the most important theoretical conquests of the world working class.

### PRIMITIVE

Let us take a look at Marcus' method as revealed in his latest theoretical writing, 'The History of Capitalism' which he has recently submitted to the SDS Labor Committee for discussion. He begins with a theory of 'primitive accumulation' which he attributes to Rosa Luxemburg. Marx developed this concept to explain the origins of capitalist accumulation. In its earliest most barbaric form, the capitalist rather than paying workers for their labor time at a rate equal to

what was required for a worker's subsistence actually paid workers below this level with the result of the early deaths of workers. The workers were constantly replenished with peasants from the countryside forced to seek work in factories as new capitalist relations broke up the old feudal relations on the land (enclosures in England for example). This way the capitalists amassed super-profits which were reinvested in more manufacturing leading to the swift early growth of capitalism. But, Marx pointed out, such barbaric forms of accumulation were self-defeating to the capitalists in the long run and as capitalism matured the general tendency for wages to equal the subsistence level of the working class emerged.

Marcus correctly points out that as capitalism matures its internal contradictions emerge particularly in the form of the falling rate of profit (though in typical fashion he makes this central point in the form of a footnote). The capitalist is forced to mechanize more and more to increase

The last year has seen the emergence of a political tendency from out of the New Left, the SDS Labor Committee led by L. Marcus. Marcus brings to these students bits and pieces of Marxist theory abstracted from the whole 125 year international struggle for Marxism and workers power. The result is a direct challenge to all the most fundamental principles and political gains of the Marxist movement.

the amount produced per worker (productivity) but as profit is only made from wage labor (variable capital) this process leads to a general tendency for the rate of profit to fall threatening total profit and thus the system itself.

### IMPERIALISM

Imperialism plays an important role in the capitalists' attempt to overcome this problem. Here Marcus reintroduces the concept of primitive accumulation asserting that the capitalist offsets the falling rate of profit within the major industrial countries through primitive accumulation in the colonial countries. While this was no doubt true particularly in the earliest stage of imperialism in colonial countries during which not only were workers paid below subsistence levels but millions, in fact billions, were simply stolen from these countries in the spirit of the early predatory societies of the ancient world like the Greeks and Romans.

However as imperialism matured what actually emerged was a tendency of the capitalist to take advantage of the relative character of the term 'subsistence.' As Marx pointed out the subsistence level of the working class is actually a social category determined by the actual class relations between workers and capitalists and by the general level of technology and the cultural level required for a particular level of technology. Thus while a worker in a colonial country involved in an extractive industry (mining, sugar, coffee, rubber, etc.) may be able to subsist on \$600 a year, a worker in Europe on \$3,000 a year, a worker in the United States may need \$6,000 a year minimum to subsist. The capitalist takes advantage of this differential in order to make super-profits in colonial countries and even Europe to offset the level of profits in the United States.

### DISTORT

To call this process 'primitive accumulation' is to distort the word out of all meaning, to include under one term different social and economic processes which represent different stages of development of capitalism. It is an example of imposing a formal scheme on the complexity of capitalist development which ignores the real processes going on in capitalism, and simplifies reality through distorting it. As Trotsky once said if we exclude today something from our formulae because it doesn't seem to fit in to our scheme, then tomorrow this element can

well overturn our whole scheme.

### CRETINISM

But let us probe this question even deeper. It would appear that all the capitalists have to do to really solve their problems and make fantastic profits would be to heavily invest in the colonial countries, build major industries there and reap enormous super-profits on the basis of the low subsistence levels existing in those countries. In fact this solution appears so "obvious" to Marcus he cannot really understand why the capitalists do not do so. He can only conclude that it is a matter of their stupidity and if only they were as smart as he then their problems would be solved. Thus in this document he states: "Granted they have an alternative 'on the books' in the form of their 'Development Decade' project. Thus, far, however, as we see in the Alliance for Progress and the rash of 'parliamentary cretinism' exhibited by Senate and House action on foreign aid proposals, there has been almost no real correlation between design and implementation."

In fact only a short while ago Marcus was convinced that this was precisely what the capitalists were up to. In his 'Third Stage of Imperialism' he claimed that what the Vietnam War was really about was an attempt on the part of the capitalists to turn Vietnam into a rice bowl, this rice would be shipped to India to feed Indian workers who then would be put to work to give capitalism a whole new stage of development in India. Needless to say this simple schema is on the face of it absurd. The vast money put into the war effort could have just as easily been used to finance grain shipments from the overproduction in the U.S. and Canada to serve that purpose. There is no simple 'economic determinist' explanation for Vietnam. The capitalists understand that what they are fighting in Vietnam is revolution, a revolution which threatens not simply rice production in Vietnam but capitalism's survival throughout the world. Only this can explain the enormous resources thrown into this war.

But to get back to the main point--the capitalists cannot simply set up modern automated factories in the jungle of Latin America or the rice paddies of Asia. Modern capitalist technology requires a whole cultural development and this in turn means a raising of the working class to a subsistence level equal at least to that in Europe. It is a whole complex process requiring an educated proletariat, literate and well-trained, a mechanized agriculture, an expanded university system producing hundreds and thousands of scientists, engineers, technicians, teachers, etc. Perhaps \$600 a year is enough for a worker who cuts cane in a field but the same worker cannot run a complex machine tool. And you cannot raise one small section of workers to such a level without changing relations with other workers. So in the United States a miner or even an agricultural worker makes a hundred times what a miner or agricultural worker makes in Ecuador, Peru or Malaya.

### REVOLUTIONARY

Such a revolutionary technological and cultural transformation means in the first place the destruction of the super-profits presently needed by the capitalists gotten from the extractive industries in colonial countries, the advantages all capitalists receive from the cheap price they pay for products from the colonial countries, a complete social upheaval in land relations, the destruction of the old ruling classes in these countries, etc. As Trotsky pointed out in his theory of permanent revolution the capitalists are no longer capable of such revolutionary changes precisely because of the emergence of the working class as a political force capable of carrying through a social upheaval started by the capitalists to a socialist conclusion--to the destruction of the capitalists themselves.

Thus to Trotsky the failure of the capitalists to initiate a 'Development Decade' was neither a matter of stupidity nor cretinism but was due to objective material conditions. Marcus, of course, has failed to inform the SDS Labor Committee of the theory of the permanent revolution, its vindication in actual life during the Russian Revolution, and the decades of struggle during which

the Fourth International fought for this position against the world Stalinist movement. Marcus offers only bits and pieces; the continuity with past theoretical development is broken; only hollow schemes remain in an attempt to cover up his theoretical nakedness.

#### JEW

But let's give Marcus this much credit--he does his very best to get every bit of mileage out of his one formula. He is very much like a medicine man with his bottle of Dr. Marcus' Snake Syrup which will cure the common cold, pneumonia, cancer, broken legs, and is even a good love potion. His most preposterous theory to date is his attempt to explain the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis as a rational economic policy of primitive accumulation. It seems the Nazis used their race theory as an excuse to put millions of Jews into slave labor. When they worked the Jews to a point where there was no labor power left in them, they simply sent them to the gas chambers to save the cost of upkeep for unproductive slaves. But it so happens: 1) not only Jews but millions of non-Jewish foreign workers were enlisted for forced labor; 2) millions of Jews were sent to death camps instead of to forced labor and for Jews in that period it was considered a lucky break to be sent on forced labor rather than directly to the gas chambers; and 3) like a number of the policies of the Hitler regime rather than aiding the German economy the Jewish persecution was greatly wasteful of necessary technical and other resources the Germans needed in the war; the bourgeoisie tolerated Hitler as the only alternative to socialist revolution but paid a heavy price for his dictatorship. Barbaric cultural manifestations have material roots in the decay of capitalism and the fear of the capitalists of the working class but to go from this to some economic determinist schema and see each and every barbarity as economically useful is to desert Marxism for the simplistic determinism which caused Engels to comment in exasperation to the effect of 'save us from the Marxists.'

#### EUROPE

If this were not enough when we reach the end of World War II Marcus tackles the very important process in which American capitalism invested heavily in the rebuilding of the Western European

economies taking much larger profits than were possible in the U.S. because of the lower wage levels prevalent in Europe. This, too, is called 'primitive accumulation.' But here we are not dealing with some backward country but major industrial countries whose economy, technology and culture are the result of several hundred years of capital development. These are countries with a high level of culture, a literate and skilled working class, a ready and a greedy internal market which had been deprived of consumer goods for two decades of depression and war. The only real primitive accumulation existing in the world today is Marcus' primitive accumulation of theoretical nonsense in this document.

But even if we throw out this primitive accumulation nostrum we still have only a one-sided understanding of the way in which the current capitalist crisis developed through the very methods the capitalists used in the 1950's to make the boom possible. It is true that capitalist investment in Europe and in the colonial countries helped the capitalists offset the general tendency for profit to fall in America. But it was not the only factor involved. At the very same time the American bourgeoisie was forced to introduce into American mass production industries a degree of exploitation seen nowhere else in the metropolitan countries. Thus they raised productivity by an intensive speed-up and a destruction of union control over job conditions paying for this in wage increases way below the actual increase of profits made possible through the speed-up.

