

# SPARTACIST

CANADA

AUG./SEPT. 1979 No.38 25¢

## Military Victory to the Patriotic Front

# Smash White Supremacy in Rhodesia

In a last ditch attempt to salvage Ian Smith's "internal settlement" and legitimize the continuation of a modified form of white supremacist rule in Rhodesia the Commonwealth heads of state meeting in Lusaka, Zambia during the first week of August made yet another call for a negotiated end to the guerrilla war raging in the Rhodesian countryside. Wrapping herself in the tattered remnants of Queen Victoria's once-mighty empire, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher won endorsement from the gathering of Britain's former colonies for the racist Tory government's alleged "responsibility" to grant independence and majority rule to Zimbabwe. The deal cooked up between Thatcher and the leaders of the African so-called "front-line states" (those which border Rhodesia) calls for a constitutional conference of "all parties" to negotiate a new constitution for the former British colony and for new, British-supervised elections. Thatcher's proposal would guarantee disproportionate representation in parliament for Rhodesia's white settler caste but would remove the white ruling caste's automatic legislative veto.

The white settler regime in Rhodesia, which broke away from Britain with its "Unilateral Declaration of Independence" in 1965, remains a barbaric relic of British colonialism in which 225,000 whites rule six million blacks. But the guerrilla war waged by the Patriotic Front alliance of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) of Joshua Nkomo has slowly boxed the white settlers into a corner. Fearful whites are abandoning their tennis courts and swimming pools and leaving the country at a rate of 1,000 a month. Outside the capital, white farmers nightly huddle over their machine guns in



Africa

fortified compounds knowing that it may not be long before Salisbury starts to look like Saigon in the final frantic days before the Americans pulled out.

It was the pressure of the guerrilla war which compelled the white settlers to attempt to prettify their rule with the "internal settlement." As a first step in the implementation of this settlement Ian Smith brought several black puppets into a "transitional government" which then conducted a phony election to install Bishop Abel Muzorewa as nominal head of the white supremacist Rhodesian state. In conducting the elections Smith left nothing to chance. One hundred thousand troops herded voters to the polls at gunpoint. Supporters of ZAPU were arrested for trying to organize a boycott and white employers threatened to fire

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## Rhodesia...

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black workers who refused to vote.

Despite the sympathy of British Tories and American right-wingers, Callaghan and Carter rejected the electoral fraud which Smith staged for their benefit and refused to throw the open support of British and American imperialism behind the "internal settlement." This attitude was not dictated by a commitment to "human rights" on the part of the imperialists but by the fear that by clinging to Smith, who they know cannot hold out indefinitely against the guerrillas, they risked pushing the Patriotic Front toward further dependence on Soviet arms and perhaps even the intervention of Cuban troops in the final offensive on Salisbury.

### A BLACK FACE FOR WHITE RULE

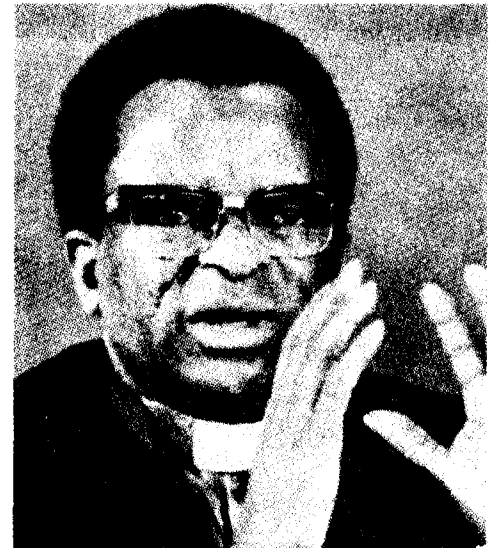
With the election of Margaret Thatcher's Tory government in May the Rhodesian white supremacists hoped for another lease on life for their discredited "internal settlement." Before the Commonwealth Conference Thatcher let it be known that her government was considering lifting sanctions against Rhodesia and recognizing Muzorewa's puppet government. However at the conference Thatcher backed away from openly endorsing the present Rhodesian regime. Recognizing that the position of the white settler minority is untenable, Thatcher sought to make a deal with the front-line states (which provide the armaments and bases for the guerrillas) to force the Patriotic Front into a negotiated settlement with the white supremacists. Canadian Minister for External Affairs, Flora MacDonald immediately committed her government to send "impartial observers" who would join the team monitoring the election of another puppet government.

