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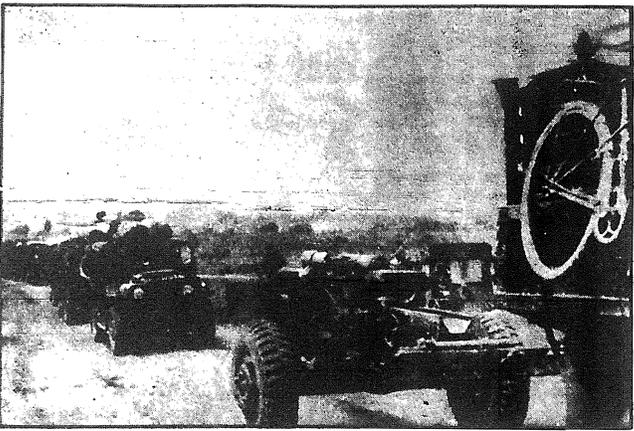
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Newspaper of the
**Revolutionary
Socialist League**

Reconstruct the Fourth International!

Vol. 2, No. 4

April 15-May 14, 1975



South Vietnamese puppet troops evacuate Central Highlands. After two decades of struggle, Vietnamese are delivering death blow to U.S. imperialism.

IMPERIALISM ON THE RUN

by Ron Taber

It is the end of the road for United States imperialism in Southeast Asia. The offensive launched by the national liberation forces in Cambodia and Vietnam at the beginning of the year has kicked all but the slenderest props out from under the puppet regimes supported and financed by the United States.

The heart of the offensive has been in South Vietnam, where the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) forces initiated a major drive last December. This offensive has already forced South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu to "abandon" the provinces of the Central Highland (Kontum, Pleiku and Darlac) and to cede Quang Tri just below the demilitarized zone, Thua Thien (containing the old imperial capital of Hue) and Binh Long (50 miles north of Saigon) to the PRG forces.

The liberation forces have swept to the coast, taking the cities of Dan Nang, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang and Cam Ranh. Fighting continues for control of the provinces in the vicinity of

Saigon and the Mekong River Delta, South Vietnam's bread basket. As of this writing, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th largest cities of the country (Da Nang, Qui Nhon and Hue) and three quarters of the territory of South Vietnam are in the hands of the PRG army.

In the face of this offensive, the Thieu regime has almost completely collapsed. Thieu decided to abandon the Central Highlands under the guise of "regrouping" his forces. In fact, his army, the ARVN, was in the final stages of disintegration. This was why his order was taken without even notifying the boss and paymaster, the United States government.

This "regroupment" turned into a rout as thousands of ARVN troops scrambled among millions of refugees to get out of the PRG-held areas. Faced with the collapse of the entire chain of command, the hysterical flight of the ARVN officers and government bureaucrats, these soldiers turned to rioting and looting, thoroughly exposing the utter decay of the entire military and political edifice of Saigon. A South Vietnamese journalist sum-

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Cambodian rebels shell Phnom Penh's Ponchentong Airport. Crushing U.S. Defeat in Cambodia has spurred on PRG forces in neighboring Vietnam.

CONFRONTATION IN PORTUGAL

by Jack Gregory

Portugal has entered into a new and decisive stage. The heroic Portuguese proletariat has foiled the right-wing generals' attempted coup of March 11, and once more placed itself on center stage in the struggle for power. Bourgeois reports notwithstanding, it was decisive action by the workers that defeated the coup, that forced nationalization of the banks and insurance companies, and that has

created momentous opportunities for revolutionary socialists to lead the struggle for power.

But at the same time, the young Portuguese proletariat, scarcely a year removed from decades of the fascist heel, retains a host of illusions in the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) and its Communist Party allies. Despite a proliferation of centrist groups, both Maoist and fake-Trotskyist, there is no revolutionary party in Portugal. And

therefore, side by side with its opportunities, the Portuguese working class faces the gravest dangers from misleaders who, consciously or not, will lead it to demise unless a vanguard party is constructed to organize the fight for socialism.

The militancy of the Portuguese workers cannot be overestimated. As we reported two months ago, the working class began a wave of strikes and demonstrations in Janu-

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Imperialism on the Run

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summed up the state of affairs succinctly: "There is nothing left, not even shame and humiliation, not even despair, not a single trace of vitality in the once 1.1 million-man army."

The collapse of the ARVN is proof of the popular nature of the PRG-led struggle. Although Thieu claimed that he was "abandoning" the Central Highlands, he had not "had" this territory for at least 10 years. Despite its claims, the Saigon government had merely controlled the key provincial cities while much of the surrounding countryside was in the hands of the liberation forces. This, and not the "flooding" of the country with North Vietnamese divisions, explains why Thieu's army melted away.

MONTAGNARDS

Thieu himself knows this, as was revealed in the following incident. The decision to flee the Central Highlands came after the PRG assault on Ban Me Thuot, the capital of Darlac province, on March 10. Thieu described this as simply the work of North Vietnamese regulars spearheaded by tank columns. Paul Leandri, a journalist working for Agence France Presse, told a different story. He quoted a South Vietnamese priest from Ban Me Thuot, who contended that the fighting was actually initiated by Montagnard tribesmen who were later joined by ethnic Vietnamese troops from the regular PRG forces.

For his "indiscretion," Leandri was called in for questioning by the Saigon police, and was "shot while attempting to escape." He had revealed the complete desertion of whatever popular base Thieu had ever had—the Montagnards had previously been ardent opponents of the NLF.

This disgusting barbarity pales only beside the plight of the refugees. Although the bourgeois press would have us believe that these two million homeless and starving people were merely fleeing out of fear of a "Red Terror," the facts are somewhat different. Although fear of the PRG forces is no doubt a factor in causing the flight of the refugees (especially of many of the city-dwellers), another cause is Thieu's scorched-earth policy. Since the PRG forces lack air cover, Thieu has been able to bomb cities taken by the PRG in order to induce people to flee. Time magazine of March 31, for example, wrote: "The refugees fled for a variety of reasons. Some may have feared that government bombing attacks would follow Communist absorption of their lands; indeed, in the months after the Paris Peace Agreement, Saigon subjected Viet Cong-held areas to frequent air raids."

HUMAN SHIELD

Whatever the weight of the various factors behind the flight of the refugees, what Thieu is trying to accomplish is clear. He wants to use millions of Vietnamese as a shield for his retreating troops and as a means to swing world public opinion to his side. This cynical ploy sums up the history of the Saigon government.

At this point, Thieu's only possible defense is to try to regroup the tattered remains of his army in the Saigon area in the hopes of holding on and provoking the direct intervention of United States troops. So far, Thieu's coastal forces have been unable to reach the Saigon area and his troops in the Mekong River Delta are pinned down by PRG forces in the area. In Saigon itself, the various loyal-oppositionist forces are making noises about getting rid of Thieu, although nobody appears to have the courage to act.

With sentiment within the U.S. increasingly against any further direct intervention, there remains little hope for the Thieu regime. Although the PRG may stop short of a final assault on Saigon, Thieu's clique at the very least will be junked, to be replaced by a regime with which the PRG will be willing to negotiate.

In Cambodia, the victories of the liberation forces

have been substantial, although not as impressive as in South Vietnam. With the belated arrival of the dry season in the beginning of January, the forces of the United National Front of Cambodia (FUNK) began an offensive which on February 19 broke the hold of puppet troops over the Mekong River, the major supply-line to the capital, Phnom Penh. The offensive also involved attacks on those provincial capitals under puppet control, such as Siem Reap, Kompong Speu and Prey Veng.

As in South Vietnam, puppet troops had to be withdrawn from these cities in order to bolster the defense of the threatened capital. With the Mekong River blockaded by the FUNK forces, the battle for the capital began. With the rest of the country virtually totally under the control of the FUNK, the siege of the capital represents the final phase of the war.

As in Vietnam, the United States-sponsored government of Cambodia and its army have been turned into dust before the offensive of the liberation forces. In the first two months of the year, the Cambodian army lost over 10,000 men, one-fifth of its total effective strength. Much of what remains of the army consists of desk soldiers and hastily trained forced conscripts.

Lon Nol, fully aware of the desperate situation of his government, fled the country. Even U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has stated that the outcome of the struggle in Cambodia can no

The final defeat of the puppet regimes will mean the achievement of substantial portions of the bourgeois-democratic revolution: the establishment of political independence, promulgation of some land reform and a certain degree of national consolidation and development.

The achievements of the liberation forces also have a broader significance. The defeat of U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia represents a victory of world-wide proportions for the workers and peasants throughout the world. This staggering blow to the policeman of the world means a weakening of its hold and an unlocking of the class struggle.

STABILIZATION

As we have noted elsewhere, the hegemony of the United States in the post World War-II period was key to the post-war stabilization of capitalism. Prosperity in the advanced capitalist nations meant the conservatism of the proletariat in these countries and a split in the international working class between these workers who either supported or did not actively oppose imperialism and the workers in the underdeveloped countries.

This split and the destruction of the revolutionary parties in the advanced countries meant that it condemned the revolts in the colonial and semi-colonial countries to isolation and the misleadership of petty bourgeois nationalist and Stalinist forces. Despite heroic efforts, the peoples of the underdeveloped countries had their socialist aspirations thwarted and their countries trapped in stagnation and underdevelopment.

After the Cold War the diplomatic side of the post-war stabilization took the form of the detente.



Refugees flee southward from Hue. Thieu is cynically using refugees' misery as a human shield for his retreating troops.

longer be in doubt. The debates within the U.S. ruling class over aid to the puppet government is only over tactics: how to surrender, how best to angle for U.S. influence in the area, how to convince the U.S.'s other client states that it won't leave them in the lurch.

U.S. IMPERIALISM DEFEATED

The successes of the FUNK and the PRG forces represent victories for the peoples of Southeast Asia. They signify colossal defeats for U.S. imperialism and a decisive turning point in the nearly 100-year struggle for the people of Southeast Asia for the liberation from the yoke of foreign invaders—French, Japanese and American.

This detente is not an "era of peace and progress" through the cooperation of the great powers, as the detente's proponents would have us think. It involved cooperation among the great powers, all right, but it was for an imperialist peace and not for progress of any kind.

The detente is in fact an agreement among the national sections of the bourgeoisie to follow the lead of U.S. imperialism in defending the status quo. This is obviously in the interest of the United States and Russia, who are the major beneficiaries of the present international balance of power. The weaker bourgeoisies are "persuaded" to support the arrangement by the larger powers. A major "argument" is that the alternative to the detente, a

return to the Cold War or a "hot" war will be much worse than the present situation.

The international political situation parallels the economic relations within the bourgeoisie. As long as the U.S. stays relatively stable, the entire international capitalist system is prevented from tumbling head-long into the pit of depression. The stability of the U.S., however, is in large part dependent upon maintaining its ability to suck blood from the rest of the world. Thus, even though the result of this "exchange" is trouble for the weaker capitalist countries, these latter fear a depression and world revolution more and are therefore persuaded to lend their grudging support to this setup.

DETENTE AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

But there is another side to this deal. The status quo on the international level takes the form of a stalemate in the struggle within the bourgeoisie. Differences are to be negotiated, not settled by force of arms. To make this arrangement work a certain maneuvering room is necessary. The class struggle must be contained. The workers and peasants must be prevented from interfering in the bourgeoisie's method of ruling the world.

Thus the United States is obligated to control its working class and keep its allies in line as its part of the bargain. And the Russians and Chinese must control their respective working-classes and keep their allies in line. As a result the Russians and Chinese have placed strong pressure on the North Vietnamese and the PRG to avoid upsetting the status quo in Vietnam and Cambodia to avoid using its positions and the weakness of the puppet regimes to force a decisive victory.

STRUGGLE HELD BACK

This pressure explains the apparent stalemate in Southeast Asia of the past two years (that is, up until the recent offensive). Willingly or otherwise, the Stalinist-led liberation forces succumbed to these strong-arm tactics. In Vietnam, for example, the PRG accepted the Paris Peace Agreement. This agreement, while removing U.S. troops from combat and providing a cease-fire called for the establishment of a coalition government, that is, a government including agents of the puppet regime in South Vietnam.

Moreover, since the signing of the Agreement in 1973 the PRG forces did not retaliate to Thieu's attacks on the liberated zones. More likely than not, they also helped police the agreement against refractory units of the PRG forces themselves. While this may have involved a maneuver to give the liberation forces time to build up their strength and to give Thieu further time to expose himself, there can be little doubt that Russian and Chinese pressure was instrumental in holding back the struggle.

It is extraordinarily difficult, however, to keep a powerful army tied closely to popular forces and faced by the daily pressure of the people, running around in circles. The internal decay of the Thieu and Lon Nol regimes, and the pressure of the long-suffering masses made it impossible to maintain the charade any longer. The offensive, most likely carried out against the wishes of the Russians and Chinese, was the result.

DETENTE IN TROUBLE

The failure of the Russians and Chinese to hold back the masses of Southeast Asia endangers the entire detente. This, the left turn of events in Portugal, plus Kissinger's fiasco in the Middle East is evoking calls for a reassessment of foreign policy within the U.S. ruling class. "After all, if the Russians won't keep their promises in Southeast Asia, what guarantees do we have that they won't break their promises elsewhere, making the whole status quo shaky." This is how the U.S. ruling class reasons.

Unless the detente can be rebuilt or some other quid pro quo established, the whole world situation will become exceptionally unstable. The overall political crisis of capitalism will be aggravated and the class struggle will be shaken from its present almost glacial-like state.

Vigorous support to the PRG and FUNK struggle is therefore in the immediate and direct



Khmer Rouge defense minister Khieu Samphan and Prince Sihanouk in 1973. Sihanouk, former ally of U.S. imperialism, will again betray the Cambodian masses.

material interests of the workers and oppressed masses of the advanced countries. The collapse of the puppet regimes and the expulsion of U.S. imperialism from all of Southeast Asia can only further the struggle against the ravages of economic crisis at home.

Workers in the U.S. must forcefully demand that this country not intervene in Southeast Asia, and that all aid be cut off to the corrupt client states. Ford and the U.S. bourgeoisie, in a last-ditch attempt to prevent utter humiliation, may decide to intervene once more to save Saigon. Ford told a San Diego news conference on April 3 that he felt "frustrated" by legal restrictions against military intervention, but it is not legalities that are preventing the intervention. It is the pressure of the American working class, which is dead set against renewed U.S. intervention. This pressure must be maintained and forcefully demonstrated, to destroy any belated attempt by U.S. imperialism to crush the Vietnamese revolution.