It is this latter tendency which is preparing an extremely explosive situation in basic industry since the capitalists are no longer capable of paying for this increased exploitation with actual increases in the living standards of the workers. Since Marcus ignores this process it is understandable that in his concrete perspective for work in the union movement today he ignores the mass production industries in favor of concentration on low-paid workers in more marginal industries. But the very center of the American capitalist system lies in this relationship between the massive corporate conglomerates in basic industry and the powerful unions in the industry like the UAW and the Steelworkers.

#### DOLLAR

Then there is a third mechanism employed by the capitalists--the ability to temporarily hold off the workings of the law of value allowing

the creation of a good deal of fictitious capital and the making of profits on the basis of this capital. In particular the acceptance internationally of the dollar as a sound basis for international trade even when there are four dollars abroad for every one dollar in gold at current fixed gold prices gave the American capitalists a tremendous edge in capital expansion and in offsetting the effects of the falling rate of profit.

This worked fine as long as the other factors mentioned allowed for a general growth of the world capitalist system and a constant growth of productivity. But today when both factors are advancing at a much slower pace and sometimes even show a reverse tendency then confidence in the dollar and other currencies is threatened which in turn threatens to bring down the whole capitalist system--unless the capitalists take on their own working class and reduce labor costs, that is to actually reduce the level of subsistence of the class through class struggle. Room for capitalist development in Europe is no longer there and the European capitalists feel the same profit pressures as do American capitalists. Expansion in the colonial countries is out of the question for social revolution is out of the question. This is why we say we have now entered into the period of the world revolution--this is the meaning of the French developments not mentioned in Marcus' history project.

We have not by any means exhausted all the aspects of understanding capitalist development in the past period and through this understanding preparing the revolutionary movement for the tasks today within the context of the current capitalist crisis. But I feel we have shown that simplistic notions of 'primitive accumulation' only lead to confusion and theoretical one-sidedness and have nothing in common with Marxism. Our Marxist analysis on the other hand, only sketched here, shows us that we are in an explosive period where the central class struggles will be in basic industry in Europe and America and will lead to a fundamental confrontation between the powerful union movement and the behemoth corporations in the United States with the capitalist state--and America's state apparatus is without a doubt the most powerful state created by man to dominate man--no mere arbitrator but the major instrument of the capitalists in their war against the workers.

## PART TWO -- TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM AND THE STATE

If Marcus' economic theories are characterized by a one-sidedness, a formal schematism, this method when applied to the question of the political program around which to advance struggle for socialism leads to a blatant reformism and an abandonment of all the most fundamental conceptions of the Marxist movement.

Seeing a stagnating crisis-ridden world capitalist system, Marcus proposes as a "remedy" an "immediate national employment policy of about 4 million new productive jobs a year" requiring new investments of about \$100 million a year leading to an annual growth rate in the neighborhood of 20-25%. "If we extend the same policy to Western Europe, Japan, and other relatively advanced sectors," he concludes, "we have the basis for really solving poverty in the advanced sector and cracking the massive poverty crisis in the underdeveloped regions."

With this "socialist" solution to the capitalist crisis before him his whole political policy unfolds. The problem of course is to mobilize "masses" around this restructuring of investment policy and in this way we will have socialism. Since the aim of the policy is the eradication of poverty, we of course develop demands aimed at the poverty section of the population and not the industrial workers and this becomes the center of our political struggle.

If this whole approach brings back memories of the New Deal this is for good and sound reasons as we will see. Marcus is clearly a man of another era. How happy he would have been in the old FDR brain trust!

What Marcus forgets to include in his schema is that very mainspring of modern society--the class struggle. The capitalists have their own plan for solving their economic crisis and they have the power and will use this power to the best of their ability to carry through their solution. The only way out for the capitalists internationally is to drive back the working class, rob the industrial workers of the gains they made in the 1950s, lower their level of subsistence, and restore profitability. This cannot be done peacefully but requires a struggle to destroy the workers economic and political organizations -- the unions and mass workers parties

where they exist and thus raise the danger of fascism. Thus we see, for instance in the aftermath of the recent Franc crisis, the determination of DeGaulle, Wilson and Nixon to put the screws on the working class-- increase taxes, raise prices, hold down wages, raise productivity in the plants.

Marcus of course has no program for defense of the class against this onslaught and does not recognize that the very dialectic of revolution is the ability of socialists to take the workers over to the offensive-- to the struggle for power in the very process of organizing the workers for defense against capitalist attacks.

But let us traverse Marcus' narrow theoretical road just a bit further to see where Marcus himself ends up. Like a horse with blinders on Marcus relentlessly pursues his single idea to the very end. If only social development proceeded in the simple way Marcus' mind works. But alas it does not.

#### TRANSITIONAL

Now Marcus has his solution but sad to say no one in Washington is interested; they are all parliamentary cretins. So what else can he do but turn to the masses. To enlist the masses in support of his scheme he needs a "transitional program". "The idea of a transitional program" Marcus states, "breaks with the notion of 'impossible demands' which used to prevail among Social-Democrats and the old Communist parties...What revolutionary socialists do, unlike our various contemporary sectarians, is to advance socialist demands which are technically feasible in terms of existing FORMS of institutions."

Then Marcus informs us by way of a footnote where he claims to have gotten this idea: "This term was introduced to the English language through Trotsky's writings of the thirties. The conception, as Trotsky accurately reports the matter, is partly traced to the evolving conception of program of the first five years of the Comintern, and is also independently located as a contribution of Luxemburg's." He then goes on to warn us not to confuse the "concept" of Transitional Program with those who use the

1938 Transitional Program as a "recipe book". We will take Marcus' warning very much to heart, for the reading of his own document has very much suppressed our appetite for recipes.

#### CONCEPT

We will turn both to the period of the first five years of the Comintern and to the Transitional Program of 1938 to get at, not the specific demands mentioned, but precisely the CONCEPT of the transitional program itself. First we quote from a statement of the Young Communist International made in 1922; "Even in their contents our demands are absolutely different from the reformist demands put forward by the Social Democracy...We, however, in fighting for our demands, do not think it necessary to stop to consider whether or not they can find a place in the profit-making system of the capitalist class. Indeed we make a full turn about and make demands of such a nature as will spell the doom of capitalism... We raise these demands in order to take the working class through a struggle so that the masses of workers will realize, if they are able to live, the capitalist society must die."

Now in 1938 Trotsky wrote in the same vein: "Marxists do not delude the working class with suggestions that any major gains can be made within the structure of capitalism. So long as power remains in the hands of the capitalist class, a struggle must be waged to preserve every advance already made, and in the course of this struggle, there must be built a movement which can overthrow the capitalist states... But the warning of the Program itself must here be taken very seriously: outside of the perspective of the conquest of political power by the working class, and the construction of revolutionary parties, these slogans lose their meaning and even become reactionary, justifying the existing leadership and the existing economic set-up."

This in essence gives us an understanding of the concept of the transitional program as the early Communists and Trotsky saw it. This concept is exactly the opposite of Marcus'. He insists that a transitional demand must be "technically feasible in terms of existing forms of institutions." But communists begin with the

needs of the working class, not the outmoded forms of capitalist economic structure. They formulate demands which on the one hand meet the real needs of the class and on the other hand CANNOT be achieved within the existing forms and institutions of capitalism. In fact the very purpose of the demands is to take the working class through a struggle through which the mass of workers will realize that these forms, institutions, structures must be OVERTURNED and a new state created. Thus Marcus is actually transforming transitional demands into their very opposite-- into reform demands limited by the existing capitalist structure. In no way does Marcus differ on this question from the structural reforms of Mandel-Kautsky.

But Marcus does not stop here. He carries the logic of his line one step further. He next confronts the problem of what happens if he wins-- that is the establishment of socialism in the United States. Here Marcus' concern is not the critical question of establishing the power of the working class and destroying the power of the capitalist class. Rather he is concerned that there be no disruption in the economy during the transfer of power. He writes in the spirit of a Nixon aide in discussion with a Johnson aide in this post election period. And in fact his conception of the working class coming to power differs little from Nixon and Johnson's "orderly transfer of power".

#### ORDERLY

"In order to maintain the essential continuity of production and distribution," Marcus informs us, "we will have to take over the existing capitalist institutions, banks, Federal Reserve System, U.S. Treasury, etc., and lay the basis for new socialist institutions, but an orderly transformation of the old. The method of expropriation of capitalists will not be by simple decree, but will-- except under the most exacerbated conditions of civil war, etc.-- be accomplished by using the capitalist corporate income-tax system for our own purposes in our own way." Never before has a single man compressed into such a short statement so much revisionism! The most essential lessons and theoretical understanding of the working class movement first formulated in 1848 in the Communist Manifesto, deepened in the 1870s in the light of the Paris Commune, carried out in life in the October Revolution of 1917, defended against Stalinism by the Fourth International for decades, confirmed again in life in Hungary in 1956-- all this is simply thrown out the window by L. Marcus, the new theoretician of the peaceful road to socialism with its "orderly transfer" of power.

The very heart of what he is saying is spelled out in the simple parenthetical statement "except under the most exacerbated conditions of civil war, etc." This means that Marcus not only conceives of the possibility of socialism being established in America peacefully but in fact sees this peaceful road as the probability and civil war as only an outside exceptional possibility. He then proceeds to develop his whole program today on the basis of this peaceful probability--that is subordinating everything else to a propaganda campaign for a tax program-- ah yes, you are familiar with it-- "Tax the Landlords--Not the People".