The organizers of the Lusaka conference received aid from all sides: both the Patriotic Front and the white Rhodesian officer corps agreed to suspend operations in Zambia during the conference, while Muzorewa provided armed guards for the trainload of wine, caviar and other delicacies shipped through Rhodesia en route from South Africa to the conference in poverty-stricken Zambia. But no one expects the document adopted by the Commonwealth Conference to provide a basis for a settlement between Nkomo and Smith, for it avoids the key question of the makeup of the army. As long as the Rhodesian army, led by

its all-white officer corps, remains intact, white supremacy in Rhodesia is guaranteed. Marxists reject any political accommodation with the white supremacist butchers in Salisbury and call for military victory for the forces of the Patriotic Front.

FOR WORKERS REVOLUTION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA!

But as Trotskyists we have no illusions about the "socialist" or "Marxist" pretensions of the petty-bourgeois nationalist leaders. Joshua Nkomo is a notoriously opportunist politician. In the early sixties he pledged his loyalty to the British Crown and supported the 1961 Rhodesian constitution which was more white supremacist than Smith's



MUZOREWA

Globe and Mail

"internal settlement." Today Nkomo jet sets around the world courtesy of "Tiny" Rowland, the Rhodesian founder of Lonrho, Africa's largest multi-national firm.

Robert Mugabe of ZANU is a practicing Catholic whose "Marxist" rhetoric is the standard cover for bourgeois nationalism in backward countries. The longstanding split between ZANU and ZAPU is not based on programmatic differences but on personal rivalry and above all tribal enmity. The defeat of the Smith government would undoubtedly be followed by the kind of intra-nationalist and tribalist bloodletting common throughout black Africa. The end result would be the victory, as in Angola and Mozambique, of a bonapartist despot like Agostinho Neto or Samora Machel.

Confining the struggle within the narrow framework of bourgeois nationalism will also mean the continued subjugation of the black masses to poverty and wage slavery. On the morrow of victory the Nkomos and Mugabes--aspiring exploiters one and all--will prove as implacable class enemies of the African workers and peasants as the white settlers. Only through the establishment of a Zimbabwe workers and peasants government in the framework of a socialist federation of southern Africa, will industry and agriculture be put in the service of the oppressed. ■

## SPARTACIST CANADA

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## Defend HKS, Fedayeen

# Stop Khomeini's Right-Wing Terror

Chanting "Women in veils, Workers in jails, Stop Khomeini's attacks!" twenty-five militants demonstrated July 19 in front of Toronto's city hall to draw attention to the plight of leftists, trade unionists, women and homosexuals in Iran. The protest was endorsed by the Trotskyist League, the Gay Liberation Union, Ross Dowson of the Forward group and the International Women's Day committee. To our knowledge the protest was the first action in Canada to date in opposition to the current wave of repression in Iran.

The demonstration was initiated by the Trotskyist League, which circulated a proposal for joint action to a wide variety of left, labor, women's and gay organizations. A July 10 press release calling for a demonstration noted that:

"The lives of Iranian leftists and labor militants are in danger. Women who demonstrate for democratic rights are attacked and stoned; national minorities are savagely repressed; and homosexuals are taken before firing squads. There is an urgent need now for a international mobilization of the left and labor movement and all those who stand for democratic rights in a powerful united front defense.

"Sixteen members of the Iranian Hezb-e Kargar-e Sosialist (HKS--Socialist Workers Party), numerous Fedayeen militants, and leaders of the Khuzestan oilworkers have been arrested by Ayatollah Khomeini's 'Imam's Committee.' Many of them are still being held incommunicado at unknown locations."

The protest was organized around the following four slogans: "Hands off the Iranian Left!" "Free the Endangered HKS and Fedayeen Supporters!" "Free the Imprisoned Oilworkers of Khuzestan!" "Stop Khomeini's Repression of National Minorities, Women and Homosexuals!"

Lisa Volkov, an independent feminist, attended the demonstration clad in a chador to dramatize the oppression of women under Islam. At the rally following the demonstration Volkov denounced the flogging and execution of women accused of being prostitutes or adulterers by Khomeini's Muslim



JULY 19th DEMONSTRATION IN DEFENSE OF THE IRANIAN LEFT.