HISTORY OF BETRAYAL

The struggle in Southeast Asia is by no means over. The leaderships of the popular liberation movements in Vietnam and Cambodia have a long history of sellouts and betrayals. In Vietnam, for example, Ho Chi Minh, creator and inspirer of the present liberation movement, accepted the framework of French colonialism during the Popular Front period of the late thirties, limiting the Vietnamese struggle to a struggle for autonomy within the French imperialist empire.

After World War II he crowned his collaboration with the Allies by massacring the tramway workers and other sectors of the Saigon proletariat who, under the leadership of Trotskyist militants, resisted the reoccupation of Saigon by French troops. Nine years later, on the heels of the overwhelming victory of the Vietminh over the French at Dien Bien Phu, Ho acceded to Russian and Chinese pressure to accept the division of the country, the withdrawal of the Vietminh troops from the south and the de facto legitimacy of a South Vietnamese "nation" embodied in the Geneva Accords of 1954. In 1973, this scenario was repeated as the PRG signed the Paris Peace Agreement which, as noted above, provided the basis for further compromises.

SIHANOUK

In Cambodia, the story has not been different in principle. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, now the head of the Royal Cambodian Government in Exile, was not always the enemy of U.S. imperialism he pretends to be today. Until his overthrow in 1970 by Lon Nol, his former premier and chief of the army, Sihanouk sought to maneuver between U.S. imperialism and the liberation forces led by the Stalinists. In 1967, this maneuvering took the form of a turn toward the U.S. Sihanouk began to allow

U.S. troops to pursue Vietnamese National Liberation Front forces seeking refuge in Cambodian territory. Later, he allowed the Nixon administration to carry on its secret bombings of NLF supply routes and encampments inside Cambodia, going so far as to authorize Cambodian officers to pinpoint targets for B-52's.

This course paralleled the active persecution of the Khmer Rouge, the Stalinist-led insurgent movement. The present defense minister of the insurgent forces, Khieu Samphan, who had been a member of Sihanouk's government, broke with Sihanouk in 1966. Sihanouk condemned him to death along with the other present leaders of the liberation movement that Sihanouk now nominally heads.

For its part, the Khmer Rouge has displayed the same tendencies to compromise as the PRG, refusing, for example, to take Phnom Penh when it has been well within its power to do so.

SELLOUT AHEAD?

Given these histories, a new sellout is not out of the question. Despite the military situation, now overwhelmingly in favor of the liberation forces, both these leaderships shout their willingness to make further compromises. The FUNK continues to call for a coalition government, while the PRG still calls for "strict implementation" of the Paris Peace Agreement and reaffirms its commitment to a "coalition government of national reconciliation." In fact, according to PRG forces, liberated Da Nang is governed by a coalition of the PRG and a Buddhist faction called the National Force for Reconciliation and Concord (NFRCC). The NFRCC is headed by Senator Vu Van Mau, a Buddhist politician and former Foreign Minister under the late South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem.

To prevent further sellouts, motivated not by the needs of the people of Southeast Asia but in the interests of an imperialist peace, the workers and peasants must demand that the Stalinist leaderships carry through the struggle against U.S. imperialism to victory.

PROSPECTS

Despite possibilities of a sellout, the ultimate victory of the FUNK and PRG forces is almost certain. The PRG and FUNK are coalitions of Stalinist and various nationalist elements, in which the Stalinists overwhelmingly play the dominant role. Despite this control, the Stalinists are subject



Thieu: Puppet at end of his string.

to nationalist pressures from the masses, from their nationalist allies and from within their own ranks. Pressure from the Russians, Chinese and sectors of the Vietnamese Stalinists encouraging a compromise is thus met by a strong counter-pressure working toward a complete victory over the imperialist puppets and their sponsors.

In addition, compromise needs someone or something to compromise with. As long as Thieu and Lon Nol maintained even the slightest social bases and as long as U.S. aid could prop up their armies, coalition governments based on the liberation forces and the left wings of the social base of the Saigon and Phnom Penh governments could be posed. The complete and total collapse of the armies and state apparatus of these governments, however, means that there will be nothing substantial with which to

Editorials

No Troops, No 'Aid'!

As we go to press, President Ford has requested close to one billion dollars in "aid" for the puppet South Vietnam regime, \$722 million military and \$250 million "humanitarian." This is double what Ford had requested in January, and reflects a desperate last-ditch effort to salvage something from the crushing defeat being handed U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia.

Ford is packaging his proposal in the wrapping of emergency relief to stabilize the military situation temporarily while American citizens and "friendly" South Vietnamese are evacuated. He is asking for authorization to send in U.S. troops, ostensibly to

evacuate tens of thousands of Vietnamese who have been "loyal allies" of U.S. imperialism.

This latest imperialist ploy must be smashed. **Not a penny in aid for the South Vietnamese puppets!** The flimsy pretense given for sending in U.S. troops must be rejected by every American worker.

The "loyal allies" have been willing tools of U.S. imperialism in its brutal rule over the Vietnamese masses. The blood of the Vietnamese is on their hands. The "American citizens" are in large part operatives and collaborators of the CIA and military intelligence. This reactionary band deserves no mercy.

Furthermore, the American war criminals for whom Ford spills out his guts could be easily evacuated without troops and billions of dollars. Ford is trying to create an opening to send U.S. troops swarming back to Southeast Asia to fight against the Vietnamese revolution.

Workers in this country must sound a clear response to Ford's schemes immediately. At every union meeting, workers must demand that the unions take a stand against further aid to the Thieu clique. Rallies should be organized demanding that the U.S. withdraw immediately from all Southeast Asia—no aid, no intervention! These demands must be carried to the April 26 mass trade union mobilization in Washington.

The defeat of U.S. imperialism in Southeast Asia is a victory for the American working class. Ford's frenzied attempt to postpone inevitable defeat by dragging U.S. troops back into the war is a blow against the proletariat. It must be defeated.

April 26

The AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department (IUD) has called a mass rally in Washington D.C. on April 26. The demonstration, expected to draw well over 50,000 workers to the nation's capital, is being billed as an "IUD rally for jobs now." According to the IUD secretary-treasurer Jacob Clayman, the demands are "for a tax cut, release of impounded funds, public service jobs, extended unemployment benefits, etc."

The IUD demonstration is planned by the union bureaucracy as a support rally for Democratic Party politicians. Leading Democrats are slated to address the mobilization, and Clayman states that "The purpose of the rally is to impress upon the general public, the White House, and Congress, the deep anxiety which workers feel about their job security."

The bureaucrats and the Democrats are rapidly moving to recement their alliance. In the face of growing discontent and anger in the working class

over the effects of the economic crisis, both groups are attempting to throw up a liberal alternative to convince the ranks that capitalism really is capable of meeting their needs. They want to keep the struggle on an anti-Ford, rather than anti-capitalist, basis.

The Communist Party is playing its part in this strategy. On April 26, the CP-supported National Coalition to Fight Inflation and Unemployment is holding a march in Washington, which it plans to link up with the IUD demonstration. Although this group is putting forward some decent demands, such as the 30 hour week with no reduction in pay and a crash program for three million public service jobs, it too calls for reliance on "labor's Democratic friends."

The Daily World, the CP house organ, is overflowing with praise for the IUD bureaucrats and the liberal Democrats for their role in organizing April 26. It sees new "progressive forces" emerging from these time-tested class betrayers. Because George Meany does not support the demonstration ("Washington is too affluent for trade unionists") the CP is heralding a major split in the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. Actually the "split"

is a tactical disagreement, although it could develop into more in the future. But in any event, the CP only demonstrates its desire to run after any bureaucrat that poses liberal, tailing the hacks continually.

Nevertheless, the rally and the actions of all the forces participating is of tremendous significance. This is the largest labor mobilization in years; if the bureaucrats did not feel tremendous pressure from the rank and file, it would never have been called. Similarly, it is decades since the CP raised the call for the thirty hour week.

We call for the largest possible turnout on April 26, but seek to build the demonstration on a revolutionary basis. The mass mobilization will show the anger of the working class, and will demand a solution. The question is what kind of solution and how to fight for it.

The thirty hour week and a crash public works program are vital needs of the working class, as a means of providing jobs for all. But no matter how they posture, the Democrats will not win this. Capitalism cannot provide full employment.

Therefore, we call for the construction of a revolutionary labor party to represent the independent class interests of American workers. April 26 should be used to build for such class independence. It could be the point of departure for organizing work stoppages, emergency conferences, rallies and marches building to a general strike demanding full employment and full income and directed against both the Ford Administration and the Democratic Congress.

April 26 should also be the time to display the solidarity of the American working class with the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Cambodia and Vietnam. The Washington rally should be forcefully demanding no U.S. intervention in Southeast Asia, and demand rejection of Ford's requests for "emergency aid."

The bureaucrats, the Democrats and the CP want to separate the struggle at home from the international struggle. They want to confine the April 26 demonstration to a cheering squad for capitalist politicians. But revolutionaries must intervene on April 26 to demonstrate the enormous potential for independent class struggle, and to begin the construction of the revolutionary leadership needed to dislodge the class betrayers.

Sub Runs Dry

The UAW's Supplementary Unemployment Benefits fund (SUB) has been almost completely depleted, leaving hundreds of thousands of unemployed auto workers to shift for themselves.

SUB was supposed to guarantee workers on layoff 95 per cent of their regular pay. It was fool-proof, according to the Woodcock bureaucracy. But the Chrysler fund has already been exhausted, and GM's is expected to follow suit any day.

That leaves auto workers to rely on state unemployment benefits. Michigan, where most auto unemployment is concentrated, has the worst program of any of the ten leading industrial states, with "benefits" averaging 29 per cent of average income. Combined with the sky-high unemployment rate in the state, and especially in the Detroit area, jobless auto workers face disaster.

UAW members, employed and unemployed alike, cannot tolerate this! The demand for compensation at full pay for as long as unemployment lasts must be raised. The money can and should come from the auto corporations themselves. That is the only way to guarantee that auto workers will be able to keep their homes and feed their families.

This is the minimum demand to insure a decent standard of living. If the auto trusts plead poverty, workers must demand that the industry be taken out of capitalist hands—nationalization under workers' control.

To solve the national unemployment crisis, the UAW should take the lead in the trade unions to call for cutting the work week to thirty hours with no loss in pay. This is the workers' solution to guarantee full employment and decent working

conditions.

The UAW bureaucrats, of course, have a completely different approach. UAW Vice-President Doug Fraser says: "We've got to concentrate on unemployment comp," urging a lobbying campaign in the Michigan legislature. In other words, Fraser will lead a fight to increase the miserable unemployment-compensation by a few dollars a week, which will still leave unemployed workers in poverty. And rather than demanding that the auto companies put up the needed money, it will be funded through state taxation—i.e., largely at the expense of employed workers.

This is part and parcel of the general Woodcock cop-out: "We'd like to do more, but we have to realize that the auto industry runs on a very narrow profit margin. If we demand more from them, they'll be forced out of business."

Maybe so. But that only demonstrates that the miserable capitalists in auto deserve to run production no more than does the capitalist class as a whole. Woodcock and Fraser, by maintaining the sacrosanct limits of capitalism, leave unemployed auto workers defenseless.

A revolutionary leadership that does not accept these limits must be built in the UAW and in the working class as a whole. The Revolutionary Socialist League is working to build such a leadership.

We urge militant workers to immediately demand that emergency regional conferences be called to deal with the drying up of SUB and the desperate need for full employment and full pay. These conferences could be the take-off point in fighting for the kind of program outlined here, taking it to the entire labor movement, and backing it up with the organization of national work stoppages building towards a general strike against the capitalist depression.

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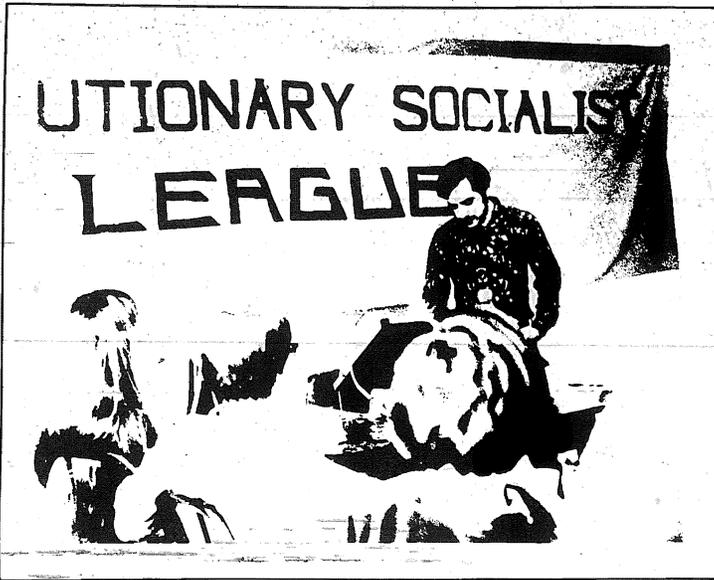
Published monthly at 13755 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, Michigan 48203.

Subscriptions: (including Mexico and Canada) 26 issues for \$3.00; supporting, \$5.00; foreign seairmail, \$4.50; foreign airmail (unsealed), \$14.00
Domestic introductory subscriptions: 6 issues for \$.50; 12 issues for \$1.00

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RSL Holds National Convention



National Secretary Ron Taber addresses Second National RSL Convention.

The Revolutionary Socialist League held its second national convention in Chicago on March 28-30. The convention marked an important step forward in the construction of the revolutionary vanguard party. The advances made by the RSL in its first year and a half of existence were seen in the political consolidation of the League and the forging of a Bolshevik cadre, ready and able to intervene in the struggles of the working class, in the theoretical consolidation of the RSL as a state capitalist tendency, and in the broadening of its international influence toward the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

When it emerged from the International Socialists, the RSL retained within its ranks a number of petty-

bourgeois elements looking for instant success, a place to maneuver, or simply a more comfortable niche. The process of politically consolidating the RSL required drawing out, exposing and eliminating these elements—the Brecht-Tracey group which hoped the League would “drift” towards its Pabloism, and the Olsen-Landau bloc which united explicit anti-Trotskyism with a passive study-group orientation.