Communists proceed from another point of view-- and this, L. Marcus, is the viewpoint of your beloved Luxemburg as well as Lenin and Trotsky. Understanding the very nature of ruling classes as shown through the several thousand year history of class rule, we can state, not as a possibility, not even as a probability, but as an absolute certainty that no ruling class will willingly and peacefully give up its power. When confronted with a serious threat to its class rule it will dispense with all "democratic" formality and use brute force, terror, and the totality of the vast means of destruction in its hands to maintain its rule and suppress the working class. Is the American bourgeoisie an exception to this rule? Just

look at the butchery in Vietnam, the bloody suppression of Negro riots, the action of the police in Chicago and against student demonstrations. We therefore hold that it is inconceivable for the working class to come to power in the United States under any other conditions than those accurately described as civil war. This is not because we wish violence but because of the nature and character of the ruling class and the immense power it possesses through its own state.

#### STATE

Ah--but there is one other little matter Dr. Marcus has left out of his scheme-- the STATE. The Federal Reserve System, the U.S. Treasury, the banks are not something separate from the state. They are part of or deeply intertwined with the state. Our task, as Lenin put it against Kautsky, is not to transform this state or its economic institutions from within, but to destroy this state completely and utterly, throwing up in its place a new state based on workers councils-- such as came to power in October and such as have risen in every revolutionary situation in one form or another.

This question of the struggle for state power stands at the very heart of our program and our strategy. The transitional program is based upon it and it is not without reason that Trotsky specifically warns against those who separate out this or that specific transitional demand from the central struggle for power.

But Marcus has absolutely nothing to say about the state or the struggle for power. Absolutely nothing. No wonder he and the SDS Labor Committee oppose raising the slogan of an American Labor Party, for it is through this slogan that we are able to pose the question of state power to American workers at their present level of consciousness. Without connecting up specific demands -- and believe it or not Dr. Marcus, there is more to the Transitional Program than tax proposals-- to the fight for the labor party "these slogans lose their meaning and even become reactionary, justifying the existing leadership and the existing economic set-up," to quote Trotsky. We say that the entire program of Marcus for today is precisely that--without meaning and reactionary.

#### HISTORY

Comrades of the SDS Labor Committee-- it is not just that these particular formulations of Marcus' are wrong and revisionist (more accurately purely reformist). We must understand that they flow from his whole basic method. This method in turn is a reflection of Marcus' refusal to root his theoretical work in the historical development of the Marxist movement--that is in the Fourth International.

At every point this becomes clearer and clearer. The theory of the permanent revolution is ignored. The transitional program is turned into its opposite. The basic tenets of Marxism on the state and revolution are tossed out the window in a cavalier fashion. There is nothing left of the Communist Manifesto. The Paris Commune teaches nothing to Marcus. There are no lessons to be drawn from the October Revolution as Marcus sees it. The whole historical fight between Stalinism and Trotskyism for three decades is beside the point. Well then, we ask the comrades of the SDS Labor Committee, if the whole struggle between Stalinism and Trotskyism is meaningless then why is it that Marcus, who refuses to educate you in the tradition of this struggle, ends up on the question of revolution with Nikita Khrushchev and Breshnev--as the new theorist of the "probability" of a peaceful road to socialism.

We must follow our horse with blinder just a little further to get at the concrete approach to the contemporary American struggles which flow from his reformism on the transitional program and the state. He states: "Agitation in this immediate period is centrally focused on those layers (like Black, Spanish-speaking, Appalachian oppressed) whose need of the socialist programs demands is most urgent. During the marshalling of advanced struggles of the most

oppressed (for minimum wages, jobs, rights or their bargaining institutions, etc.) the socialist simultaneously agitates among other layers of workers, urging their support for the vanguard struggles of the most oppressed." In short he proposes we agitate among the poor for support to tax and investment programs aimed at wiping out poverty but for the industrial workers we really only can propagandize on how these workers should support this program for the poor.

This outlook flows from his nostrum on primitive accumulation which ignores the attacks the capitalist class is presently making on industrial workers in basic industry and the central importance of this struggle as well as from his reformist position of seeking to restructure investment without tackling head-on the question of state power. So like the rest of the New Left Marcus is incapable of proposing a program for the class as a whole-- all he can do is propose a program for the poor and urge other workers to support this program for some sort of moral reasons.

#### CENTRAL

We see the situation in a different way. We see the industrial workers under attack and see the central strength of the class in the fight back against the capitalists precisely in this section of the class. We see the poor also under attack. So we propose a fighting program for the whole class to unite in a political struggle against the capitalists. This is the meaning of the labor party slogan. This is why we fight specifically and particularly in the trade unions and see that only through this fight can the problems of the poor seriously be tackled. For only in the organized industrial working class is there the strength to destroy the real and immense strength of the capitalists and their state. The poor surely cannot do it alone. Nor can the industrial workers be gotten to support the poor out of some abstract consideration-- the class as a whole must be brought together because there are good and objective material needs for this unity.

#### UNIONS

When it comes to the level of work in the trade unions Marcus has no orientation at all towards a real struggle within the unions against the labor bureaucracy. Here he seeks rather to create organizations of some vague sort of "mass" and "transitional" character outside the unions containing unionists and sections of the poor. These organizations are supposed in some mystical way to transform the consciousness of the workers.

At the moment that he was murdered by Stalin's agent, Trotsky was at work on an important pamphlet precisely on the trade unions question: "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay". Published posthumously, this pamphlet sees the relation between the unions and the broader masses of the proletariat in quite the reverse way as does Marcus: "It is necessary to adapt ourselves to the concrete conditions existing in the trade unions of every given country in order to mobilize the masses, not only against the bourgeoisie, but also against the totalitarian regime within the trade unions themselves and against the leaders enforcing this regime. The primary slogan for this struggle is: complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labour bureaucracy."

This means the fight against the economism and parochialism of the trade unions must be conducted within the unions through a political and ruthless fight against the labor bureaucracy in the interests of the working class as a whole. To abstain from this struggle by attempting to magically transform unionists outside the unions has the reactionary result of leaving the labor bureaucracy unchallenged in its control of powerful organs of many millions of workers who hold in their hands the power to stop America for good.

## PART THREE -- THE PARTY

Finally we come to the question of the party. This is the very central question of our time and lies at the very heart of what is wrong with Marcus theoretically, politically and in every respect. It will not come as a surprise that by the time Marcus finishes with this concept absolutely nothing is left of the very rich theoretical and practical history of this question from the days of the First International to the Fourth International.

Lenin once wrote about a Bundist who was

lined up on this question with the Mensheviks: 'Because he is an absolute ignoramus, who has never learnt anything or even read any party history, but merely happened to land in liquidationist circles where going about in the nude is considered the right thing to do as far as knowledge of the party and everything it stands for is concerned.' So today Marcus, as we shall see, has taken up the popular New Left garb of nudity on this question in New Left circles. We intend to give no quarter at all on this score. Marcus

may call us a 'sect' or 'sectlet' or whatever he wants as he proceeds to construct his own sectlet distinguishable from those he attacks only by its complete nakedness on this question.

#### INSTITUTIONAL

Marcus begins by talking about the need for 'some sort of organized institution of mass forces, an institution ready and qualified to take over the tasks of government from the present ruling class. That conception is conveniently identified as a

revolutionary party.' Perhaps it could be just as 'conveniently' identified as a 'reformist party?' In the whole history of the Marxist movement we have never seen a vaguer conception of the party. In fact Martov and the Mensheviks themselves would have recoiled from such a formulation and denounced it vehemently as liquidationist.

But there is a reason for this vagueness in addition to his efforts to ingratiate himself with the prejudices of the New Left students. The only purpose he gives this 'mass institution' is to be qualified 'to take over the tasks of government from the present ruling class.' But Dr. Marcus aren't you a bit too eager to get into that old White House and show everybody how efficiently you can run the government? The White House is presently occupied; it is defended by several million troops which can be airlifted to the spot in a few hours; these troops are armed with the most efficient means of mass destruction. Again we suggest that before you get your seat on the Federal Reserve Board you will need to destroy the state power of the capitalists. And this task requires something more than a vague 'organized institution of mass forces.' It requires a conscious, disciplined combat party, steeled in struggle and prepared for the ultimate revolutionary struggle for power. Yes, Dr. Marcus, we repeat: CONSCIOUS, DISCIPLINED, yes, DISCIPLINED, particularly and harshly and cohesively DISCIPLINED. We are speaking of a LENINIST party.

This question of the party is not open for grabs --some sort of new form which will spontaneously emerge out of the theoretical confusion and individualistic middle class indiscipline of the middle class students. It is a question which has been decided theoretically in Lenin's long struggle from 1903 to 1917, decided in concrete battle during the October Revolution, promulgated and defended by the Communist International during its first five years, saved from degeneration by the Trotskyist movement in the fight for the Fourth International.

#### PARTY

It is not an American party and it is not a German party or a Russian party or a Chinese party. It is a world party representing the world working class in common struggle against a common enemy. It has always developed as a world party and theoretical development has always occurred within the struggle for the world party--and never, never, never outside it. But not a word appears in the Marcus opus on the international character of the party. You, Lyndon Marcus, are completely naked on this central question.