SC Photo

fanatics and outlined the barbaric treatment of women as chattels under Koranic law. The member of Ross Dowson's Forward group who spoke next, pointed to the crimes committed by the big oil monopolies against the Iranian working class and the proletariat internationally. The final speaker, Tom Riley of the Trotskyist League (TL), underlined the importance of the demonstration and the need for socialists, labor militants and all those concerned with democratic rights to raise an international outcry to save the lives of the HKS and Fedayeen militants. Thanking the participants and endorsers of the demonstration, Riley went on to denounce the criminal sectarianism of much of the left that has undercut this vitally needed united front defense campaign.

### WHO ARE THE REAL SECTARIANS?

It is hardly surprising that a Stalinist sect like the Canadian Party of Labour (CPL) refused to participate in protesting Khomeini's clerical terror. CPL hailed Khomeini as a great "anti-imperialist" and even carried his portrait on its annual trek through downtown Toronto in early May. Moreover for CPL it would be a breach of

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# Imperialist Hypocrisy and the Boat People

By the tens of thousands, the "boat people" are leaving Vietnam. Some make it to the United States, Canada, Australia or various West European countries, but most end up in disease-ridden refugee camps in the impoverished capitalist states of Southeast Asia or Hong Kong. As the wretched departees continue to pile up vicious squabbling has broken out among the various chancelleries as to who should take them in (a dispute which was only papered over at last month's UN Geneva conference on Indochinese refugees). Meanwhile, the imperialist press and governments are trying their best to milk the affair for an anti-communist propaganda bonanza. They have been joined by prominent "progressives" from the liberal/pacifist anti-war movement of yesteryear, including Joan Baez and Toronto mayor John Sewell, who have indeed "come home," to join with their own imperialist bourgeoisies in a scandalous smear attack on Vietnam.

The plight of the boat people--many drown at sea as their overloaded dinghies and trawlers capsized--is certainly horrible. But the crescendo of anti-Vietnamese vituperation unleashed by the imperialists and the reactionary ASEAN "front line" states (Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Philippines) is revolting hypocrisy. The Western media shriek indignation against the "new Hitlers" of Vietnam, its "insane, genocidal" policies etc., while Southeast Asian governments threaten to push the refugees back out to sea. Malaysia even threatens to shoot the boat people on sight, claiming the influx is a fiendish plot by Hanoi to subvert their regime with yet more Chinese.

In Canada, the Clark government has decided to climb aboard the boat people bandwagon and establish its "human rights" track record by agreeing to accept 50,000 Vietnamese refugees by the end of 1980. At the two day United Nations conference on Southeast Asian refugees, Canada, alongside China, made headlines with its strident denunciations of Vietnam's "human rights" violations. External Affairs Minister, Flora MacDonald, proclaimed "It is our humanity that cries out for an end to the flagrant, this continuing, this outrageous violation of human rights" (Globe and Mail, 21 July). Immigration Minister Ron Atkey chimed in to express his "shock" at such "systematic genocide." But the imperialist mass murderers and their Canadian junior partners had no such concern for "human rights" during their bloody decades-long colonial war in Indochina. To MacDonald's "human rights"



BOAT PEOPLE ADRIFT.

U.S. News and World Report

diatribe at the UN conference the head of the Vietnamese delegation replied:

"...this idea [of human rights] was launched by the United States, a country that conducted a devastating war against Vietnam and bombed people...."

--Globe and Mail, 21 July

## WHO ARE THE BOAT PEOPLE ?

When North Vietnamese and NLF forces took Saigon and smashed capitalist class rule in South Vietnam in April 1975, the professional torturers working for the Pentagon, the ruthless war profiteers, the drug traffickers and remnants of the indigenous capitalist police force and army made a furious scramble to get out of the country. Their suitcases packed with everything from gold bars to heroin, the human refuse of the corrupt Thieu dictatorship frantically piled onto the ships, planes and helicopters of their U.S. imperialist overlords to the safety of the West.

Today the situation has changed somewhat. No doubt among those heading out of the country now there are many particularly odious types who amassed fortunes through wholesale corruption, gangsterism and in the service of American imperialism during the Vietnam war. But the chief criminals, the Nguyen Cao Kys and the rest unfortunately got out early, courtesy of their U.S. master. Those leaving now are much more marginal and dispensable to imperialism. The very fact that it is they who

are left helpless in the South China Sea, not the Marshal Thieu or his number two man, Dang Van Quang, who has found asylum in a posh Montreal suburb, is eloquent testimony to that.