EPOCH OF DECAY

The focal point for exposing both these groups was the RSL’s “State Capitalism and the Epoch of Imperialist Decay” resolution. This document, to be published shortly, elaborates the

League’s analysis of state capitalism as the only position consistent with Lenin and Trotsky’s understanding of the epoch of imperialist decay. The convention discussion demonstrated the League’s firm understanding of the question of state capitalism, and its central role in the reconstruction of the Fourth International.

The state capitalism resolution will be a major weapon in combating both the Pabloites who, like Tracey, maintain the possible creation of workers’ states in the absence of workers’ revolutions, and the “progressive capitalist” revisionists, like Olsen, who reject the Marxist analysis of the epoch of imperialist decay and counterpose the continued qualitative development of the productive forces in this epoch, relegating socialism to a moral “better.” Only the RSL’s analysis retains the centrality of the proletariat in determining the mode of production, and its decisive role in advancing the forces of production through the seizure of state power in its own name.

LABOR

One of the central themes of the convention was the commitment of the RSL to build a revolutionary pole of attraction within the working class movement. This means an increased emphasis on all aspects of labor work—industrialization, propaganda and participation in working class organizations. The RSL will intensify its participation in the struggles of the oppressed for democratic rights, championing such struggles and pointing to the necessary link between the fight for democratic rights and the struggle for socialist revolution.

The convention’s emphasis on labor work was seen in the time devoted to its labor fractions as well. Here, comrades involved in various industries met with other comrades working in the same areas across the country

for intensive discussion of national perspectives.

INTERNATIONAL

The convention marked an advance in the League’s international work as well. The convention was addressed by a representative of the Revolutionary Marxist Collective (RMC) of Jamaica, which is moving toward fraternal relations with the League. In addition to presenting a Marxist analysis of imperialism in the Caribbean, the comrade spoke to a wide range of issues around which discussions between the RSL and the RMC have been taking place including the Fourth International, the role of Stalinism in the underdeveloped world, and trade union tactics and the united front.

Delegates spoke to all these questions in what was a model of principled political discussion among serious revolutionaries. The League’s ability to draw serious revolutionary elements, especially from the imperialist and oppressed strata, around its banner is another major indication of the correctness of the program of the League and its organizational consolidation.

The tasks facing the League in the next period are enormous. As the stranglehold of the reformists over the international working class movement begins to weaken under the impact of the capitalist crisis, all claimants to revolutionary leadership will be tested in the fires of the class struggle. Those whose programs spell capitulation to bourgeois forces, despite their subjective revolutionism, will become outright betrayers of the working class.

The Revolutionary Socialist League, the only organization which stands on the method of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, has already begun the task of fighting for a revolutionary perspective within the working class, of winning the advanced layer to its banner, to the necessary construction of a revolutionary vanguard party, of planting the revolutionary pole internationally through combat with centrist currents. With the political consolidation of the League, the success of the second national convention, we move forward stronger than before in our work of winning the working class to its necessary tasks—socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Union Hack’s Attack Aids RSL

Adam Kwiatkowski, a Trustee of Republic Steelworkers Local 1033, USWA, and the editor of its paper, 1033 News and Views, has involuntarily aided the work of revolutionaries in his local.

He did this by devoting most of the Editor’s column in the March issue of News and Views to an attack on Revolutionary Steelworker, a local bulletin published in political solidarity with the Revolutionary Socialist League. The January issue of The Torch published excerpts from an earlier issue of Revolutionary Steelworker, which is now published in Spanish as well as English. On February 25, Kwiatkowski also saw an issue of Revolutionary Steelworker. Let him describe it: “On February 25, I was encountered by three ‘cloak and dagger’ type individuals in front of our Union Hall. They were passing out garbage literature to our members. . . . They distributed two pieces of literature with the heading of ‘Revolutionary Steelworker.’ The contents reveal-

ed the hatred they have for major union leadership and America in general.”

So far, so good for Kwiatkowski. He has raised the bogey of “outside agitators” and accused Revolutionary Steelworker of hating America. This may divert his readers’ attention from the accompanying photo of Kwiatkowski himself, looking every inch a worker in a white shirt and striped tie. But now Kwiatkowski makes a serious mistake: he actually summarizes the viewpoint of Revolutionary Steelworker. In “Brother” Kwiatkowski’s words:

“Class-collaborationists” they called the union leaders. They accused them of tying workers to the decaying Capitalist system and of standing in the way of the only solution to Capitalism’s crisis . . . its revolutionary overthrow by the working class.

They admit further, within their fabricated literature, that they want to take over the major unions to use them as a weapon in the struggle for Socialism.

A hearty vote of thanks to “Brother Kwiatkowski. We couldn’t have said it better ourselves. Kwiatkowski and his ilk are indeed obstacles to the only solution to capitalism’s crisis. Revolutionaries indeed struggle to win the unions to their viewpoint and turn them from tools of capital into weapons of revolutionary struggle. When Kwiatkowski adds, “These people hate America for what it represents,” he only reveals that to him, “America represents” the rule of capital.

Kwiatkowski is a clumsy opponent who has done Revolutionary Steelworker more good than harm by his “exposure.” Doubtless more dangerous attacks will follow. But Kwiatkowski’s attack reveals that the first few issues of Revolutionary Steelworker have already made the bureaucracy in Local 1033 afraid for their positions. Clearly, a bureaucracy which can be made so nervous by the first issues of a revolutionary publication has at best fragile ties to its membership.

A Torch Pamphlet

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JOANN LITTLE MUST BE FREED!

Joann Little, a 20-year old black woman, goes on trial for first-degree murder on April 28 in Beaufort County, North Carolina. In recent months a national defense campaign has focused on Little's case. This has led Beaufort County DA William Griffin to lament that if the trial had been held as originally scheduled last November, "We would have gotten in under the press wire—before (defense attorney Jerry) Paul had a chance to drum up his publicity forum. She would have had a fair and speedy trial . . ."

be serving a seven to ten year term for breaking and entering as a result of



Joann Little: working class must defend this victim of racist frame-up.

Defense efforts must be redoubled now. Little's case is only a particularly vivid example of the capitalist "justice" which black and working-class defendants face every day. Even without the developments leading to the murder charge, Little would today

the lack of adequate legal representation. As it is, her life is at stake.

Little was originally convicted for breaking and entering after a half-hearted defense by a lawyer who took the case just before the trial began. Little's right to an automatic appeal was lost when this same lawyer dropped the case, unknown to Little, because she could not pay further fees. In the meantime the pending breaking and entering case had become a murder case when Clarence Alligood, a white jailer, entered Little's cell with an ice-pick and, Little says, attempted to rape her.

Little stabbed Alligood, fled and later surrendered. Alligood's body was found naked from the waist down—a fact withheld by "fair trial" DA Griffin from the grand jury which brought the murder indictment. Grif-

fin's idea of "fairness" can be further gathered from the fact that after bond was set at \$115,000, and Little's supporters had raised this sum, Griffin attempted to get bond either raised or denied altogether. By these delaying tactics, Little's release on bail was held up from December to late February.

Thanks to the defense campaign it is now more difficult for Griffin to proceed with his idea of a "fair" trial. But the cards are still stacked against Little—for example, by the pretrial publicity in Beaufort County and by the fact that blacks and women are systematically underrepresented on the jury lists. Efforts are under way to challenge the jury lists and obtain a change of venue. All individuals and organizations interested in justice must rally to ensure that Joann Little be freed.

On the Run

Cont'd. from p. 3

construct a coalition.

If the U.S. does not intervene the resultant power vacuum in Saigon and the pressure of the masses will therefore make it almost certain that the PRG-FUNK forces will seize power themselves. Even if the pro-compromise forces within the liberation movement prevail over their more intransigent brothers; this will only mean that the outcome will be delayed but not prevented. If this prediction is correct, then the various coalition governments which Southeast Asia may experience in the coming months and years will be facades for the steady consolidation of power of the Vietnamese and Cambodian Stalinist parties, who hold the real power in the PRG and FUNK coalitions.

Despite the victory over U.S. imperialism that this will mean, the workers and peasants of Southeast Asia should be forewarned. The Vietnamese and Cambodian Stalinists have abso-

lutely no interest in the socialist revolution. Indeed, the genesis of Stalinism is as the gravedigger of the proletarian revolution in Russia and elsewhere. The Stalinists, at best, aim to consolidate the nation under their rule and to foster national economic development through state-capitalist methods. They will not and cannot fulfill their promises in any but a distorted way.

Despite promises of autonomy for minority peoples, this autonomy will consist of little more than minority faces in the local segments of the Stalinist governing apparatus. Despite promises of land reform, the peasants will see efforts to coerce them into some variety of collectivization from above. And despite promises of national reunification, it is still possible that this progressive goal may be sacrificed to the interests of détente.

TASKS

The tasks of the workers of South Vietnam and Cambodia are great. First and foremost, they must give full military support to the armed forces of the FUNK and the PRG helping to force a decisive defeat of the puppet forces, the liquidation of the reactionary social classes supporting them, and the complete expulsion of U.S. imperialism. At the same time, and as a necessary part of this struggle, they must form their own militias and vigilantly guard against any efforts on the part of the Stalinists to disarm them. Moreover, they must exploit the present political crisis to press their revolutionary socialist aims against the pro-capitalist aims of the petty-bourgeois nationalists and Stalinists in the FUNK and PRG.

The struggle to build a revolutionary party based on Leninist principles embodied in the Transitional Program, the Cambodian and Vietnamese sections of the reconstructed 4th International must begin at once. Since only a truly proletarian revolution, organized by such a party can bring about the complete and genuine completion of the bourgeois-democratic tasks, the construction of such a party is the indispensable precondition for the successful consummation of the struggle in Southeast Asia

today.

With this party, the proletariat can undertake the struggle to win to its side the oppressed minorities, the poor and middle peasants, and the most oppressed elements of the urban petty bourgeoisie. With this party, the revolutionary proletariat can fight to expose the pretensions of the Stalinist-led forces as the protectors of the peasants, the defenders of the oppressed minorities and the fighters for socialism. Only by coming forward as the most resolute fighters against imperialism, for



Ammunition from U.S. airlift unloaded in Cambodia. Billions in "aid" could not defeat the Cambodian Revolution.

unification of the entire Vietnamese nation, for land to the peasants and autonomy for the oppressed minorities, can the proletariat consolidate the victories won so far and move the struggle forward to the successful accomplishment of the socialist revolution.

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SECTIONS!
FOR PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION IN
VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA!**

Spartacist League: Petty-Bourgeois 'Theorists' of Black Oppression

by Chris Hudson

The race crisis raging in Boston since last autumn has put all radical organizations to the test. Some have capitulated blatantly to the racists—for example the Revolutionary Union (RU), whose slogan "People Unite to Smash the Busing Plan" merely "united" the RU and those it misled with the racists.

Most of the left, however, has capitulated to the pro-busing side in Boston—the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie and the black liberal leadership. The more "revolutionary" the dress of this capitulation, the more dangerous. The most dangerous role in Boston has been played by the centrist Spartacist League, with its slogans "Implement and Extend the Busing Plan," "Extend Busing to the Suburbs," and "A Labor-Black Defense" of the bourgeois program.

SPARTACISTS' BOURGEOIS REFORMISM

The SL has fallen hook, line and sinker for the bourgeois fraud in Boston. Their agitation in Boston and the propaganda in their press is merely the bourgeois program dressed in militant rhetoric. As the SL argues in its own defense, "while the SL poses the need to fight for better schools for all, and points to the limits of busing" (we shall see what this refers to) "we support busing, and support its extension to the middle-class suburbs, as an alternative to the racist status quo." (*Workers Vanguard*, Jan. 17, 1975)

Probably not even the SL really believes that cross-district busing would actually represent "an alternative to the racist status quo"—not even a minor reform, but a wholesale improvement for the black masses. They merely parrot this liberal lie because they are afraid to oppose the liberal bourgeoisie. Fundamentally this reflects a deep cynicism—because the SL does not see the black masses fighting for a real (revolutionary) program of black gains, it thinks the liberal bourgeoisie has to be supported "as the alternative to the racist status quo."

The SL misses the point that bourgeois reformism is just as much part of the racist status quo. It does this partially out of cynicism and despair of winning blacks to a revolutionary program, but partly because it accepts the main point of the bourgeois liberal program—integration. According to the SL, "Defense of racial integration is a principled question for Marxists." (*Workers Vanguard*, Sept. 27, 1974) The SL explains, "The Spartacist League has a consistent record of supporting racial integration. . . . The SL has opposed community control of the schools." (*WV*, Nov. 8, 1974)

So the SL did not support community control because it was a meaningless bourgeois reform, because it could not touch the real causes of black oppression, because what was needed was a

revolutionary struggle for democratic rights and the expropriation of the capitalists. No, the SL opposed it because they favored a different bourgeois reform, one just as meaningless, just as incapable of touching the real causes of black oppression and giving direction to the revolutionary aspirations of the black masses—integration.

Where the black masses since 1954 had come to see the fraudulent nature of integration, the Spartacists attempted to convince them that this was, in fact, the ideal. Where the black masses were attracted to nationalism and community control because these petty-bourgeois ideologies gave a distorted expression to their longing for social power, the SL counterposed not scientific Marxism and the Transitional Program—which could translate these longings into reality—but another bourgeois program.

This reformist methodology is no accident. The Spartacists' "mistake" on integration is part of a failure to understand the posing of democratic demands in the two epochs of capitalism—the epoch of its ascendancy and that of its decline.

EPOCH OF ASCENDANCY

In the epoch of its ascendancy, capitalism in order to win power and expand the basis of its own rule was forced to win and expand bourgeois-democratic rights. This was a real, objective tendency. For this reason, the proletariat in the first epoch struggled for its own democratic rights by supporting the liberal bourgeoisie against the feudal and landlord elements, the kings, and the church. This is in fact the strategy of the SL in

Boston—transferred from the epoch of capitalist ascendancy to that of capitalist decay.

But in the epoch of decay the objective tendency of capitalism is exactly the opposite of what it was in the first epoch. Instead of expanding democratic rights, capitalism increasingly restricts them. Instead of liberating peoples in the course of creating a world market, capitalism deepens the enslavement of peoples in the course of dividing and redividing that market. The tasks of the proletariat thus change. Where previously the proletariat had to help the liberal bourgeoisie, for example in breaking down old national boundaries, now it must struggle against this bourgeoisie. As Lenin explained in 1916, "In the period of progressive capitalism in Europe, roughly from 1848 to 1871," capitalism struggled against the old empires and created new nation-states corresponding to national populations.