A little later on Marcus states, knowing what he says will be warmly received in the universities: 'Worst of all, the very fact that each sect and sectlet considers itself already 'The Party' is an absolute flaw in its makeup, a dogmatic conviction which renders it hostile to every sort of work necessary to actually form such a party.' But what is a party, L. Marcus? It is not mystical thing nor is the revolutionary party simply a 'mass institution'. The party is nothing more than a conscious organization of a section of the class around a program. It is the program which determines whether a particular party is 'The Party' or whether it is a fraud, a revisionist formation posing as 'The Party'. It is the program which determines the way in which the party is organized. Our programmatic understanding requires us to organize as a part of a world movement and as a disciplined formation. Marcus' programmatic understanding demands of him that he organize a loose propaganda group which he hopes someday will lead an even looser mass organization which will have confidence in L. Marcus' ability to administer the Federal Reserve System.

#### TRICK

To deny that a party is 'the party' is thus a theoretical task requiring one to investigate the formation of history and program both as stated and as exemplified in practice. To write off all formations simply on the basis of their claim to be 'The Party' is an old New Left trick used to hide the fact that the New Left is not 'The Party' nor can it build 'The Party' precisely because of its programmatic bankruptcy.

Marcus seeks to bolster this position by citing the practice of the SWP, the CP and the PLP. But again these formations are not 'The Party' precisely because their programs are rotten through and through and not because of their claims to be the party. Marcus claims that no formation in the United States 'even acknowledges the importance of a concrete analysis of the current economic situation; none has a real program nor is capable of developing a relevant transitional program.' Ok, L. Marcus, we claim that the Workers League has

a concrete analysis of the current economic situation, has a real program and not only is capable of developing a relevant transitional program but has developed one far superior to your 'Tax and Landlords' gimmicks. We say we are 'The Party' and we challenge you to dispute this by showing us what is fundamentally wrong with our program. We in turn will readily acknowledge that you do not represent 'The Party'. We believe you are absolutely correct in not making that claim. This is because your program is revisionist and reformist to the core.

#### INTELLECTUALS

But Marcus has more to say about his conception of a party. To him the revolutionary party is 'a cadre-grouping of revolutionary intellectuals.' This intellectual cadre through participation in mass struggle gets the workers to 'actively support' it. At the point where a significant vanguard of the working class recognizes this cadre of intellectuals 'as a real alternative choice' such a cadre grouping can be considered a party.

This Marcus seeks to justify by turning to the history of the revolutionary party internationally. He cites as examples: 'Marx and Engels intervening to change the direction of the 'League of the Just', Lenin in the early years in Petrograd, Luxemburg in the Polish and German labor movements, etc.' It is absolutely true that revolutionary intellectuals like Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky made critically important contributions to the development of the revolutionary party. The working class on its own because of its cultural poverty as well as its general conditions of existence which give it only a trade union consciousness could not have developed the level of consciousness Marx and others brought into the working class movement. This is all true and correct but like much that is true and correct it becomes false and incorrect if it is posed, as Marcus poses it, as the totality of the relation between the workers and the intelligensia. It is in fact only one side of this relationship.

#### WORKERS

Another side is that while men like Marx and Lenin played a critical initiating role in the early stages of the construction of the party and made major contributions to the construction of the party at later stages they always, always viewed their tasks as participation in the construction of a workers party. From the very earliest moments in their party building work they fought for the party to be a party of workers, saw the necessity for themselves to become integrated in a workers party, insisted on workers not only being members of the party but playing a leading role in the party at every level, and their strength came from the reliance at all times in the worker section of the party.

Even that very first beginning of the party Marcus mentioned, Marx and Engels' intervention in the League of the Just, was an intervention into a group of workers not the creation of a separate intellectual group barring workers from membership but kind enough to allow workers to support it. What disdain for the working class Marcus represents! In everything he writes it comes through.

#### CONTRADICTIONARY

But there is even another side to this question of the relation between the revolutionary intellectual and the party. Reality is not only not one-sided, it is not even two-sided--it is in fact all-sided or infinitely sided. The role of the intellectual within the party is actually extremely contradictory. It is true he brings to the party a greater theoretical ability, what Marcus calls the ability to have 'an overview' of society. But he also brings into the party two other interrelated things quite harmful to the party. First, as a man trained in bourgeois universities, he brings with him the method of the universities--in the United States this means pragmatism. Thus his actual strength can become his deepest weakness--his ability to theorize is in actuality an ability to theorize with the methods of the bourgeoisie and such methods inevitably lead to the tying of the working class movement to the bourgeoisie.

At the same time his method of thought is reinforced by his actual class position in society--his ties to the middle classes. He is the man in the middle--he prefers middleheadedness in thinking, eclecticism like Marcus', individualism and subjectivism as against discipline and objective thinking. He wants a party which is a propaganda circle of fellow intellectuals. The class struggle for him is an idea--not his daily life. Much of the time he understands one thing in his head and acts out another thing with his feet.

The winning over of the intellectual to the working class requires a conscious battle against the pragmatic method, a constant struggle to subordinate middle class individualism to the discipline of a proletarian party, a destruction of the snobbery and pretensions of the 'special position' in society the middle class intellectual so much cherishes.

#### WORKERS

Of course the workers who enter the party (that is if not barred by Marcus as unfit for the elite cadre) bring pragmatism and narrowness of thought with them also. There can be no concessions to the theoretical backwardness of this section of the party also. But in fighting for the theoretical development of workers within the party their actual social conditions can reinforce dialectical thinking while with the intellectual it works the opposite way. Also the very conditions of life of workers require discipline--the worker has no illusion that he can have power separate from numbers and cohesion. He joins the party precisely because he wants to struggle and fight--the class struggle is not an idea to him but his life. What is required is the exact opposite movement as with the intellectual--for his life to become conscious --for the class struggle to be an idea, that is theoretically understood, as well as his life.

It is very good for Marcus to recommend selected passages from Lenin's 'What is to be Done', about the importance of theory and the reactionary character of those who tail the economism of the workers. But perhaps the SDS Labor Committee comrades should also read 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward', written only a short while later when Lenin confronted a petty bourgeois propagandistic rebellion in his party led precisely by these revolutionary intellectuals who wanted something like the SDS Labor Committee as a substitute for a combat party of workers. And Lenin continued the fight against the revolutionary intellectuals who could not change right up to and including the moment of revolution always basing himself on the proletarian wing of his party (a wing not to be allowed into Marcus' cadre). Then there was Trotsky's struggle against the petty bourgeois opposition within the Socialist Workers Party documented in his book 'In Defense of Marxism'. The current ISC is the heir to this completely revisionist grouping of the revolutionary intelligensia who resisted breaking from the petty bourgeoisie methodologically and in actual life.

#### MARCUS

We must conclude with Marcus' own political history for this he tells no one and herein lies the very basis of the confusion in his theoretical thought. Marcus spent some 20 years inside the SWP. He existed in that party on the basis of an unstated agreement--the SWP would not try to change Marcus and Marcus would not try to change the SWP.

Then to Marcus' credit he made an attempt to change the SWP and found himself soon out of the SWP. He then joined the Workers League (then called the American Committee for the Fourth International) on the principled basis of agreement on the nature of the SWP, of the capitalist crisis and of the general strategy for fighting to build the movement as part of the Fourth International.

Soon thereafter our organization entered into unity negotiations with the Spartacist League and Marcus became an active supporter of this unification. He did this, as became clear later, not because he wanted to have a unified section of the Fourth International in this country but as a jumping off place for greater and bigger amalgams out of which he could create his 'intellectual cadre.'

When the unification fell through because of Spartacist's hostility to being a serious part of an international movement Marcus waged a quicky faction fight in our organization and up and joined Spartacist, only to leave them after a month or two.

He has never been able to explain politically his break with the Fourth International. Instead he has turned his back on the whole struggle to build an international movement based on the theoretical foundations of the whole struggle for Marxism since the days of Marx. No wonder today he cannot put forward a coherent theoretical alternative to the revolutionary Marxism of the Fourth International. Instead he digs up schemes and gimmicks from the past, old worn-out formulas and reformist gimmicks about running the Federal Reserve System without first taking power, Menshevik arguments against the combat party, complete ignorance about the theory of the permanent revolution or the central meaning of the transitional program.



# SUPPORT FOR SHERWOOD GROWS

As we go to press we have learned that the trial of Robert Sherwood, a member of the Toronto Branch of the Workers League, has been postponed until December 23rd. Sherwood is being charged with violating the Canadian Immigration Act (section 50f) for not divulging an arrest record upon his entry into Canada in 1967.

The conviction which was not reported, resulted from arrests in civil rights demonstrations in Chicago, arrests also involving Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dick Gregory. The charge is considered a "misdemeanor" in the state of Illinois, not a felony. The prosecution is a prelude to the deportation of Sherwood to the United States who went to Canada after faced with trumped up draft delinquency charges.

In New York City on December 6th, the Committee to Defend Robert Sherwood was set up to organize his defense within the United States. A similar committee is presently being established in Cana-

da where a considerable amount of support within the New Democratic Party and the trade unions is being mustered. Fred Mueller is the Executive Secretary of the American Committee.