Today [Lenin continues] these democratically determined frontiers are more and more being broken down by reactionary imperialist capitalism. There is every sign that imperialism will leave its successor, socialism, a heritage of less democratic frontiers, a number of annexations in Europe and in other parts of the world. Is it to be supposed that victorious socialism, restoring and implementing full democracy all along the line, will refrain from democratically demarcating state frontiers and ignore the "sympathies" of the population? ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed up," 1916)

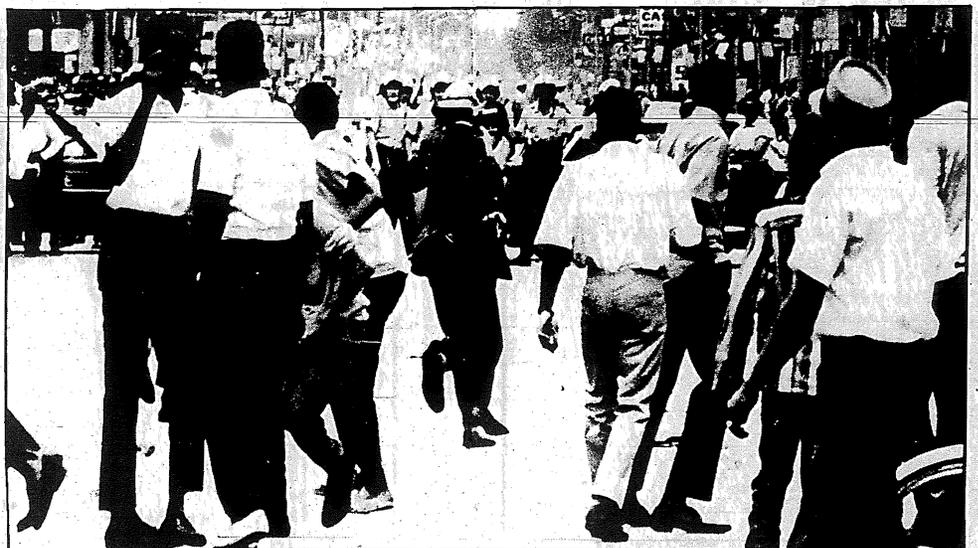
EPOCH OF DECAY

In the epoch of decay the democratic rights of the proletariat and oppressed peoples can only be realized through the socialist revolution. The Transitional Program, the world program of socialist revolution, therefore includes alongside its socialist demands the fullest and most radical democratic demands. But these demands can only be realized through the proletarian struggle for power—not by supporting the program of one section of the bourgeoisie against another.

THE SL "CRUSHES" THE TORCH

The Spartacists have recently produced two shrill polemics (*Workers Vanguard*, Jan. 17 and 31) in answer to *The Torch's* attacks on their capitulation to liberalism. The only way the SL can "criticize" our criticisms is to lie about them, but their presentation of their own position (which is only half a lie) leads to one political and theoretical error after another.

First, the SL defends itself by claiming that it "points to the limits of busing." But it doesn't care to remind its readers of what this refers to. What are these limits? That capitalism is decaying, that inner city and suburban schools are both decaying, that U.S. capitalism cannot maintain even the present rotten social services as it speeds downhill? Not at all.



Spartacist petty-bourgeois integrationism denies blacks right to self-determination. SL insists that militant blacks acquiesce to bourgeois strategy.

According to Young Spartacus (Nov.) the limits of busing are that it is confined to the inner cities instead of being spread to the suburbs. "Busing suburban students into the inner-city schools would itself result in bringing the considerable middle-class suburban vote to bear on city politicians to upgrade these schools." What a disgusting echo (from "socialists") of the demagoguery of the pro-busing liberals, who carefully conceal the fact that capitalism is decaying and tell the blacks that the cause of their misery is the "indifference" of the "middle-class suburban vote" and the "city politicians"!

In any case, why doesn't the Spartacist League follow its own logic? Even the SL knows that education is peripheral to the real roots of the social crisis. Why doesn't the SL propose and fight for a law to require half of those now living in the suburbs to move to the inner cities, to be replaced by ghetto blacks? Since discrimination in employment is central to black oppression, why doesn't the SL fight to send the whites who now have a stranglehold on the skilled trades back to the production line—or the bread line—and replace them with black production workers? All this—which would really accomplish the bourgeoisie's work of setting workers at each other's throats—is absolutely in accordance with the SL's approach to busing. Why not? We challenge the SL to say.

Because The Torch doesn't accept the SL's cover-up of busing, Workers Vanguard puffs itself up and claims that the RSL is "on the same side of the barricades as Louise Day Hicks" and "does not necessarily oppose segregation." Why then does the RSL defend the right of black students to attend the schools in South Boston and call for workers' defense guards to safeguard this right and to physically defend the black students (The Torch, Nov. and Dec., 1974)? The answer is that the SL has carefully concealed all this from its readers to avoid having to deal with it. To cover its own confusion that black democratic rights equal integration, the SL cynically argues that the RSL must be for segregation when we reject the SL's integrationist utopia!

DISTORTIONS

Similarly, the SL twists The Torch's point that the ultimate withering of national and racial divisions "may be approached by a variety of detours. Blacks may opt for separation not integration. In any case, the task of revolutionaries is to unconditionally defend the right of blacks to make this choice . . ." (The Torch, Dec. 1974) This, the SL bellows, is "warmed-over 1966 SNCC rhetoric," "contemporary 'cultural nationalism,'" a "latter-day version of the Austro-Marxist scheme of 'cultural-national autonomy.'"

There are just two things wrong with this impressive-sounding indictment. First, in order to cook it up, the SL had to end its quotations from The Torch with four dots instead of quoting the rest of the same sentence, namely: ". . . while politically struggling against both integrationism and nationalism, which both represent varieties of bourgeois ideology!"

Much more fundamentally, the SL's "indictment" shows that the SL equates the right of self-determination with "cultural-national autonomy." As we shall see, the SL opposes this right. They therefore miss the "minor" point that Lenin counterposed "cultural-national autonomy" (more or less equivalent to present-day community control of schools, which the RSL opposes) to the right of self-determination, which Lenin (like the RSL) supported.

The SL gets to their integrationist conclusion by a cheap verbal trick. They define blacks as a "specially-oppressed caste, forcibly segregated into the lowest positions" in the U.S. economy. We shall get back to the SL's misconception of caste. The point here is that by using the descriptive term "segregated" rather than a precise Marxist definition of black oppression, the SL can claim that the opposite of segregation, integration, is the solution to black oppression without ever examin-

ing this oppression in a Marxist scientific manner.

And so they do, calling for "the destruction of this caste system (i.e., the achieving of integration, of real social and economic equality)." They have not a clue (or carefully conceal the fact) that all these things which they treat as equations are actually quite different.

The SL has simply mixed the two up and reduced the struggle for social and economic equality to integration (which might be one of the components of this struggle). They have reduced the struggle for equality to the bourgeois reform demand of integration, removed from the black struggle for equality all that the bourgeoisie cannot accept, and left only what it can accept—integration.

To back up their own liberalism, the SL cites Lenin. Workers Vanguard (Jan. 17) quotes a number of Lenin's short polemical articles from 1913 and 1914 while deliberately ignoring an examination of his extended theoretical writings and the development of his position. In this shoddy way, the SL proves the not-exactly-amazing point

that Lenin opposed segregation of schools. Moreover, they say, Lenin was for the amalgamation of nationalities in his early writings on the national question. This is precisely because, examining the national question in backward semi-capitalist countries (and up till 1914 he regarded the national question as confined to the semi-developed countries), Lenin identified the assimilation of nationalities as a progressive characteristic of capitalism. This was completely in keeping with the Marxist understanding of the tasks of the proletariat in capitalism's progressive era. The SL has taken Lenin's views on developing capitalism, without examining the evolution of Lenin's thought, and repeated them in the conditions of the imperialist epoch, when capitalism's tendency to amalgamate nations is no longer progressive and liberating.

The SL has distorted even Lenin's early position. First, although an assimilationist, Lenin defended the right of self-determination, which the SL denies for blacks. Second, assimilation for Lenin never meant "integration" in the sense of compulsory national or racial balance. He called for autonomous national areas: "It is beyond doubt that in order to eliminate all national oppression it is very important to create autonomous areas, however small, with entirely homogeneous populations, towards which members of the respective nationalities scattered all over the country, or even all over the world, could gravitate." ("Critical Remarks on the National Question," CW, p. 50)

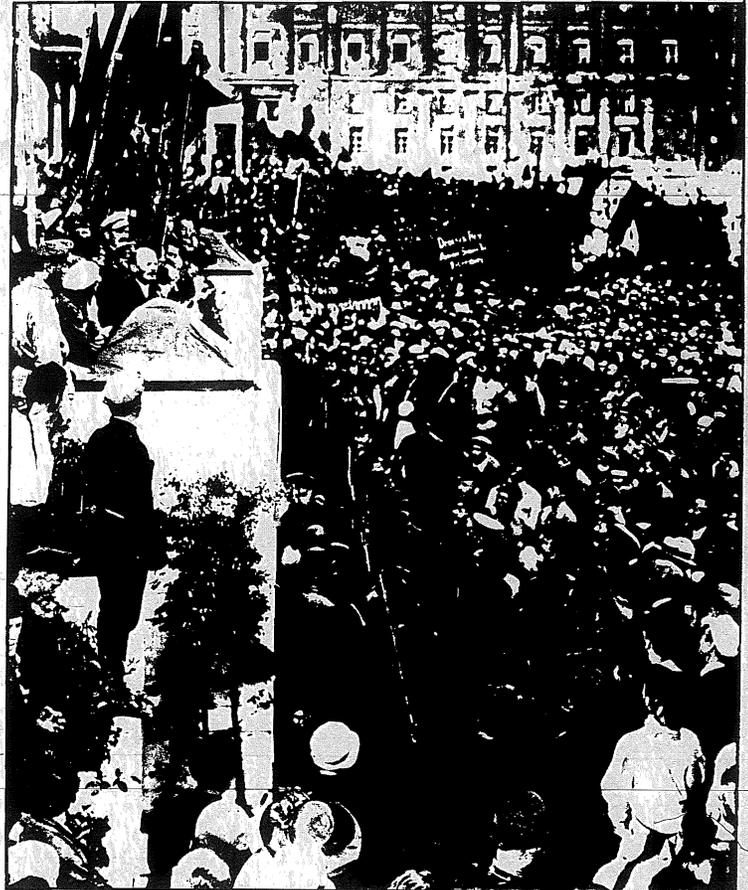
Finally, even on the narrow question of the schools, Lenin's opposition to segregation (the establishment of separate schools for each nationality) did not mean, in the bourgeois-reformist Spartacist manner, support for state programs to equalize the proportions of different races or

nationalities in each school. (This is what busing is, and all that it is.) On the contrary, Lenin called for the attendance of all students in each locality in the same schools, with instruction of minorities in their own language, history, etc. And, he pointed out, in districts with non-Russian majorities, this would mean instruction in the non-Russian languages, with minority rights for the Russian pupils ("Nationality of Pupils in Russian Schools," CW, Vol. 19, p. 533)

TAILING REFORMISM

Compare this to the SL's view that to achieve integration black students must be bused so that there are no schools with a black majority! Is it not obvious that the SL's method is that of tail-ending bourgeois reformism, whereas Lenin stood (as he often said) against every form of national oppression and for fullest democracy, without supporting the reformism of the bourgeoisie?

But the SL's distortion of Lenin reaches rock-bottom with the year 1914. The SL simply fails



Lenin speaks at ceremony marking Second World Congress of Comintern. Lenin fought consistently for right to self-determination, which the SL rejects.

to mention any of Lenin's writings on the national question written after that date! They have good reason for this. Lenin well knew that political conclusions which were progressive in one set of circumstances become reactionary in another. For this reason, when he began to formulate the political tasks of the imperialist epoch in his writings of 1914 and later, Lenin drew a sharp line against the previous view of capitalist amalgamation of nations.

Capitalism's tendency to amalgamation, progressive under developing capitalism, was now, under decaying capitalism, imperialist and reactionary. Those who continued to speak of the economic progressiveness of assimilation under imperialism Lenin called "inconsistent annexationists." Any socialist who refused to fight for the right to

self-determination, Lenin wrote in 1916, must be regarded "as a scoundrel and an imperialist." ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up," CW, Vol 22, pp. 335, 346)

In the theses on the national question written the same year, 1916, Lenin elaborated:

The aim of socialism is not only to end the division of mankind into tiny states and the isolation of nations in any form, it is not only to bring the nations closer together but to integrate them . . . (But) in the same way as mankind can arrive at the abolition of classes only through a transition period of the dictatorship of the oppressed class, it can arrive at the inevitable integration of nations only through a transition period of the complete emancipation of all oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede. (CW, Vol. 22, p. 147)

There are almost the same words (only more precisely formulated) as the sentence in *The Torch* which the SL found to contain "warmed-over SNCC rhetoric." To underline the point, Lenin wrote in commentary: "A member of an oppressor nation must be 'indifferent' to whether small nations belong to his state or to a neighbouring state, or to themselves, according to where their sympathies lie: without such 'indifference' he is not a Social-Democrat." (CW, Vol. 22, p. 347) The SL, in contrast, is very far from "indifferent."

As Lenin's view of the national question in general evolved after 1914, so did his view of the "Negro question" in the United States. In the 1916 Theses and again in the "Draft Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" prepared by Lenin four years later for the Second Congress of the Communist International, American Negroes are included along with the Irish as among "dependent and underprivileged" peoples to whom the right of self-determination applies, and to whom Communists must extend direct revolutionary aid if they should struggle for secession. (CW, Vol. 22, p. 151; Vol. 31, p. 148.) Lenin's views on this question are an embarrassment to the Spartacist League, a polemic against the SL's oppressor-nation chauvinism, so the SL simply fails to mention that they exist!

Instead, the SL lies a bit, by quoting *The Torch* on the right to self-determination and then insisting that we "call for self-determination." In its eagerness to slander the RSL and conceal our real views from their readers, the SL is happy to confuse questions that were clarified by Lenin a half-century ago! But this confusion is more than a slander. The SL's own failure to make the elementary distinction between the right to self-determination (which refers to the oppressed people's right to make a choice for or against self-determination) and calling for self-determination in the positive sense means that in arguing against self-determination, the SL takes the national-chauvinist position of denying the right of self-determination. There is simply no other way to interpret this glaring silence—the SL, politically speaking, was not born yesterday.

And since the SL denies the right of self-determination to blacks, since they are not "indifferent" but are determined that under no circumstances may U.S. blacks have a nation of their own even if they should engage in revolutionary struggle for it, the Spartacists fully deserve all the names Lenin designated for such types: scoundrels, imperialists, inconsistent annexationists.

Underlying the Spartacists' complete distortion of the Leninist viewpoint on the national question in general and the black question in particular is a basic theoretical confusion.

The Spartacists begin by lecturing us that "the theory of the permanent revolution is not about democratic rights in general but about the historical tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, a very different matter."

This one sentence shows the SL's complete misunderstanding of Marxist theory. The two questions are not "a very different matter." On the contrary, the very conception of "democratic rights in general," so confidently tossed into the argument by the SL, is a petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism. Until now, Leninists knew that all the democratic rights were posed as "historical tasks of

the bourgeois-democratic revolution," and that any attempt to separate out from these some democratic rights which existed "in general" was a petty-bourgeois attempt to raise democracy above class. The SL's position logically implies that some democratic rights are posed as new historic tasks, and they openly say this, calling these "proletarian democratic tasks."

The SL completes its error by claiming (as logically it must) that bourgeois-democratic rights are merely formal legal rights. As they put it, "When Marxists refer to bourgeois-democratic rights, they do not mean equality in general, but equality before the law."

MARXISM VS. SLISM

This is a complete distortion of Marxism. Theoretically, as Engels pointed out in *Anti-Duhring*, the idea of equality (in general, not just "before the law") derives from the conditions of commodity production. It is brought into society by the rise of the bourgeoisie. And with the end of commodity production, with the end of the exchange of labor power for wages, the idea of political and social equality will also become obsolete. The ideas of equality and all other democratic rights are historical products of the bourgeois era. This minor idea, which the SL mocks with its conception of "proletarian democratic tasks," was merely the life work of Marx and Engels and the basis of Lenin's understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Without it, no correct theory is possible.

Lenin, who regarded Engel's discussion as of primary theoretical importance, referred many times to all the democratic rights (not just "equality before the law") as posed historically by the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie. For example, in the 1916 Theses on self-determination already referred to, Lenin wrote: "In contrast to the petty-bourgeois democrats, Marx regarded every democratic right without exception not as an absolute, but as an historical expression of the struggle of the masses of the people, led by the bourgeoisie, against feudalism." (CW, Vol 22, p. 149. Emphasis added.) We wonder which "petty-bourgeois democrats" Lenin had in mind?

Similarly in the Theses on *Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*, written in 1919 as a basic statement of Communist program, Lenin stated:

The equality of citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race or nationality, which bourgeois democracy everywhere has always promised but never effected, and never could effect because of the domination of capital, is given immediate and full effect by the Soviet system, or dictatorship of the proletariat. (CW Vol. 28, p. 465)

And the 1919 program of the Bolshevik Party written under Lenin's guidance, echoed:

Bourgeois democracy through the ages proclaimed equality of persons, irrespective of religion, race or nationality and the equality of the sexes, but capitalism prevented the realization of this equality and in its imperialist stage developed race and national suppression. The Soviet Government, by being the authority of the toilers, for the first time in history, could in all spheres of life realize this equality . . .

The Spartacists have three choices. They can continue to claim that the rights promised by bourgeois democracy refer only to "equality before the law" and argue that this is all the Bolsheviks implemented. Or they can conclude that the Bolsheviks' programmatic documents are imprecise, and falsely refer to "proletarian democratic tasks" under the heading of bourgeois-democratic rights. Or they can admit that they don't know the first thing about Marxism, as proven by reference to the Marxist fundamentals.

The Spartacists' distortion of the Marxist theory of democratic rights is intended to disprove *The Torch's* application of the theory of Permanent Revolution to the black question in the United States. As we have just seen, in place of the Marxist analysis the Spartacists give us an idealist, petty-bourgeois distinction between democratic rights "in general" and the historic bourgeois-democratic tasks. Now their only problem is to dispose of Lenin and Trotsky, who did not follow them in their petty-bourgeois theorizing.

As we have seen, the SL merely shuts up about Lenin. About Trotsky, they have to fib. Since Trotsky's real views are an embarrassment to them, the SL does not mention them, but argues that "In his most careful exposition of his political world view, the Transitional Program," Trotsky mentioned the permanent revolution only in regard to backward countries.

The following are the main errors in this argument.

(1) The Transitional Program is not an exposition of a world view, but a program; it is therefore condensed and summary.

(2) It is a world program. It does not examine all political questions in all countries. It names only the main tasks. It therefore discussed permanent revolution only in regard to countries where the national and land questions are the dominant questions.—the semi-colonial and colonial countries. Because of its general character as a world program, the Transitional Program doesn't mention the black question in the United States at all. It doesn't mention the right of self-determination for blacks in the U.S. It doesn't mention the right of self-determination for nationalities in the USSR. What does the SL make of all this?

(3) Trotsky however did support the right of self-determination for blacks in the U.S., he did consider the U.S. black question as an initially democratic struggle which must become a socialist struggle to succeed, and he did express approval of the idea that "the 'self-determination' of the Negroes belongs to the question of the permanent revolution in America." He said all this in conversations with U.S. comrades on the black question, which are collected by the SWP in a pamphlet which the SL fails to mention at all!

These conversations, which the authors of the SL polemics against *The Torch* seem unaware of, are mentioned in a letter to *Workers Vanguard* (Feb. 14) by a member of the SL Central Committee who is at least literate, Reuben Samuels. Samuels leans heavily on the argument that in 1932 (when he referred to "the question of the permanent revolution in America") Trotsky's knowledge of U.S. conditions and his command of English were poor. So we are to conclude that Trotsky said "permanent revolution" as an error for the Spartacists' wretched invention, "proletarian democratic tasks"! And, since Trotsky knew much more about U.S. conditions in 1939, his discussions in that year are simply not mentioned.

But Samuels has already conceded far more than is wise from his point of view. Whether or not Trotsky knew much about blacks in the U.S. in 1932, he did know that the U.S. was an advanced capitalist country. So the SL's claim that the Permanent Revolution can only be applied to backward countries has gone right out the window after their previous theoretical insights.

What Samuels and the SL cannot face is that Trotsky, continuing Lenin's revolutionary approach, fought against the SL's point of view. He fought successfully to include the right of self-determination in the SWP's program. As Trotsky put it in 1939:

The Negroes have done everything possible to become an integral part of the United States, in a psychological as well as a political sense. We must foresee that their reaction will show its power during the revolution. They will enter with a great distrust of the whites. We must remain neutral in the matter and hold the door open for both possibilities, and promise our full support if they wish to create their own state.

Trotsky never discussed the slogan "integration." None of his followers raised it. According to the SL, not only Trotsky, but all the SWP leaders must have been highly unprincipled, since the SL insists that "defense of racial integration is a principled question." Trotsky in contrast knew that what is principled is the full rights of blacks, and

that only national chauvinists insist that full democratic rights are subordinate to integrating the oppressed with the oppressor population.

Trotsky, of course, did not reject the call for "social and economic" (and political) equality, but his insistence on adding the right to self-determination knocks the SL's insistence on the principled nature of integration into a cocked hat. Trotsky, like Lenin before him, used precisely the same "warmed over 1966 SNCC rhetoric" as the RSL. It is the RSL and not the Spartacists that stands in the tradition of the great revolutionaries.

THE BLACK CASTE

The Spartacists chide *The Torch* for "reducing the black question to a simple case of democratic rights," and counterpose that it is a question of "social and economic equality." With this argument the SL shows its ignorance of the fact that social and economic (and political!) equality are bourgeois-democratic rights. The free sale of labor power is the theoretical basis for all political, social and economic equality.

Where one person's labor power exchanges as freely as another's, that person necessarily is politically, economically and socially equal to the other. It is therefore the denial of the bourgeois-democratic right of the equal sale of labor power which is the basis for black economic, as well as social and political oppression.

The Spartacist League is forced to deny this, because to admit it would be to admit the basis of the RSL's understanding of black oppression. Their theory of blacks as an "economic caste" is therefore no theory at all, but a hodge-podge. Blacks, the SL says, are "an economic caste concentrated in the industrial reserve army—the most marginal, lowest levels of the proletariat—and in the lumpen population."

This is all the definition the SL gives. This description, however, cannot explain the seemingly contradictory facts about blacks in the U.S.: that they are economically marginal but at the same time central to basic production; that they are overwhelmingly members of the proletariat and masses, but that the small black petty bourgeoisie and middle class play a disproportionately major role in black political life. These facts cannot be understood without understanding that black oppression consists of the denial of bourgeois-democratic rights, first and foremost the right of the equal sale of labor power. Finally, the SL never discusses the super-exploitation of black labor power which would raise the forbidden question of bourgeois-democratic rights. (Or does the SL wish to claim that the equal sale of labor power is a "proletarian democratic right?")

So instead of an analysis of black oppression, the SL gives it a label, "economic caste." The label explains nothing, but does satisfy the SL's desperate desire to deny any aspect of a democratic question.

SL HAS NO THEORY

Though they search everywhere for analogies, the SL has no theory. They argue (and this is a first among Marxists) that the U.S. Civil War did not have to lead to the freeing of the slaves—according to the SL, the outcome of revolution is decided not by the dynamics of struggle, but in advance by the intentions of the leaders! They accuse *The Torch* of "writing a lengthy article on the 'permanent revolution' without once mentioning the peasant question." According to the SL, the denial of land to blacks in the South after the Civil War must have been a "land question" and not a "peasant question." And most ludicrously, the SL states that Chris Hudson "recognizes" the "betrayal of bourgeois democratic rights" and "arrest of the bourgeois-democratic revolution" after the Civil War!

No, "Marxists" of the SL, Chris Hudson did not "recognize" this. He made it a key part of the analysis of black oppression as the denial of bourgeois-democratic rights to blacks. It is the SL which is in the absurd position of "recognizing" the failure of blacks to gain bourgeois-democratic rights and then turning around and denying that black

oppression is related to this! As Lenin once wrote against a particularly thick-headed bourgeois commentator, the Spartacist League is "lost in a wood of three trees."

EPOCH OF DECAY

The Spartacists have placed themselves in the hopelessly ridiculous position of arguing that blacks failed to gain bourgeois-democratic rights a century ago, but that this has nothing to do with their oppression today. They cut the Gordian knot in an absurdly literal manner: they literally separate the black oppression of yesterday from that of today.

The current oppression of blacks in the U.S. is neither a remnant of some previous historical epoch, nor is it any kind of national question . . . (It) is a product of this epoch of imperialist decay.

The SL closes its eyes to the obvious fact that black oppression has been constant throughout U.S. history—repeatedly changing in form, but always the status of an oppressed population within U.S. capitalism. We now have the discovery of the "current" oppression of blacks!!!

Worst of all, the SL ignores the fact that capitalism does not choose between "remnants" of previous epochs and oppression produced by the epoch of decay. This absurdity reflects only the Spartacists' illusion that the bourgeois-democratic revolution in the United States actually conquered all the bourgeois-democratic rights. But as Marx and Lenin and Trotsky understood, the bourgeoisie which begins by fighting for the universal rights of humanity against feudal restrictions never conquers these rights for all, and in its death agony leans more and more on the "remnants" of previous epochs, as well as on new forms of oppression.

NATIONAL CHAUVINISM

The SL's theory is eclectic and petty-bourgeois; so is their program. But it is not really correct to say that their petty-bourgeois program flows from their petty-bourgeois theory. Both simply snatch up petty-bourgeois theory. Both simply snatch up whatever facts, half-truths and lies are at hand. The program flows from a much more fundamental source. This is the SL's national-chauvinism, their identification with the "civilized" culture of the oppressor caste in the United States, which is a reflection of their fundamental adaptation to the labor aristocracy in the United States.

This national chauvinism is visible in their insistence that integration will save the black masses from "lumpenization," which fundamentally means that the culture of the white (and black) middle class is seen as a civilizing influence. It is visible, as *The Torch* pointed out previously, in their defense of the legitimacy of the bourgeois state restricting the right of free immigration—a position Lenin, in 1907, condemned as reflecting the "trade union exclusiveness" of the opportunist labor aristocracy. But the SL's national chauvinism is most starkly seen in their position on black self-determination.

The Spartacists categorically deny the right of self-determination even should a self-determination struggle arise on the part of blacks threatened with fascist extermination. In place of the revolutionary logic of making an alliance with more backward strata struggling for a democratic conquest, even if that represents a detour from the socialist program (as with peasant demands for land) the SL offers the shopkeepers' logic that black self-determination is "either impossible or reactionary."

This position they justify with two references to Zionism. First, the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine by European settlers on land stolen from the Arab inhabitants is equated by the SL with the demand for state independence for black areas of the United States! Nothing could better illustrate—negatively—Lenin's warning that "the division of nations into oppressor and oppressed (is) basic, significant and inevitable under capitalism." (Theses, 1916, CW, Vol. 22, p. 147)

A separate black state, should blacks struggle for it in a revolutionary manner, must be denied, because this would mean "displacing and oppressing some other people." It would be "a settler

colony," if you please! It has escaped the Spartacists that if Israel were the creation of an historically oppressed population of the Middle East in struggle against their oppressors—if Israel were not objectively a European colonial intrusion in the Middle East—Israel would not be a "a settler colony" and revolutionary Marxists would defend its existence, even if Arab (oppressors) were displaced in the process. The SL's position represents not Leninism but the Kautskian "petty bourgeois, opportunist utopia" against which Lenin warned. Self-determination, you see, must not displace "some other people."

There is no need for the SL to be so coy. "Some other people" is merely a shamefaced way of arguing that black self-determination would "displace and oppress" whites. The SL is afraid of the possible future oppression of today's oppressor caste. In contrast to the wretched white chauvinists of the SL, Trotsky in 1932 warned, "We do not need today to break our heads over a possibility that sometime the whites will be suppressed by the Negroes." The SL is breaking its head over precisely this "possibility."