#### SPONSORS

Among the initial sponsors of the Committee are: Norma Becker, Coordinator, Vietnam Peace Parade Committee; Tom Gordon, SDS Labor Committee; Sy Landy, Independent Socialist Clubs; Conrad Lynn, Civil Rights Attorney; Pat Noonan, New School SDS; Melody Phillips, Delegate, Local 1199, Hospital Workers (\*); Ramona Ripston, Co-director, National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee(\*); Bill Rose, Acting General Manager, The Guardian; Bill Scheicher, Delegate, Social Service Employees Union of N.Y. (\*); Sam Smith, Revolutionary Communist League(\*); Lucy St. John, Workers League; Harry Turner; David White; Rowland Watts, Workers Defense League(\*). (\*Organizational affil-

iation listed for identification purpose only). More sponsors will be announced shortly.

#### SWP

The Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance were repeatedly asked to sponsor the Committee. They refused on the grounds that since the statement upon which the Committee was established supported Sherwood on political grounds-- that is recognised the attack on Sherwood as being politically motivated-- and was not strictly and narrowly a civil liberties statement, they could not support the Committee.

It seems that the SWP is willing to support anybody but a Trotskyist, and on any grounds so long as it is not class grounds. We demand that the SWP and YSA reverse this shocking position and assume their elementary working class responsibilities to participate in a class defense of a working class victim

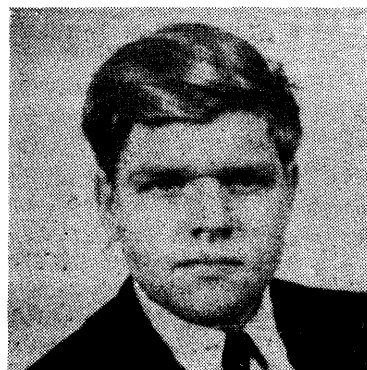
of ruling class "justice"

#### STATEMENT

The statement upon which the Committee was established is as follows:

"The indictment of Robert Sherwood, a member of the Toronto Branch of the Workers League, on a charge of violating the Canadian Immigration Act, is a clear case of political persecution. Sherwood has been singled out for prosecution and the stage is being set for his deportation from Canada.

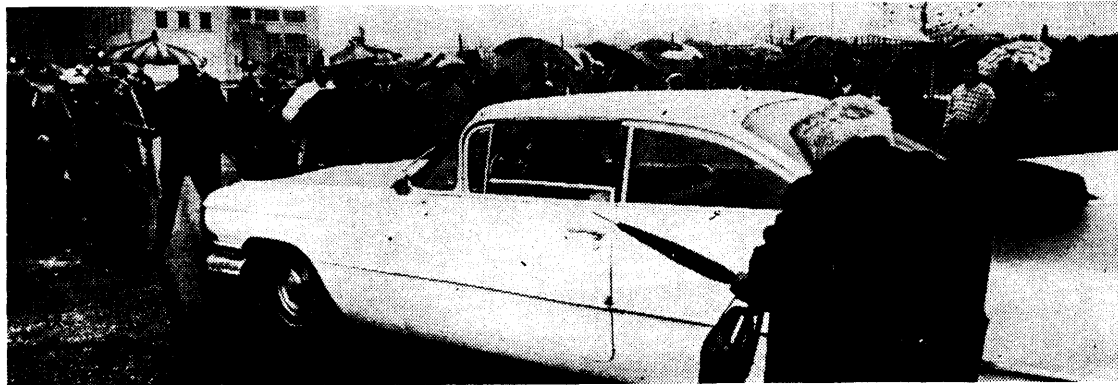
"This case involves far more than draft resistance or the Vietnam War. Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau has publically expressed his fear of social unrest spilling over from the U.S. into Canada. The Rand Commission Report is a direct attack on Canadian trade unions. In the U.S. the incoming Nixon Administration is preparing to continue attacks on black militants, radicals and the entire working class movement.



ROBERT SHERWOOD

"This prosecution is a political attack and it must be answered politically. The plans of the Canadian and U.S. rulers must be exposed and the broadest support possible won for Sherwood on this basis. The Committee to Defend Robert Sherwood is being formed for this purpose."

We urge the widest possible support for Sherwood among all working class tendencies, the trade unions and the minority movement. Financial support is desperately needed for this case. Please send contributions to: Committee to Defend Robert Sherwood, Room 7, 243 East 10th St., New York, N.Y. 10003



DC 50 STRIKERS, MOSTLY WOMEN, STOP SCAB FROM ENTERING CREEDMORE STATE HOSPITAL

#### BY A DC 50 MEMBER

NEW YORK-Gov. Rockefeller has decreed that the penalties of the Taylor Law are to be applied in full measure to the hospital workers who struck four mental hospitals, Creedmor in Queens, Manhattan State on Wards Island, Bronx and Buffalo State Hospitals for a ten day period in November.

The workers acted to ensure that they would be represented by the union of their choice, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Council 50, and to prevent Rockefeller from again carrying through contract negotiations with the Civil Service Employees Association, the company union of his choice, for the 124,000 state employees.

Thirteen workers at Bronx State Hospital, initially suspended on charges that they had committed "acts of violence", "threatened" such acts, "intimidated" and "harrassed" other employees, were permitted to return to work, pending resolution of the charges, only because the workers at that hospital threatened to resume their strike. These workers have, however, been "reassigned" at the hospital, pending hearings on the charges. At Manhattan State Hospital, three workers were, in fact, suspended on similar charges.

Lillian Roberts, State Mental Hospital Organizational Director for AFSCME, Council 50, is presently serving a thirty day jail sentence and

has been fined \$250, the maximum penalties allowed under the Taylor Law. Robert Fuller, president of Creedmor, Local 69, is now serving a twenty day jail sentence, and has been fined \$125.

Council 50 will lose its dues check-off "privileges" at state mental hospitals.

#### THREAT

In the absence of organized resistance by the unions, the door has been opened to the prosecution of teachers, sanitation workers, firemen, social service workers, and all city workers--and not only for striking, but for job actions as well. In the face of this threat, not only to public service workers, but to the entire labor movement in the State, the business as usual complacency of the labor bureaucracy is a measure of their incompetence and downright treachery to the workers.

The legal talent for District 50 requested bail pending appeal of the sentences against the two labor leaders, not only on the basis that they were responsible people who could be depended on to serve their sentences at the proper time, but also, that they were needed to keep the ranks in line and from engaging in "wildcat" strikes such as was threatened by the Bronx State Hospital Workers.

Jerry Wurf, international president of AFSCME, instead of posing a united front of the entire labor movement in the state, let alone of city

and state public service workers in their own defense, shrugs off the punitive measures, and declares them to be "ludicrous." The only "action" Council 50 projects thus far is a protest of the suspensions to the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Hygiene!

Council 50 has achieved its greatest success thus far, in recruiting workers in the New York metropolitan area, and in the large upstate cities. They have organized approximately 50,000 workers who function as psychiatric attendants, nurses' aides, laundry, dietary workers, and maintenance workers. In the New York area, an estimated 80% of these workers are black and Puerto Rican. In the state as a whole, 60% of hospital workers are from these minority groups. Many of these workers are often required to perform skilled specialized duties, and earn approximately \$2 an hour.

The specially oppressed black and Spanish speaking workers, who have an unemployment rate of at least twice that of white workers, a gap that has been widening in recent months, have increasingly accepted the low paying jobs in City and State employment, in recent years, as the wages paid by them continues to fall further below the levels paid by business and industry.

Their determination in this respect has been reenforced by the victory of the hospital workers in the so-called

voluntary hospitals, organized Local 1199 in achieving a \$100 minimum wage. District 37, taking a leaf out of 1199's book, has now demanded a minimum wage of \$6000 a year, with a minimum increase of \$1500 per year for City hospital workers, beginning in January 1969.

#### ACT

The fines, firings and suspensions of hospital workers, is the concern of every trade unionist in New York State. It is necessary that this issue be raised in every trade union, that guarantees of support to the hospital workers in their fight for union recognition and for a decent standard of life be made. The unions, in recognition that their own unions are under attack, should inform Gov. Rockefeller and the Dept. of Mental Hygiene, that they stand ready to call a general strike throughout the state, if the hospital workers are victimized, that they demand that all charges against all workers be dropped, that the three suspended workers at Manhattan State Hospital be immediately re-instated with full back pay for the period of suspension already served.

#### CAUCUS

It is clear that only the re-

placement of the labor bureaucracy by the representatives of the rank and file, on a program of struggle in the immediate and long term interests of the membership is vitally necessary. Hospital workers must organize a rank and file caucus which would demand that:

\* all penalties under the Taylor Law be immediately dropped, and all workers reinstated with full back wages.

\* preparation to be made for a sharp struggle to win the \$6000 minimum wage posed by Council 37 for city hospital workers, as well as other economic demands, through a campaign to solidify the union ranks in all state hospitals and schools.

\* a united front, not only public service unions, but all unions in the state welded together against the union-busting Taylor Law, and any other law devised, and against the coming offensive of the ruling class.

\* a political party representing the workers, a labor party based on the unions, be organized, which would run workers candidates against the representatives of the ruling class, which would mount an election campaign against Lindsay and Rockefeller, in the 1969 and 1970 City and State elections.

## ROCKEFELLER

## ATTACKS

## DC 50 STRIKERS

#### BULLETIN OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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# the negro, nation and marxist theory

BY LUCY ST. JOHN

Today the reactionary role played by black nationalism in the working class is being revealed through the growth of deepening divisions within the trade union movement between white and black workers. We have only to look at the recent teachers' strike as well as the formation of organizations like DRUM in the UAW. The reactionary character of black nationalism is being given a Marxist cover by revisionists such as the Socialist Workers Party.