Second, the SL refers to the demand of the Trotskyists in the 1930's for free immigration of Jews to the countries of the world. But this demand was advanced concretely to counter Zionism's avoidance of struggle against the exclusionism of nearly all countries. Stripping the demand of its revolutionary content, the SL applies it to the U.S. in an absolutely reactionary way: in place of recognizing the right of blacks who were already struggling for a separate state to achieve such a state, the SL poses "open global immigration for a minority facing racial terror." In short, blacks will not be allowed a state of their own—in the U.S. or anywhere else. The Spartacists are not "indifferent" about this. But blacks will be allowed to leave the United States and form minorities in several different countries.

SL VS. SL

The Spartacist League has just finished opposing the right of free immigration; now it defends the same right. Apparently, the SL's chauvinist positions are elbowing each other aside. But in reality they are consistent. The SL opposes free immigration of Mexicans into the white United States. It supports free emigration of blacks from the white United States. The two positions are identical. But they are not Marxist, revolutionary or even democratic. They represent shameless U.S.-national chauvinism.

Stripped of the rhetoric of "free" emigration, the SL's position amounts to forced dispersal of the blacks. Either racist terror—or pack up and go to England, France and Germany: that is how the SL poses the question. (Except that the SL would be more likely to pose Honduras, Albania and Iraq.) In reality the SL's "solution" to black oppression in conditions of totalitarian terror is the dispersal of the black race.

But this is also the inner meaning of their present liberal integrationism. Underneath the Marxist cover, it is the old liberal hope that the troublesome blacks can melt into the middle class and go away. It is not only a utopian hope, but a reactionary one.

The democratic rights of blacks do not mean, as the SL thinks, on the one hand mere legal equality, or on the other, support for a liberal social-engineering program. They are the rights to go to school anywhere, to hold any job whatever, to live in any area whatever, as part of any state whatever, to be free from all social harassment and indignity. This is the only Leninist understanding of these rights. It is not the RSL, but the SL which "reduces" the black question to legal rights, for the only content of being is a formal, legal equality which poses no actual democratic gains.

Busing is a specific bourgeois proposal for implementing a specific bourgeois program—integration—which bears a changing relationship to black bourgeois democratic rights. Therefore it is not integration which is principled for Leninists, but opposition to race oppression and support for these democratic rights—rights which can only be gained through the Permanent Revolution, placing the proletariat in power and carrying out the delayed bourgeois-democratic tasks.

Revolutionist Faces Death Sentence

Free Desmond Trotter

Desmond Trotter, a revolutionary leader on the Caribbean island of Dominica, has lost his appeal against trumped-up murder charges and faces death unless his sentence is overturned by appeal to the British Privy Council.

Trotter is a major leader of the Movement for a New Dominica (MND). Since Dominica is officially not a British colony but an "associated state" within the British Commonwealth, British officials have a perfect excuse for not intervening against the bloody repression practiced by their servants in the ruling "Dominican Labor Party."

In reality, Dominica is totally dominated by British and European imperialism, and ruled in their interests. In its plantation economy, which produces bananas, limes, cocoa, copra and other products for foreign consumption, 60 per cent of the cultivated land is controlled by ten families and corporations—the latter mainly foreign-owned. British banks like Barclays help the foreign combines control the economy. By official figures, 60 per cent of the population are unemployed.

BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

Behind the attempt to railroad Desmond Trotter to his death stand years of rising unrest. Since 1968, a Black Power movement centered on educated but unemployed or underemployed Dominican youth has provided one strand in this unrest. Trotter, employed as a civil servant until fired in the course of government harassment, typifies and is the outstanding leader of this movement. Although the MND is nationalist and strongly influenced by the Rastafarian religious cult, it does have an analysis of Dominica's imperialist exploitation and demands for the nationalization of banks and insurance companies and the common ownership of land.

The MND has acquired greater significance, and been pushed further in its analysis of Dominican capitalism, by a second strand of unrest—the

revolt of agricultural and other workers in the last several years. In mid-1972, a mass strike by agricultural laborers and attempted expropriation of the Castle Bruce plantation, owned by the British-based multinational Commonwealth Development Corporation, was brutally suppressed by the ruling party. A year later, an economic strike by civil service employees flared into a nation-

al general strike before being suppressed. These outbreaks were supported and aided by the MND, which thereby became the government's chief target.

Yet a third strand of unrest emerged with the appearance of the "Dreads," an unorganized youth movement labelled by the government as "black power guerrillas." Accused of the responsibility for attacks on North



Workers in Dominica are forced to labor under brutal conditions on foreign-owned estates.

American tourists, the Dreads provided the excuse for wholesale government repression. Under the "anti-Dread" laws passed last year, "members" of the Dreads are liable to be shot on sight. Anyone wearing the hair style and dress typical of the Dreads can be arrested without warrant or bail.

The "anti-Dread" laws also provide for banning other organizations, and under their provisions the MND has been banned and its leaders arrested. Protest against the laws has been widespread throughout the Caribbean. A solidarity message from the Revolutionary Marxist Collective of Jamaica asks:

Who does "law, and order and public safety" serve? Does it not serve the minority? Does not law and order mean continued exploitation for the working people? This is what the Act is about and that is the strategy of the ruling capitalist class everywhere in this crisis of capitalism: to try to curb the rights of the working people and to brutally crush their organizations and representatives.

The "case" against Desmond Trotter stems from the murder of an elderly U.S. tourist, John Jirasek, during Carnival week in February, 1974. In the wake of widespread disturbances during Carnival week and a later riot of agricultural workers in the town of Grandbay, supported by the MND, the government pinned Jirasek's murder on Trotter. The trial of Trotter and a co-defendant (also an MND leader, who was acquitted) was marked by police harassment of defense lawyers, the court's refusal to hear major defense witnesses, and a government case based largely on a "witness" who had already repudiated the "testimony" forced from her by the police. The blatantly biased judges and the ruling-class jury secured conviction and sentenced Trotter to hang last November.

In March Trotter's appeal was denied on the nearby island of Antigua, where the judges had fled in justified fear of popular indignation when they predictably upheld the death sentence. Meanwhile the persecution of the MND and others under the "anti-Dread" laws continues.

Desmond Trotter must not hang! Support and contributions may be sent to the U.S. support organization, Dominicans In Support of Progress, care of The Torch.

RU Cowardice Grows

The Revolutionary Union (RU) demonstrated its political cowardice again, this time in Detroit on April 6. Once more, the RU resorted to goon tactics in an attempt to shield its ranks from the revolutionary politics of the Revolutionary Socialist League.

The Revolutionary Student Brigade (the RU's youth group) and the Vietnam Veterans Against the War-Winter Soldier Organization had called a counterdemonstration protesting a Detroit Bicentennial Committee-organized parade celebrating the 200th anniversary of the U.S. imperialist army. When an RSL contingent arrived to join the RSB protest, we were told that we could only participate if we agreed to abandon our slogans, remove our banners and not sell *The Torch*. In other words, we were told that we could participate as long as we renounced our political

independence and agreed to hide our politics.

A short verbal exchange took place, in which the RU-RSB leadership could not agree among themselves about what was wrong with our slogans ("Victory to the PRG," "Workers' Revolution in Southeast," "Down With the Imperialist Army, For a Workers' Militia"). Failing at this, they resorted to their customary hooligan tactics, sending in their goon squad to attack the RSL contingent.

Although outnumbered, the RSL fought the RU goons. We left only when the cops arrived on the scene, to avoid giving the state an excuse to break up the demonstration. Independent participants, stating their disgust at the RU's exclusion of the RSL, left the demonstration.

The RU's actions in Detroit con-

tinue a national exclusionary campaign which includes the brutal beating of RSL leader Sandy Young by RU thugs who broke into her home (see *Torch* Vol. 2, No. 2) and more recently physical exclusion of the Spartacist League from RU demonstrations in Ann Arbor and New York, as well as attacks on members of the Progressive Labor Party. The RU, unable to argue for its politics, is trying to make sure that nobody gets close enough to expose them.

The RU has a double standard—when it wants to intervene someplace, it is the most ardent advocate of the united front; when others want to intervene at its demonstrations and forums, it imposes Stalinist tactics.

For example, the April, 1974 issue of *Revolution* (the RU's national newspaper) put forward one notion of the united front in the course of a struggle with the October League on slogans for an International Women's Day rally in Chicago:

In the discussion, the RU representative again emphasized that while the RU supported the overall thrust of the march, wanted to participate and help mobilize for it and would not raise banners or chants against the ERA, we felt strongly that all groups (not only the RU), must have the freedom to put out their independent views about one or more of the demands, if in fact they disagreed with them.

But in Detroit, the RSL was denied its right to "put out its independent views." The RU wept crocodile tears over the violation of the Leninist united front at last year's Chicago demonstrations. But when it is in the driver's seat, it has no compunctions about throwing Lenin out the window.

The hypocritical and cowardly campaign of the RU must be defeated. We call upon all tendencies in the workers' movement, including individual members of the RU, to reject the terror tactics of the RU leadership and to unite in smashing the right-wing tuggery of the RU.

Confrontation In Portugal

Cont'd. from p. 1

uary that demonstrated the existence of a layer of militants breaking beyond the limits of the CP and SP. Demonstrators encircled assemblies of the right-wing Social Democratic Center and Christian Democratic parties, resulting in bloody confrontations with police and paratroops. Wildcat strike actions increased sharply, many led by centrist groups such as the Maoist Movement for the Reorganization of the Portuguese Proletariat (MRPP) and the Mandeliste International Communist League (LCI).

The leftward direction of the proletariat was further demonstrated in a series of defeats dealt to CP candidates in trade union elections at the hands of centrists; most notable of these was the defeat of the CP by the Maoist Workers and Peasants Alliance (AOC) for control of the crucial Lisbon Chemical Workers Union days before the abortive coup.

In early March, the class struggle was spilling over the boundaries which the ruling coalition wished to assign it. Just prior to the coup, well over 100 plants were hit by wildcats as militants continued to move beyond the CP. And on March 7, in Setúbal, a demonstration led by what the bourgeois press terms "the extreme left" (i.e., centrist groups to the left of the CP), called to protest the bourgeois Popular Democrats (PPD), erupted into violence as security police opened fire on the demonstrators.

The political situation polarized rapidly. Rumors circulated in Lisbon of an imminent right-wing power play, and the weekly *Expresso* hinted that hard-core veterans in the Portuguese army were becoming disgusted at the political and economic turmoil and were preparing to intervene.

FRIGHTENED GENERALS

The rightist generals, then, were spurred to action by fear of the increasing combativity of the workers. They interpreted MFA elections which took place just prior to the coup attempt as an indication of widespread support for their move in the army. In these elections, the left-wing officers suffered heavy losses, losing three seats on the Coordinating Committee.

The CP, meanwhile, did its best to dampen the militancy of the rank and file. CP leader Alvaro Cunhal escalated his attacks on the "extreme left," calling it "pseudo-revolutionary leftists" who were "providing a pretext for a counter-revolutionary offensive."

The conjuncture seemed ripe for a coup. The army seemed to be swinging over to the right. The CP was trying to actively restrain the more advanced workers. The authority of the ruling coalition seemed to be fading.

THE COUP

But the coup was easily defeated. Paratroops from Tancos airbase sent to attack the left-wing Light Artillery Regiment No. 1 were quickly dissuaded when they met with the determined opposition of soldiers and civilians. Vigilante groups mobilized by the CP appeared. Major demonstrations were rapidly organized. In Porto, the second largest city, the CP-dominated trade union federation, Intersindical, issued an immediate call for a general strike. The headquarters of the major bourgeois parties—the Social Democratic Center, the Christian Democrats and the Popular Democrats—were attacked.

The mobilization of the workers and their collaboration with the army ranks convinced wavering officers that it would be folly to throw their lot in with the putschists. First and foremost, it was the strength of the working class that was responsible for the ease with which the right-wing was routed.

In the aftermath of March 11, Portuguese workers gained new self-confidence. Bank workers mobilized to force the closing of the banks and

forced through nationalization of the banks and insurance companies. Plant occupations increased sharply. The demand for nationalization spread to workers in other sectors, such as postal and transport, and in some areas is now being coupled with the call for workers' control.

But the Portuguese bourgeoisie has not been decisively defeated. Imperialism has not been routed. In the wake of the coup, the MFA moved to assure the bourgeoisie that it would not lay hands on foreign investment. On April 8 it announced that while it would no longer allow the U.S. to use the Azores military base to aid Israel (the Azores had been a major staging ground for the October war), it would continue to honor its commitments to NATO. General Vasco de Goncalves, the "leftist" Premier, continues to evade comment as to whether the former bankers will be compensated for the

prestige was heightened among less advanced sectors by its role in mobilizing opposition to the rightist move, by its call for a general strike in Porto and its organizing of vigilante squads. The CP has also been able to bathe in glory from the nationalization of the banks and insurance companies, and from Premier Goncalves pronouncements that Portugal now has "a socialist government."

CP'S LEFT POSE

The CP did indeed play a more militant role on March 11 than is customary. It was forced to do so. The leftward move of the proletariat has forced the CP to itself strike a more radical pose in order to prevent massive deflections to the "extreme left." For example, the nationalization of the banks is a



Portuguese masses lay siege to headquarters of right wing plotters. Immediate response of Portuguese workers decisively smashed the March 11 coup.

nationalizations. And the bourgeoisie, domestic and foreign, continues to control the key sectors of Portuguese industry.

Where is Portugal going? The question is a riddle for bourgeois observers. Is it heading for Stalinist state-capitalism through the MFA-CP coalition? Is it headed for tragedy on the scale of Chile, with the right-wing reaction drowning the workers in a sea of blood? Will it stabilize into some form of Bonapartism along the lines of the Peruvian junta? Or will the workers come to power through the socialist revolution?

None of these questions can be answered in the abstract, which is the problem facing the bourgeois press. They continue to ignore the proletariat as the central factor. Before the March 11 coup, for example, the reactionary British publication, *The Economist*, was covertly counseling the right-wingers to move. Following the March 11 rout, it condemned the "foolish coup" for pushing Portugal further left. *The Economist* was reminded of the power of the masses only when the masses demonstrated it in practice.

So too today, class forces must be examined in the concrete. While the left-moving consciousness of the proletariat was accelerated by the March 11 victory, the CP remains the dominant workers party. It continues to control Intersindical. Its

step that Allende never took in Chile. But in Portugal, the pressure from the working class has been so great that even the American-oriented Socialist Party and the bourgeois Popular Democrats were softly murmuring about the need for this measure.

Given this militancy, the CP virtually had to move rapidly on March 11. The workers were demanding a response; the rank and file soldiers were not moving to the side of the rightists. Further, an aspect of self-preservation was involved. Victory for the right would have meant severe repression against the CP, including its leadership. And on the level at which the encounter took place, where the workers did not have to take on the bulk of the army, the CP was able to muster a response.

NO ILLUSIONS!

But there should be no illusions about the role that the CP will play, either in the immediate period or in the long term. The CP, together with the MFA "leftists," has moved in the aftermath of the coup to strengthen its hold over the proletariat and to increase discipline. The CP is now in a position to begin to act on its warnings to the "extreme left." The MFA left is more able to turn against the "disruptive forces" it blames for its losses to the

right just prior to the coup.

And so the MFA-CP coalition is embarking upon a consolidation of power aimed at least as much at the left as the far right. Following the coup, a new cabinet was formed in which the weight of the CP has increased dramatically. The MDP, a CP front group, has been brought in and given equal say with the other political parties (the CP, SP and Popular Democrats). SP leader Mario Soares has been replaced as foreign minister by MFA Major Melo Antunes. CPers have been given far more authority in commissions controlling the economy and the media.

The new coalition has used its power to arrest hundreds of overt right-wingers. It had to, with



Vigilante groups organized by trade unions take to streets to repel rightist elements.



Lisbon bank workers demand nationalization. Workers' control and no compensation is necessary to prevent the nationalizations from being used against the proletariat.

popular sentiment demanding death to everyone associated with the March 11 coup. It has banned the right-wing Christian Democrats from participation in the elections, twice-postponed and now scheduled for April 25.

LEFT WING UNDER FIRE

But the left has also been attacked. Several of the AOC members who defeated the CP for leadership of the Lisbon Chemical Workers Union have been arrested on trumped-up charges. Both the MRPP

and the AOC have been banned from participation in the up-coming elections. It is significant that these are the only two "extreme left" groups of any substance that refuse to urge a vote for CP candidates where they themselves are not running. The CP fears that a sizeable number of workers will vote for groups to the left of it, and is seeking to build up its strength at the expense of the two groups that most clearly won't play by the rules.

These are the opening guns of what will be a generalized attack against the left. This is how the CP will aid its military friends in their efforts to attain "stability." This is how the CP will seek to secure its hold on the proletariat—by smashing all forces to its left. In the coming months, a confrontation between the MFA-CP ruling clique and the "extreme left" looms.

For this campaign to succeed, the militancy of the proletariat must be crushed. For months, Cunhal has railed against "disruptive elements" endangering the "democratic stage." The MFA wants order, and there is no doubt that proletarian upheavals are "disruptive." Therefore, to preserve its coalition, the CP must crush the left wing.

The emerging rank and file leaders of the Portuguese proletariat are to the left of the CP, as demonstrated by the wildcat surge just prior to March 11. To attain its desired end, the CP must destroy this layer. If successful, it will destroy the force that has driven the bourgeoisie and the army to make concessions steadily for the past year. It will destroy the militancy of the proletariat that was the force behind the defeat of Spínola's right-wing mobilization of September 28, and that made the rout of March 11 possible. It will disarm the proletariat and make it prey to a right-wing bloodbath.

The CP, in other words, is taking on the role of muzzling the proletariat while the bourgeoisie seeks time to organize its forces. Even the seemingly radical nationalization of the banks and insurance companies must be viewed in this context. As we reported two months ago, the Portuguese economy is in severe crisis. Unemployment has passed 200,000 and inflation has hit 41 per cent in Lisbon. Portuguese capitalism is more backward than the rest of Europe, and is in severe need of rationalization. Centralization through nationalization is a measure that the bourgeoisie does not like, but one that may be necessary for other private firms to survive. One sector has been sacrificed in the attempt to save others.

That is why the SP and the Popular Democrats supported the nationalizations.

At the same time, for capitalist production to run efficiently, the proletariat must be contained. its wages and hours must be kept within certain bounds. it must be forced to labor "productively." How can the militant Portuguese workers be forced to submit

to this?

One way is to convince the working class that it is working in its own interest, that it is constructing socialism. This is exactly what Premier Goncalves' assertions that Portugal is socialist are intended to do. This is precisely how the MFA and the CP wish to have nationalization interpreted. They hope to step up the exploitation of the proletariat by convincing workers that they are not being exploited at all. They hope to be in position to attack left-wingers who protest as "counter-revolutionary elements" preventing the construction of

socialism.

To create "stability," to check worker militancy, to curb the growing strength of the "extreme left," the MFA-CP alliance is moving in a Bonapartist direction under the cover of the term "socialism." The banning of the MRPP and AOC were initial steps. Following this, the MFA ordered leaders of all political parties to sign a "pact" guaranteeing that decisive power would remain in the hands of the military's High Council of the Revolution. Premier Congalves has repeatedly cautioned that no matter what happens in the April 25 elections, the ruling coalition will not be altered; it will not heed the elections. After all, changing the cabinet would upset "stability."

BONAPARTIST SOCIALISM

On April 10, the Bonapartist path was made explicit by the Minister of Information, Comdr. Jorge Correia Jesuino. He expressed the MFA's "dissatisfaction" with all political parties, and stated that "it was probably a mistake to allow parties to be formed after April 25" (1974, the day when the Caetano regime was overthrown). He went on to indicate that the MFA now leans toward the establishment of a single mass party representing the armed forces, with all other parties banned: "We do not yet have a political party that represents the real interests of the population . . . We have a feeling that the political parties' aim is power and that they are interested in fighting each other, whereas the main aim should be in fighting for collective happiness."

Jesuino was echoing a refrain of Admiral António Rosa Coutinho, who two days earlier stated that "It is necessary to create a political party that comprises the forces that have up to now supported the armed forces." Jesuino made it clear that there was only one political party that the MFA was pleased with—the CP.

ROCKY FUTURE

The MFA is trying to rapidly consolidate left military rule. Because of the militancy of the proletariat, it must include the CP in the ruling clique in order to convince the proletariat that they have major voice in the government. But this left-Bonapartism has a rocky future. It is faced on one side with the militant Portuguese working class. On the other is the threat of rightist reaction.

In the deepening international economic crisis, it is doubtful that backward Portuguese capitalism can maintain stability. This is especially true since many multinational corporations have withdrawn capital from Portugal since the defeat of the right-wing coup. In crisis conditions, polarization will continue and indeed accelerate. Sectors of the army will once more opt for a right-wing solution to "solve" the crisis, while the Portuguese proletariat will find increased unemployment and mounting inflation difficult to swallow. Decisive confrontations loom.

There is, of course, the possibility that the MFA-CP alliance will be able to gradually nationalize more and more of the country's industry, break with NATO over time and align with the Stalinist bloc. But this eventuality is remote. The gradualist course being pursued by the CP will allow the bourgeoisie to take advantage of mounting economic chaos to make another move—Goncalves has repeatedly warned that the March 11 coup will not be the last attempt, and he is undoubtedly correct.

CHILE

The CP's line, stated by Cunhal, that the "revolutionary axis" is a "permanent alliance" between the CP and the MFA is disastrous. When right wing officers gain strength in the MFA more decisively than they did prior to March 11, the CP will have led the proletariat to the slaughter, by leading the working class to rely on the army rather than on workers' militias, just as in Chile it leaned upon the "democratic heritage" of the armed forces.

Therefore, in the immediate period, the likely path of development is a left Bonapartist

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KURDS SMASHED IN MIDEAST POWER STRUGGLE



by Sandy Young

The decades-long national liberation struggle of the Iraqi Kurds has received a brutal and crushing blow. In the face of withdrawal of all military support from Iran, and the promise of the Iraqi government to completely annihilate the rebel movement, Kurdish military forces have collapsed, and most have fled to Iran. The Iraq-Iran accord, which was concluded in Algiers on March 5 and laid the basis for the defeat of the Kurds, highlights the political dynamics of the Mideast. In the struggle against western and Soviet imperialism, the struggle for a larger share of international power, the Arab bourgeoisies have established a junior imperialism of their own. Under the phony cover of Pan-Arabism, designed to deflect the sentiments of the Arab masses against their bourgeois exploiters, small weak nations like Kurdistan are trampled and thrown to

Kurds, a non-Arab Moslem people who still lead a semi-nomadic, tribal existence, occupy parts of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Syria and the Soviet Union. The two million Kurds in Iraq constitute over one quarter of that country's population. Although a well-defined nation geographically and culturally, one of the oldest of the world, the Kurds have never achieved national independence.

In the post-World War I independence struggles in the Mideast, Kurdistan received a promise of immediate autonomy in the Treaty of Sévres in 1920. The Kurds, however, did not have the strength to enforce this agreement, and it was dropped almost immediately. In 1943, a major Kurdish rising took place in Iraq, under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani, recently deposed and exiled leader of the Kurdish forces. In the aftermath of this unsuccessful rising, Barzani and his forces moved into

ist Party, and the withdrawal of support to the Kurdish Republic by the Soviet Union and its subsequent collapse in 1945, all served to completely disarm and demoralize the Kurdish liberation movement for over a decade.

The Iraqi revolution of 1958, which brought the pro-Soviet Karim Kassem to power, appeared to offer renewed hope to the Iraqi Kurds. KDP leaders returned from exile and began negotiations with the Kassem government. The Iraqi Communist party, which always had a relatively high percentage of Kurdish members, initially supported self-determination for Kurdistan.

But the Soviet Union, attempting to maintain its influence over the unpredictable Kassem, again completely betrayed the Kurdish masses, giving covert support to Kassem in smashing the 1961 Kurdish uprising. The KDP had taken over several cities in Northern Iraq—Iraqi troops responded by bombing Kurdish villages. The Kurdish rising was not even reported in the Soviet press, and Kassem "exonerated" the Soviet Union from any complicity in the Kurdish rising.

The results of this betrayal were predictable: the Iraqi revolution was stifled before it could develop into a full-scale social revolution, Kassem was ousted by the Ba'ath Party in 1963, and thousands of Iraqi Communists and other left-wing elements were slaughtered along with the Kurdish masses. Only after this massacre did the Soviet Union launch a "protest" in the United Nations against the genocide which had destroyed more than 200 villages in Kurdistan.

SOVIET MANEUVERS

The CP continues its counter-revolutionary policy today. No longer even bothering to cover their reactionary stance with pseudo-revolutionary rhetoric, the Soviet Union simply dismisses the current Kurdish rising as "reactionary."

There is no mention of why a movement which the CPSU helped establish and claimed to support for over two decades has suddenly become "reactionary."

What has changed is not the KDP, but Soviet foreign policy dictates. To maintain its cozy relationship with the Iraqi ruling class, the Soviet Union can no longer give even nominal support to the Kurds. In addition, the Soviet Union is trying desperately to better its relations with the Shah of Iran, who has strengthened his ties to the U.S. and Chinese ruling classes. The Soviet Union hopes that the "glorious accord" between the Shah and the Iraqi Ba'athists will mean a strengthening of Soviet influence in Iran, although it looks instead as if the accord may mean a weakening of Soviet influence in Iraq.

The current struggle in Iraqi Kurdistan must be viewed in its broader international context. The Mideast is playing a key role in the threatening breakup of post-World War II U.S. imperialist hegemony. The relative shift of international wealth toward the OPEC countries, based on international fuel shortages coupled with U.S. oil company-OPEC monopoly pricing, constitutes the most important current threat to the post-war division of power which favored both the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

The relative success of the OPEC bloc combined with the overall international downturn is encouraging other countries to push the challenge to U.S.-Soviet hegemony. As the pressure to squeeze ever-more surplus value out of the imperialized nations to prop up the sagging world order increases, these nations and regional blocs seek to duplicate the OPEC strategy. The recent third world conference in Havana is one example. The Eastern European countries are chafing under the high oil prices and restricted trade markets dictated by the USSR. The collapse of the International Monetary System represents the inability and unwillingness of Western European countries to continue to prop up the U.S. dollar. China is striking an increasingly independent course in trying to integrate itself into the world market.

The return to international autarchy is reflected within the U.S. and the Soviet Union as well. The ruling class is divided internally over what strategy to pursue. One wing attempts to hold on to the old order through "detente." U.S.-Soviet power should be used jointly, this wing reasons, to hold back the forces of autarchy and avert the impending world war in the Mideast. The anti-detente forces see no hope for avoiding increased international competition, and focus instead on grabbing the largest possible share for their respective countries. Thus, isolationism, protectionism and sabre-rattling are seen as the appropriate weapons.

The U.S. must try to find a way to lower the price of Mideast oil if it is to have any hope of salvaging its hold over Western Europe and Japan. The U.S. cannot simply dump its junior partner in the Mideast, Israel. Not only would such a move produce a tremendous wave of reaction within the U.S., but the U.S. needs Israel to function as its policeman in the Mideast. The threat of military invasion by Israel, which is much easier to rationalize and carry out than direct U.S. military intervention, constitutes a club at the heads of the Arab rulers.

At the same time, the U.S. is prepared to sacrifice some of Israel's power in exchange for concessions favorable to the U.S. by the Arab bourgeoisies. This is what was going



Kurdish soldiers retreat. The Kurds have been bartered off in the power play between the U.S., USSR and the Arab bourgeoisies.

winds as "concessions" for other material advantages.

The Iraqi Kurds are victim of this dynamic in stark and brutal form. Not only are the Kurds "expendable" from the point of view of the Arab rulers, but their struggle poses an active threat of stimulating the national aspirations of the Kurdish and other minorities throughout the Mideast.

BLOODY HISTORY

The history of the Kurdish struggle for national liberation is long and bloody. The 11 and a half million

Persia (Iran) where a Kurdish republic was set up in 1945.

It was here, under the auspices of the Soviet Union, that the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (KDP), a popular front consisting of various nationalist bodies and the Kurdish Communists (who dissolved as an independent body), was established. The counter-revolutionary maneuvering of the Soviet Union, which has characterized its entire foreign policy from the 1930's to the present, can be clearly discerned.

The cross-class popular front, dissolution of the independent Commun-

on in Henry Kissinger's frantic "diplomatic" efforts to reach a stable solution.

On the surface, the Iraq-Iran accord simply involved disputes between the two countries. Iran would receive control of portions of the Shatt-al Arab river in return for the withdrawal of military support to the Kurds. Beneath the immediate gains for both sides, however, lies another extremely important factor: Iran is to be brought more closely into the OPEC orbit, strengthening OPEC's independence and bargaining status.