The SWP defends its capitulation to black nationalism on the basis of the discussions with Trotsky on the Negro question during the period 1933-1938 which they have published under the title 'Leon Trotsky on Self-Determination and Black Nationalism.' The SWP has taken the ambiguities as well as the incorrect conclusions of this discussion along with a complete distortion of Lenin's work on the question of self-determination of nations to completely adapt to black nationalism.

## LENIN

It is necessary therefore to go back not only to Trotsky's discussion but to the development of Marxist theory on the question of self-determination of nations particularly the work done by Lenin.

Lenin in his extensive writings on the national question was attacked on two sides - one by Rosa Luxemburg who denied the validity of the national question under all circumstances and Otto Bauer and the Bundists who advocated the slogan of 'cultural and national autonomy.' Lenin began his discussions with a discussion of method. He differentiated between the historico-economic and the psychological theories of the national question. He attacked the conception of approaching the national question by 'juggling legal definitions' or inventing abstract definitions. Rather he said that it had to be approached by examining the historico-economic conditions of the national movements. He stated that the 'categorical requirement of Marxist theory' is to examine the question in definite historical limits and that account be taken of the specific features in relation to the particular country.

Above all Lenin insisted that the question had to be considered from the standpoint of the class struggle and that the slogans for self-determination must be compared with the interests and policies of classes and not with 'meaningless general principles, declamations, and phrases.' Lenin pointed out that demands for democracy, including the demand for self-determination, are not absolute but only a small part of the general socialist world program. In individual cases, the part he said may contradict the whole; if so it must be rejected. However this does not in any case mean that you throw out democratic demands as self-determination. 'It is possible that the republican movement in one country may be merely an instrument of the clerical or financial monarchist intrigues of other countries; if so, we must not support this particular concrete movement, but it would be ridiculous to delete the demand for a republic from the program of international Social Democracy.'

## CONTEXT

In addition Lenin approached the whole question of the right of nations to self-determination not as an abstract slogan but in the context of the whole development of capitalism and with a definite political content. He traced this demand through the development of the nation states with the break from feudalism to the development of the divisions between oppressed and oppressor nations under imperialism. He saw the demand not abstractly but arising out of the historical development of the class struggle. When he spoke of self-determination of nations he used a very precise definition. 'The right of nations to self-determination implies exclusively the right to independence in the political sense, the right to free political separation from the oppressor nation, the right to secede.'

Lenin defended the right of self-determination for nations and national minorities breaking out of feudalism and oppressed under imperialism and pointed out that it was necessary not only to fully support the demand for political independence but to unite the workers and peasants in the oppressed countries in the fight for the unity of the world working class and the socialist revolution. While

he was unconditionally in favor of this demand, he pointed out that support to national movements would depend on their character and that support could not be given to reactionary movements.

## JEWS

Neither Lenin nor Trotsky approached this question abstractly. While the Bolshevik movement stood unequivocally in favor of the right of nations to self-determination, when the demand arose it was considered in the context of the material conditions and the development of the class struggle. It is through this approach that both Lenin and Trotsky fought against the conception of national determination for the Jews in Russia on two fronts, first that the Jews did not in fact constitute a nation and second the raising of the question of self-determination for the Jews was reactionary and utopian.

When the Bund raised this question in the party they were severely attacked. The idea of the Jewish nation, Lenin said, was 'absolutely false and essentially reactionary.' He contended that the conception was 'absolutely untenable scientifically' and that 'the idea that the Jews form a separate nation is reactionary politically. Irrefutable practical proof of that is furnished by generally known facts of recent history and of present day political realities.' Lenin contended that there was absolutely no material basis for the idea that the Jews were a nation whether they wanted to be or thought they were. In addition Lenin stated that 'the idea of Jewish nationality runs counter to the interests of the Jewish proletariat for it fosters among them directly or indirectly a spirit hostile to assimilation, the spirit of the 'ghetto'.' Lenin pointed out that Jewish nationalism didn't end but legitimized Jewish isolation. He stated that war must be proclaimed against this idea and that under no circumstances was this demand supported by the Bolshevik party.

## CULTURE

Not only did Lenin reject the conception of the Jewish nation but also launched a lengthy attack on the demand for 'cultural and national autonomy' which he called 'refined nationalism' (see Collected Works, Volume 20). This demand was raised by the Austrian Social Democrats, Bauer and Renner, and was taken up by the Bundists. The conception was that within one country the people of one and the same nationality, regardless of their place of residence, should form an autonomous national union, which would have complete jurisdiction over schools (separate schools for children of different nationalities) and other spheres of education and culture. It might surprise some, particularly the revisionists, that black control of the black communities is not new.

Lenin pointed out that the slogan of working-class democracy was not 'national culture' but the international culture of democracy and the world-wide working class movement. 'It is that all liberal-bourgeois nationalism sows the greatest corruption among the workers and does immense harm to the cause of freedom and the proletarian class struggle. 'National culture' is the culture of the bourgeoisie and under the slogan the bourgeoisie pursues the policy of splitting the workers. Lenin counterposed working class democracy to nationalism which means the demand for the 'unconditional unity and complete amalgamation of workers of all nationalities in all working class organizations - trade unions, co-operative, consumers, educational and others.'

## FRAUD

Lenin called 'national culture' a 'bourgeois fraud', and said that whoever put forward such a slogan was the enemy of the proletariat. He said that those who advocate it are among the nationalist petty-bourgeoisie, not among the Marxists and the working class. Lenin attacked the promoters of national culture among the Jews for trying to turn back the wheel of history. He said that their desire to segregate the workers according to nation and to fight against 'assimilation' was totally reactionary. 'All advocacy of the segregation of the workers of one nation from those of another, all attacks upon Marxist 'assimilation' or attempts where the proletariat is concerned to contrapose one national culture is bourgeois nationalism, against which it is essential to wage a ruthless struggle.' Lenin empha-

# WORKERS LEAGUE

The Workers League held its third National Conference on Nov. 22-24 in New York City. Represented were delegates from New York, Toronto, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, San Francisco and a fraternal delegate from the International Committee of the Fourth International.

The conference both reflected the changes which had already taken place within the Workers League through the fight over the past year to intervene in the trade unions around the labor party demand and also projected the need for further internal development of the organization to prepare it for even deeper intervention in the class in the coming period of intensified class struggles.

The conference reaffirmed the basic orientation of the League to penetrate the trade unions while at the same time stepping up the struggle against the revisionist distorters of Marxism particularly among the student youth. With the International Report and running as a thread through all the discussions at the conference was a battle to understand American political developments within the context of internationalism and a struggle against a constant tendency for the reassertion of a national and pragmatic

sized that Marxism cannot be reconciled with nationalism and that by advocating cultural-national autonomy 'despite the pious wishes of individuals and groups, divides the nations and in fact draws the workers and the bourgeoisie of any one nation closer.'

## EQUALITY

Lenin said that Marxists recognize the equality of nations as it is essential to comradely unity in the workers' class struggle. But he differentiated between this demand for equality in a class program from the demand for bourgeois national equality which amounts in practice to advocating national exclusiveness and chauvinism and the division and estrangement of nations.

'This is absolutely incompatible with proletarian internationalism which advocates not only closer relations between nations, but the amalgamation of the workers of all nationalities in a given state in a united proletarian organization. That is why Marxists emphatically condemn so-called cultural-national autonomy, i.e., the idea that educational affairs should be taken out of the hands of the state and transferred to the respective nationalities. This plan means that in questions of 'national culture' educational affairs are to be split up in national associations according to the nationalities in the given state federation, each with its own separate Diet, educational budgets, school boards, and educational institutions.'

## NEGROES

It is with this background that we approach the Negro question in the United States. We state that the Negroes do not constitute a nation or a national minority that there is no material basis for this conception in the context of historical, economic, and political development. We state that whether or not the Negroes may want a nation sometime in the future is not the basis on which the conception of nation is based. We reject a psychological and subjective analysis of this question. We say that the Negroes are no more a nation today than the Jews were in Russia. None of the material or political economic conditions exist which would make the Negroes a nation: common territory, economic system, language, and culture as well as a striving towards an independent economic existence.

In order for capitalism to develop in the U.S. it was necessary as Lenin puts it to 'grind down' national divisions in order to develop a cohesive and disciplined working class. Capitalism would never have developed in the U.S. if each national minority had been allowed to set up its own state. As Trotsky points out that 'Russia took form as a state made up of nationalities is the result of her historic belatedness.' It was absolutely necessary for the American capitalists not only to abolish slavery but to assimilate the Negro people into class society. While the Negroes were assimilated into class society, into the productive process, at the same time it was necessary to continue the discrimination of the Negro through racism to divide the working class.

# HOLDS CONFERENCE

outlook on all levels within the League. This is nothing more than a reflection of the pressure of the petty bourgeoisie.

An extensive discussion was also held on the Negro question--particularly in relation to the misconceptions put forward by Trotsky in his 1939 discussions and the attempts of the SWP to turn these misconceptions into a reactionary adaptation to black nationalism. The article on this page by Lucy St. John reflects this discussion and marks the beginning of our theoretical work on this critical question.

Future issues of the BULLETIN will carry more material on the conference including the International and Economics reports.

Over and over during the conference it was emphasized that every aspect of party work must be centered on the BULLETIN. The fight for the BULLETIN is the very center of the fight for the party and for the world Trotskyist movement. The Political Committee has now decided to expand the paper to 12 pages and to conduct a campaign to triple paid circulation by this Fall and at that time launch the BULLETIN as a weekly paper.

The Negroes today do not exist in relation to the capitalist class as a separate nation but rather as a part of the class society, doubly burdened not only with class oppression but racial discrimination so that they share more proportionally in unemployment, unskilled jobs, etc. That this is the case is revealed in the struggles of the Negro people not historically for a separate nation but for political, economic and social equality. The nationalist movements in this country beginning with Garvey have never been supported by the Negro working class and are not today. The petty bourgeoisie have been the mentors of the demand for a separate nation.

We say that the demand for self determination for the Negro people is a reactionary demand - that it legitimizes the racial divisions, the 'ghetto' and aids the bourgeoisie in maintaining racism, that it divides the working class.

## TROTSKY

It is within the context of the discussions of the national question within the Marxist movement and the historical political conditions of the United States and from the standpoint of the class struggle, that we approach Trotsky's discussion on the Negro question. The Workers League contends today that Trotsky's conclusions in this discussion were basically incorrect. Trotsky was indeed a genius but not a god.

Trotsky in this discussion contended that the SWP should support the demand for self determination 'if the Negroes themselves want it.' At the same time he stated that the Negroes are 'a race and not a nation.' He said the SWP should 'not obligate the Negroes to become a nation; if they are, then that is a question of their consciousness, that is what they desire and what they strive for.' He saw the demand for a black state as a 'sign of moral and political awakening' and as a 'tremendous revolutionary step.' In his approach to the question of whether the Negroes are a nation, Trotsky appears to be relying on a totally subjective and psychological basis of analysis as he puts it 'their feelings and their impulses', rather than an objective analysis.

Trotsky at the time admitted that he had very little information on the Negro in the United States. His statements are far from definitive on the question and often contradictory. Trotsky at the time was concerned primarily with turning the SWP around and forcing it to take up the struggle for the Negro people which they had literally ignored. Trotsky's conclusions appear to be based solely on the need for the SWP to turn to the Negro masses without a clear analysis of the historical, political, and social role of the Negro in the U.S.

We believe that Trotsky was wrong in seeing this demand as a revolutionary step; in that period as well as today it meant the dividing of the working class. Trotsky realized that the demand could have this effect if black and white workers had been united in struggle. Nowhere, nowhere, we repeat, does Trotsky call for black nationalism or in any

way advocate cultural nationalism.

## SWP

Today the SWP has taken every ambiguity and incorrect conclusion in this pamphlet and is using it to give a cover to the most reactionary ideas which serve one purpose and one purpose only and that is to divide the working class and thus aid the capitalist class.

Their method and their conclusions have absolutely nothing to do with Marxism, with Trotskyism. Today the question of self determination for the SWP has become an abstract principle, a moral principle, abstracted from the class struggle. The right of self determination of nations has become the 'right' for groups to control their destiny or more crudely their right to 'do their own thing' if that is what they want. What it boils down to in practice is that if you are black you are never wrong and can never be corrected--whatever you want is good and you are right. The Negro people cannot be given leadership as part of the working class by the revolutionary party.

The logic of this position should be clear and was brought home at the YSA convention when the YSAers were addressed by a Black Panther who told them they were not the revolutionary party, that the Black Panthers were the only revolutionary party and he was applauded. Accordingly, the SWP should disband tomorrow. What the SWP has done is to raise the conception of an abstract, moral right above the class struggle and the needs of the working class and the revolutionary party.

Black nationalism is nothing more than a modern version of cultural nationalism. The SWP has never defended theoretically the idea of the Negroes as a nation although they give lip service to it. It is even admitted that the Negro was "totally stripped of the culture and values acquired on the African continent." What black nationalism is calling for is the reversion, turning back the wheel of history, to the times when the Negroes lived under tribalism, reviving a primitive culture. This as Lenin points out is the most reactionary form of nationalism. The demand for "blackification," Afro-American autonomy and control of educational institutions only perpetrates the segregation of black and white workers and continues the "ghetto."

## CAPITALISTS

Today every black capitalist and petty bourgeois has taken up the demand for black culture. Black capitalists such as Jesse Jackson are seen as the friends of the black transit workers.

Today the Ford Foundation has become the hero in the fight for black control of the schools,

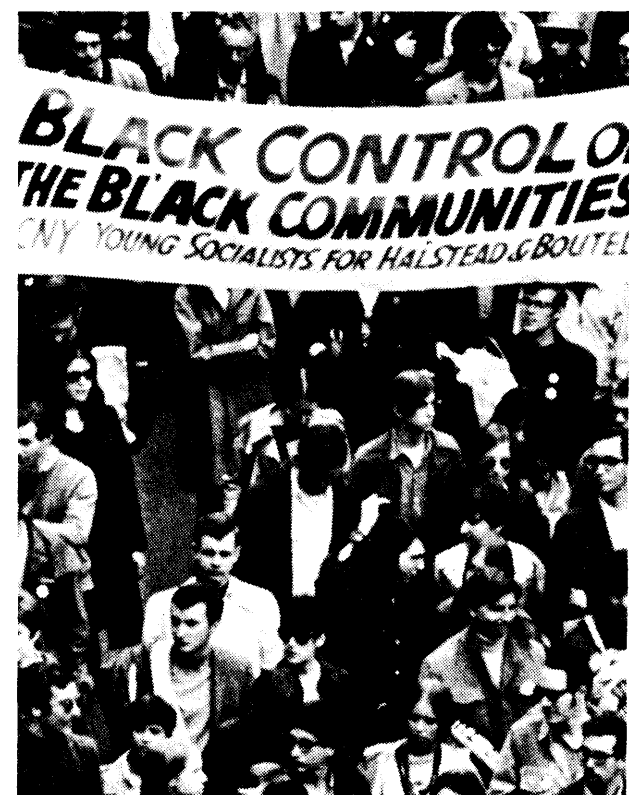
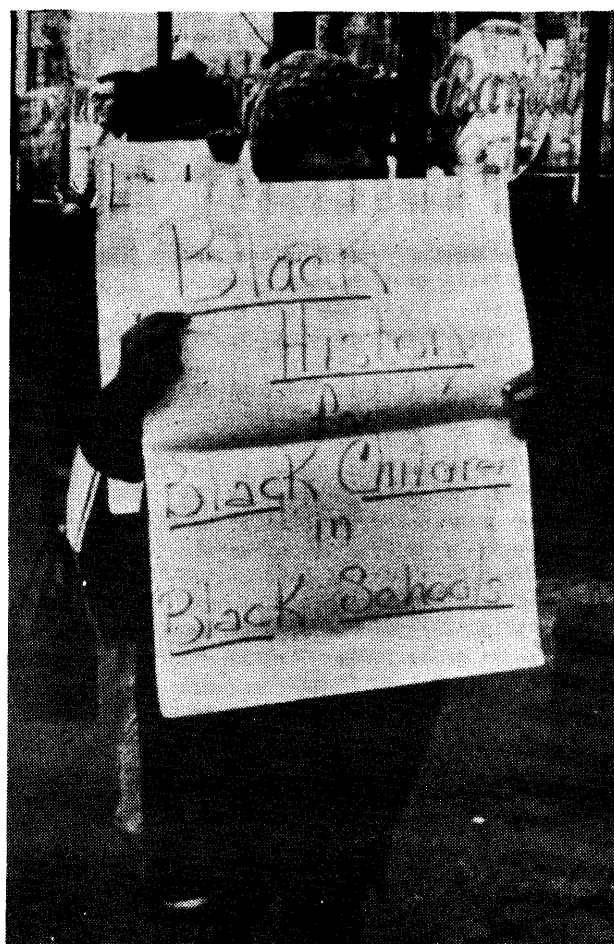
pouring millions of dollars into community control while the white workers the teachers become in the eyes of the nationalists the enemies. As Lenin said cultural nationalism draws the workers closer to the bourgeoisie.

Black nationalism has served to split the working class. This is exposed particularly within the trade union movement. Where white and black workers have joined in struggle against the boss as in the UAW and the Chicago Transit strike with the intervention of the nationalists, this unity has been broken with the demogogy of black capitalism, black is beautiful. Rather than amalgamating the working class in a united organization, the nationalists call for separate organizations, separate unions. In every single instance, black nationalism has served to divide the working class. We say that black nationalism is absolutely against the interests of the black workers that it will only lead them to defeat.

The Workers League stands today 100% against black nationalism in all its forms. We say that the key to the class struggle must be the unity of the working class, united in trade unions, in the revolutionary party. Racism cannot be fought through black nationalism which is a diversion for black workers to keep them from fighting their real enemy the capitalist class, economically and politically. Black nationalism only aids racism; it prevents the mobilization of black and white workers against the system of which racism is an inherent part.

There is no separate solution for the Negro people outside of the struggles of the world working class. There is no separate program. This Trotsky made clear. The fight against racism and every form of discrimination must be combined with the class struggle as a whole. The fight for equality, for black representation must become an integral part of the fight for socialism. The Workers League rather than accepting the divisions created by capitalist society and adapting to them calls for the organizations of the working class to take up the struggles of the Negro people and to unite the class politically in the fight to create a political arm of the entire working class, black and white, a labor party.