This is the explanation for the seeming distress of the U.S. over the plight of the Kurds. The U.S. couldn't care less what happens to the Kurdish people, but they had hoped to use both the anti-Arab historicism of the Kurds and the historic Iraq-Iran hostilities to strengthen their hand

against OPEC.

Revolutionaries must support the right to self-determination for Kurdistan. Just as we defend the international proletariat from imperialist domination, so we must defend oppressed colonies from the ravages of "their own" nations. At the same time, revolutionaries have a duty to point the road forward for the Kurdish masses. The popular front KDP and its strategies spell disaster for the Kurds. The KDP appeal for U.S. intervention on behalf of the Kurds is simply the latest example of betrayal and defeat.

The Kurds must link their movement with the revolutionary aspirations of the Arab masses against their common oppressors—world imperialism and the Arab bourgeoisies. To do this, the Kurdish masses must over-

throw the KDP and create a revolutionary party which will fight for the national liberation of Kurdistan as part of the struggle for social revolution in the Mideast and throughout the world. The revolutionary party would fight to replace the phony Pan-Arab and anti-Arab ideologies which serve to divide the Mideast masses, with international proletarian solidarity.

A revolutionary leadership must be established which will not flinch from the task of social revolution, which will establish a Socialist Federation of the Mideast. Only under the dictatorship of the proletariat can full democratic rights to all national minorities be assured, be vastly raised and can the peoples of the Mideast, along with the entire international proletariat, move forward to the creation of communist society.

CLUW Witch-hunt

Cont'd. from p. 16

Our call for combat against the bureaucrats in CLUW does not end with the question of democracy and opposition to purges. The RSL stands on a revolutionary perspective for CLUW. We call for ousting the CLUW bureaucrats and turning CLUW into an organ fighting for the revolutionary interests of working class women. This would mean CLUW taking the lead in the fight to organize the unorganized, fighting within the working class to organize a Congress of Labor and the Oppressed which would map out a strategy against the capitalist attack, uniting women workers with the rest of the proletariat against their common enemies. The RSL calls on all those who claim to be revolutionaries to unite with us around this program. As the March 2 meeting showed, a united left wing could push through such a perspective within CLUW.

Why hasn't this happened? Why has the Revolutionary Socialist League been the only organization fighting for a revolutionary program within CLUW? The answer lies in the nature of centrism itself. The I.S., SWP, OL, IT and even the CP claim to be for revolution—you can read it in their newspapers and hear it in their speeches (sometimes). But when it comes to practice, these organizations all reveal the reformist content which the revolutionary phrases attempt to cover.

The centrists sit back quietly or join in agreement while the CLUW bureaucrats exclude non-unionized women from CLUW demonstrations, while CLUW attacks the seniority system (i.e., white male workers) as the source of women's oppression instead of mounting a campaign of jobs for all among the entire working class, while CLUW sucks up to Democratic Party hacks instead of fighting within the working class to form a revolutionary labor party. These centrists are all committed to building CLUW on a reformist basis. This is the meaning of centrism—revolutionary in words, reformist in practice. In many ways, it represents the most dangerous form of class betrayal, because it is able to deceive subjective revolutionaries and honest militants longer by claiming it will lead a revolutionary struggle later, but must support the reformists now.

The Revolutionary Socialist League will continue to lead the fight in CLUW against the bureaucrats' repressive designs and the politics they represent. We counterpose the creation of a revolutionary working class women's movement to the bureaucratic shell which the CLUW leaders want to consolidate. We have not seen the end of the repressions within CLUW. CLUW leaders will continue to move against the RSL and against all left forces who threaten, even in the most limited ways, the bureaucratic domination of CLUW. Revolutionary women must join us in this fight, as part of the struggle to end women's oppression and exploitation through socialist revolution.

NOTE: As we go to press, we are informed that, six weeks after the event, the CLUW bureaucrats have discovered that a two-thirds majority is required to pass a censure motion. We wonder how long this rule will stand!

Portugal

Cont'd. from p. 13

disciplining of the proletariat, in the attempt to create bourgeois order, which will give way to increased polarization and decisive class confrontation.

For the proletariat to emerge victorious, a revolutionary vanguard party must be constructed. Today, no such group exists. Despite militancy and dedication among the ranks of the "extreme left" (centrists), all capitulate in one form or another.

AOC AND MRPP

The AOC, for example, has gained strength in the trade unions, especially the Chemical Workers Union. But the AOC and its political wing, the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (PCP-ML) have carried Maoism to absurd limits. The AOC allies with the CIA-oriented Socialist Party, using one of Mao's favorite dictums. In the words of AOC leader Jose Chagas, "The enemies of our enemies are our friends. At least temporarily. It is a question of tactics." So the AOC has decided that since U.S. imperialism is hostile to Russian imperialism, it is correct to ally with the Portuguese arm of U.S. imperialism!

The MRPP, on the other hand, refuses to make any alliances at all. It has a principled position against forming united fronts with "adventurers, opportunists, and false revisionists." It therefore is left to unite with itself, proving that it is itself an ultra-left formation. It carries this to new heights with its main trade union slogan, directed at the CP, "Drive the Social-fascists out of the trade unions," thereby hermetically sealing itself off from all opportunities to win the CP's base through united front actions. In much the same way that Stalin's Third Period line left the German proletariat divided and prey to Hitler, the MRPP's ultra-left tactics splinter the Portuguese working class, despite tremendous heroism on the part of members of this group.

But at least the AOC and the MRPP oppose and condemn the CP's alliance with the bourgeois army. In this they virtually stand alone. Every other "extreme left" group participating in the April 25 elections, by urging a vote to CP candidates where they



MRPP members demonstrate shortly before the ban was imposed. Despite militancy, MRPP's third period line splinters Portuguese proletariat.

themselves are not running, "critically support" the National Front, the bourgeois bloc which includes the Bonapartist army.

LCI SUPPORTS ARMY

Ernest Mandel's LCI is among the worst culprits in creating illusions about the CP and the MFA. They go beyond critical support to the CP. In a recent issue of *Rouge*, newspaper of Mandel's French section, the Mandelites set about to "draw all the necessary conclusions from March 11." While they call for kicking the Popular Democrats out of the government and for a government of workers' organizations, they nowhere explicitly call for throwing the army officers out of power. They capitulate to the popularity of the "left wing" of the MFA, and therefore spread illusions that those bourgeois officers are part of the workers' movement. When the LCI calls for workers' militia, then, the proletariat will have to wonder why. Shouldn't they trust the "professional" soldiers, led by officers who apparently are proletarians to the Mandelites?

The "extreme left" groups do not provide revolutionary leadership for the Portuguese proletariat. Some will capitulate openly and move sharply to the right. Others, through their

sectarian policies (such as the MRPP) are preventing the united defense of the proletariat and the exposure of the CP by disdaining the Leninist united front tactic. To lead the fight against the MFA-CP repression of the left, and to prepare the proletariat for victory against the right-wing reaction, a revolutionary vanguard party must be constructed which stands unalterably opposed to collaboration with both the bourgeois parties and the army, which seeks to unite different sectors of the proletariat in defense of its class interests, and which organizes in the factories for workers' committees, in the army for soldiers' committees, for arming the workers and a workers' militia, and for nationalizing all industry under workers' control without compensation and under a workers' government.

Break with NATO!

Popular Democrats and Army Out of Government— For a Workers' Government!

Arm the Workers—For a Workers' Militia!

No Restrictions Against the Parties on the Left!

Nationalization Under Workers' Control—No Compensation!

For Proletarian Revolution!

Reconstruct the Portuguese Section of the Fourth International!

RSL Fights For Revolutionary Program

WITCH-HUNT IN CLUW

by Lisa Rega and Sandy Young

On March 2, Revolutionary Socialist League supporters were censured by Chicago CLUW (Coalition of Labor Union Women) on fabricated charges of having slandered the CLUW bureaucrats in a leaflet. The entire affair graphically demonstrates the RSL's analysis of CLUW as a bureaucratic shell designed to block the developing consciousness of working class women, to direct this consciousness into pro-capitalist, reformist channels.

CLUW is on the ropes—even the limited programs of the centrists, such as support to the farm workers and the demand for jobs for all which have been passed over the bureaucrats' objections, threaten CLUW's acceptability to the labor bureaucracy and ruling class circles. Having relied on the centrists to build CLUW in the absence of any real working class support, the CLUW tops must now move against the centrists, or abandon CLUW altogether. As one bureaucrat recently stated ("jokingly" of course, but accurately) "We built CLUW, and now we're not sure it wasn't a mistake."

PURGE

In mounting a campaign against the left in CLUW, the bureaucrats must first take on its revolutionary wing, the RSL. The RSL has been the only consistent fighter for revolutionary politics inside CLUW, demanding that CLUW open its doors to the unemployed and unorganized and lead the fight to defeat the capitalist offensive against the working class. The RSL has led the fight against CLUW's purge efforts, successfully defeating the effort to censure women involved in the Stewart Warner demonstration (see Torch, Vol. 2, No. 2, "CLUW: Class Struggle or Class Collaboration").

The "slander" for which the RSL was censured was a leaflet exposing the CLUW bureaucrats' purge plans. CLUW hacks quoted the opening paragraph of that leaflet:

At the September National Coordinating Committee meeting of CLUW, President Olga Madar as well as Midwest Vice President Clara Day opposed chartering the Chicago CLUW chapter because of the presence of radicals. Two of Madar's supporters walked out of the NCC meeting early, destroying the quorum necessary for business just as the vote over Chicago was to be taken. Chicago CLUW's internal life continues to hotly express the bureaucrats' fear of and opposition to the "lefts." Many of these "lefts," themselves without a revolutionary strategy, are capitulating and their numbers are dwindling.

Almost everyone in CLUW knows the truth of this statement. Of course the bureaucrats aren't going to own up to it—they do not yet have the strength in CLUW to openly admit their plans. But what about the centrists?

Workers' Power, newspaper of the International Socialists, ran an article on the September National Coordinating Committee meeting which mentioned the red-baiting incident. The Internationalist Tendency, recently forced out of the Socialist Workers Party, has discussed CLUW red-baiting in private conversations. The Maoist October League, whose supporters face massive purge efforts in southern chapters where they have influence, has told us that the red-baiting is even worse than we described.

CENTRISTS CAPITULATE

But none of these centrists defended the accuracy of the RSL's statements at the CLUW meeting. Their whole strategy in CLUW involves cozying up to the bureaucrats and cajoling them slowly "to the left." In practice, this means capitulation to the rotten class-dividing program of the CLUW hacks, covering the complete betrayal of working class women with a little left rhetoric.



CLUW bureaucrats begin attack. To maintain CLUW as a reformist arm of the labor bureaucracy, CLUW leaders are now moving to tighten their control over the "left." The censure of the RSL heralds a wave of repression in CLUW.

The meeting itself showed the strategies of the reformists and centrists in CLUW in stark form. All pretenses of democracy were dropped. RSL supporters were not informed of the exact charges in advance of the meeting. The women charged were not allowed to present a defense. Motions for a trial were ruled out of order. Discussion was limited to two speakers for and against the censure motion, with three minutes apiece. Then CLUW leaders got up to make "points of personal privilege" about how the RSL statements were lies. RSL supporters who tried to reply were ruled out of order and shouted down.

The one RSL supporter who was given the floor for three minutes during the "discussion" denounced the procedure and demanded a trial. She pointed out that the accusation of slander was completely false and that many people in the room, including leftists, knew it. She also pointed out that the censure motion flowed from

the class-collaborationist politics of the CLUW bureaucrats, and that it heralded a wave of repression in CLUW.

IN A BIND

The centrists were caught in a bind at this meeting. On the one hand, they realized that the move against the RSL was directed at the entire left, and that a victory for the bureaucrats opened the door for reprisals against them as well. On the other hand, their strategy for building a reformist women's movement rules out taking the bureaucrats head on.

So they compromised. Most of the centrists voted against the censure motion, but on the grounds of "democracy" rather than counterposing themselves to the bureaucrats and their plans to consolidate reformist hegemony within CLUW. The Maoist woman who spoke against the censure motion did so on the basis that CLUW should be democratic and let anybody say anything. She also contended that the national Steering

The role of the Socialist Workers Party is more interesting. Its supporters in CLUW did not vote at all on the censure motions. When RSL supporters confronted an SWP trade union woman who had missed the meeting a few days later, she expressed disbelief that SWP supporters at the meeting hadn't opposed the censure and promised to bring the matter up. She even talked about publicly announcing their changed vote. This is, of course, the last anyone has heard of the matter. The SWP is committed to maintaining reformist hegemony in CLUW and its cozy relationship to the bureaucrats, even when that means throwing out all semblance of socialist principle.

One other group of leftists made a special point of having their abstentions on the censure motion recorded. These women, who claim to be against the bureaucracy and its red-baiting, bear special responsibility for the passage of the censure motion, since their opposition would have defeated the motion. When confronted by the RSL after the meeting as to why they didn't vote or speak against the censure, they claimed that to do so would have granted legitimacy to the bureaucrats' procedure. This position is ultra-left lunacy. It is tantamount to saying that the proletariat should refuse to fight repression by the state, because to do so would "legitimize" the state. Revolutionaries must fight each and every attack against the working class and its most class-conscious wing, whether in the streets, the trade unions or in organizations like CLUW.

In fact, although these women's position may have been motivated by ultra-left reasoning, it represented a complete capitulation to the bureaucracy. These women did not openly protest the procedure, nor register their disapproval of the censure. Their abstention did not represent opposition to the bureaucracy, but the decisive margin of capitulation to the CLUW leadership against the left wing.

PARTIAL VICTORY

Despite the passage of the censure and the rotten behavior of the centrists, the meeting represented a partial victory for the left. The censure motion against the RSL was a test for the bureaucrats. If they could have pulled off the censure with ease, they would have had an open path to pursuing their purge policy throughout CLUW. The closeness of the vote (particularly in an attack against the RSL, which is hated almost as much by the centrist leaderships as by the bureaucrats because of the RSL's continual exposure of the centrists' capitulations and betrayals in the face of the bureaucrats' demands), means that the bureaucrats have a more difficult job in moving against the left.

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CP ALLIES WITH HACKS

Most of the leftists in CLUW at least voted against the censure. There were a few, however, who did not. The Communist Party, which plays the most blatant anti-working class role in CLUW generally, championed the censure. This is not surprising, since its entire policy within the working class has its axis in the CP building its base within the labor bureaucracy, being the most loyal left lieutenants of the bourgeoisie.