The struggles of the workers in the United States cannot be separated from the struggles of workers all over the world. The struggles of the workers and students in France last spring pointed the way. In the next period the struggles of the working class, particularly in Europe, will give tremendous impetus and leadership to the working class, both black and white, in the U.S. Black workers will see that their brothers are the workers in France, England, Italy and not the black capitalists or the Ford Foundation.



SWP MISLEADS THE NEGRO PEOPLE WITH DEMANDS FOR BLACK CONTROL AND BLACK SCHOOLS. LENIN ATTACKED SUCH SLOGANS FOR CULTURAL NATIONALISM AS REACTIONARY.

# CHAOS HITS NYC SCHOOLS

BY A SEWARD PARK STUDENT  
NEW YORK--This past week there have been student strikes throughout the city demanding that students be given back their vacations and the extra forty-five minutes a day of school time. Many students, justifiably angry about these questions, have been demanding that the teachers not be paid for overtime. They are claiming that the teachers' strike was racist, and that teachers are "getting paid for striking". What position should radical students take on this question?

Before taking a position, students must understand the class role of education, and the class forces involved in community control, and the teachers' strike.

Like all parts of the superstructure of capitalist society, the educational process

reflects the class struggle. The bourgeoisie utilizes education to continue its rule by, on the one hand, brainwashing students and teaching them to accept discipline and on the other hand teaching them the minimum skills which will enable them to produce profits for the bourgeoisie.

The ruling class teaches students that this is the best and the only possible society. They teach students to view all the complexities of modern society with the "common sense" of the bourgeoisie.

To use the educational system for the benefit of students and the rest of the working class, we must oppose bourgeois control of schools with the concept of working class control of society as a whole.

COMMUNITY  
The concept of community

control says nothing about what class in the "community" should control education. Does a black ex-slum lord like Rhody McCoy represent the interests of the black masses? Is the Ford Foundation interested in equality for blacks? No! The reason why agents of big business such as Mayor Lindsay and George McBundy of the Ford Foundation support community control is that it not only continues bourgeois control of schools, but it also permits them to direct the militancy of the Black people against the teachers' union, through their agents like McCoy.

The cause of the teachers' strike was the arbitrary transfer of nineteen teachers from P.S. 271, on the basis of their opposition to community control. This was a deliberate attack on the UFT.

Many students will say that the Board of Education bylaws do not require due process for teachers who transfer, which is true. However, the legalistic and abstract slogan of "due process" evades the fact that the local board's action was an attack on the teachers' union and the rights of teachers. As for the right to transfer "white racist teachers," this was just an excuse for the anti-union action.

## STUDENTS

Students must recognize that the teachers' strike was justified. The right to job security was at stake. Students must also recognize the role of Shanker in this strike. If, instead of talking about "mob rule" and appealing to racism, he had supported the demands of black workers and students for equality, the teachers would have had the

support of Black people instead of their opposition.

"Community control" is a tool of the bourgeoisie, and must be opposed with the slogan of workers' control, i.e., students, teachers and parents. Students must call on teachers to join them in struggle for better education, and to kick out Shanker, who stands in the way of unity.

Students must recognize that the City violated the teachers contract and caused the strike. Instead of opposing the right of overtime for teachers, students should call for teachers to receive their full salaries without the necessity of working overtime. The UFT should fully support the students struggles against the extra 45 minutes and holiday lose. Its the Board of Education's fault. Let them give up their holidays.

## Teachers Key to SF State Victory

BY DEBORAH O'CONNELL

The struggle at SFSC has reached a critical stage. It is already endangered by adventurism. Without a clear perspective, a strategic orientation, the present confusion and anarchy will lead inevitably to defeat.

This crisis can be interpreted in one and only one way. It is an attack on every "sacred right" of the bourgeois university. It represents a clear move by the state to destroy all the hard won rights of academic freedom and to smash every vestige of the independence of the university from the state.

A victory for the state will mean that it will have won the right to deal with dissent through the method of the purge. It will mean also that a step has been taken towards the destruction of faculty rights, the right of all student tendencies to exist and organize politically will be endangered, and ultimately, state control over the right to independent investigation. This, in embryo at SFSC, is the beginning of the march toward the corporate state.

The confrontation at State is not a mistake due to confusion or to a series of blunders. It is a reflection of a very sharp movement of the international capitalist class to the right. This movement will not be arrested through compromises. Those days ended with the end of the capitalist boom.

## DEFENSE

The fundamental fight on State is the defense of democratic rights. If this is lost nothing else can be won. A

struggle that unites the students and the faculty to win the essential issues will mean that a strong and united force will have been forged to go on to further gains.

The key to victory is the faculty organized into the AFT and gaining Central Labor Council sanction for the strike. The task before students and faculty is to turn the struggle on campus into a class struggle. This is the only way to win. Anything that detracts from or opposes such a strategy is a reactionary diversion.

The essential demands are quite clear. (1) OUST HAYAKAWA. (2) NO DISCIPLINARY MEASURES OR REPRISALS AGAINST ANY PARTICIPANT IN THE STRIKE BY THE STATE. (3) POLICE OFF CAMPUS IMMEDIATELY. (4) THE RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH, PRESS, ASSEMBLY AND ORGANIZATION FOR ALL TENDENCIES ON CAMPUS. (5) THE REINSTATEMENT OF GEORGE MURRAY AND ALL FACULTY THREATENED BY DISMISSAL.

It would be an illusion to think that winning these demands will end the matter. This is only the beginning. We must be prepared for continuing attacks on faculty and students rights, there will be a slashing of educational funds, social welfare benefits and the launching of attacks on the trade unions. This is unavoidable as the deepening crisis drives the bourgeoisie to the right.

It would also be an illusion to think that university autonomy from the state or an

end to police brutality or the funds necessary to really change the educational system can be won by striking the university. This is a more fundamental fight, a fight for state power.

## TENDENCIES

In this light it is necessary to investigate the role of all political tendencies on campus and their perspectives for leading the strike.

The Black Students Union and the Third World Liberation Front have posed a series of demands which are completely reformist and have played the role of muddying up, confusing and ultimately betraying the strike. The demands for a Black Studies Dept., administration, money and posts can all be met by the state without checking its reactionary march toward the destruction of the independence of the university, which is the critical issue.

It is absolutely clear that the university is scrambling as fast as it can to meet these demands, to defeat the strike and to proceed from there to the task of smashing every radical tendency on campus.

The question of rehiring George Murray is a central question. It is a clear issue of the state interfering to dump Murray for his politics. This is the fundamental issue which underneath it all has united the campus in a critical battle for four weeks, consciously or unconsciously.

It is the unconsciousness and inability to differentiate between reformist demands and a critical class issue which has led to the confusion and anarchy on campus and if unchecked will leave the way open to defeat.

In addition to the BSU & TWLF, the SWP-YSA has compounded the tendencies toward reformism, confusion and anarchy by not only tailoring the BSU-TWLF, but becoming its extremely sophisticated mouthpiece, its most eloquent spokesman. This



SAN FRANCISCO STATE STUDENTS ARE BRUTALLY CLUBBED BY COPS

major force which masquerades as a Trotskyist party, has since taken a back seat to the BSU, content to let it do the driving. The Militant goes no further than reportage in its coverage of SFSC, uncritical, in no way posing the leadership of the revolutionary party.

The other main tendency on campus, SDS-PL, has attempted to take leadership by logically following out the program of the BSU, again essentially reformist, with a major campaign against the police. On the one hand it poses a reformist struggle immediately, on the other it poses the university 'corporation' in the same realm as the factory, tries to draw analogies between the repression of the students and the workers, also posing the goal of revolution. But what it fails to do is develop a class perspective and program for class struggle on campus, based on the faculty organized into the union and a fight for Labor Council sanction. Therefore PL-SDS cannot go beyond a reformist struggle no matter what its rhetoric or analogies between workers and student struggles. It cannot develop a class perspective and therefore becomes another spokesman for anarchy and hopeless confrontations.

The last force is the faculty itself which has attempted to take leadership. Its most conscious layers have been the backbone from the beginning. However, its demands range from classroom size to the nature of the Board of

Trustees without differentiation. On the one hand, class room size can be negotiated and Hayakawa must be dumped but the essential nature of the bourgeois education system cannot be changed under capitalism, therefore it is a revolutionary demand and cannot be won at this time with a strike at SFSC. All these demands and several more are lumped together by the faculty, willy-nilly, without a perspective of priorities or a program for going forward.

Arrayed against this disarray is a formidable right wing, headed by S.I. Hayakawa, puppet of the right wing Ronald Reagan, whose strings are controlled by the right wing bourgeoisie, which will soon dance the right wing Nixon before our eyes. The stage is set.

Over and over again it is going to be made clear that only the program of the Fourth International, of the Workers League, can provide leadership for the coming struggles. Over and over, the inadequacy and bankruptcy of reformist politics is going to be made clear. Out of a fight to build the revolutionary party, that penetrates the class and turns its struggles toward political power, away from bourgeois politics, toward an independent labor party, comes an iron clad alternative to the rotting capitalist system, capable of absolute political clarity and responsible leadership. This is the answer to law and order. This is the answer to the two party system and its puppet Hayakawa.

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