There is a strong ethnic component to the present mass emigration from Vietnam, as the overwhelming majority of those leaving in leaky boats are of Chinese (Hoa) background. But the fundamental cause is economic. Many "boat people" are former traders and entrepreneurs from southern Vietnam whose shops were nationalized last year. The rice trade in South Vietnam was virtually a Chinese mercantile monopoly before the fall of the Thieu regime. These parasitical middlemen have been eliminated with the introduction of a planned nationalized economy.

There are also many petty bourgeois who have seen their living standards drop sharply since the departure of the U. S. military machine, which had produced a hypertrophy of the urban economy under the Thieu regime. A large part of the urban petty bourgeoisie is being forced to become either workers or agricultural laborers. In large areas of Vietnam the terror bombing destroyed the countryside and either massacred the peasantry or forced them into the cities. As a consequence, Vietnam has been forced to recreate its agricultural sector so that this imperialist-bled country can eat. Families have been ordered to resettle in so-called "New Economic Zones" in the countryside for this

purpose. No doubt these measures though economically necessary, have been carried out bureaucratically. Nevertheless, the "boat people" who flourished under imperialist-backed despots like Thieu and Ky, are not departing because they abhor violations of democratic rights. They leave because they cannot make the transition from being middlemen and social parasites to being productive laborers under the onerous conditions of rebuilding a war-ravaged backward country.

The "boat people" do not set sail for their ethnic homeland, China--for it represents everything they are trying to escape. Nor does the Chinese bureaucracy, which leads the chorus against Vietnamese "genocide" open its borders to these merchants and middlemen of Southeast Asia for which its nationalized economy has no room. Instead they sail for countries like Malaysia where anti-Chinese racism is genuinely rampant but where their entrepreneurial expertise can still find an outlet.

The "boat people" are part of a whole social layer that has become superfluous in the aftermath of the revolution. The phenomenon is hardly new. One only need recall the activity of the Scarlet Pimpernel spiriting former nobles out of revolutionary France. Or the United Empire Loyalists who fled north to Canada to escape the American Revolution. More recently, there are the Russian counts working as doormen in Parisian hotels while hoarding the gold

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## Asylum for Galindo Madrid



Globe and Mail

GALINDO MADRID

Galindo Madrid, a Chilean refugee who has been fighting for political asylum in Canada since jumping ship in Squamish, B. C. in March 1977, still faces deportation to Chile.

A high school student leader and supporter of the Allende government before the September 1973 coup, Madrid was held and tortured along with thousands of other workers, students and political activists. He was drafted into the Chilean army in 1975 and served the compulsory two years. He was then ordered to report for further military duties at a base near his home town, where he feared recognition by informers still searching for activists from the Allende period. He deserted and fled Chile. Madrid applied for asylum in Canada, but his appeals for refugee status have been repeatedly turned down.

On August 1, Madrid was granted a temporary stay of a deportation order. He will be allowed to remain while Tory Immigration Minister Ron Atkey reviews new evidence. The deportation order, however, could be enforced at any time. The Galindo Madrid Defense Committee has requested that telegrams be sent to Immigration Minister Ron Atkey, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, urging him to grant asylum to Madrid immediately. The following telegram was sent by the Trotskyist League:

The Trotskyist League of Canada vigorously protests any attempt on the part of the Canadian government to deny Galindo Madrid's request for political asylum in Canada. Madrid must not be deported to Chile where he faces imprisonment, torture and possible execution as an enemy of the bloody Chilean junta.

The case of Galindo Madrid is just one example of the anti-working class bias of the Canadian government. While you continue to harbor Dang Van Quang, a South Vietnamese general accused of running a multi-million dollar narcotics ring under the corrupt Thieu regime, and welcome 50,000 "boat people" from Vietnam, you deny asylum to refugees of right-wing terror. We demand that Galindo Madrid be granted asylum in Canada!

## Boat People...

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bars smuggled out of Petrograd after the Bolshevik Revolution. And in the 1960's there was the mass exodus of a disaffected middle class from Castro's Cuba.

There may well be active discrimination by the Hanoi bureaucracy against the Hoas, as well. Vietnamese Stalinists are not immune to chauvinism, and Hanoi sees all ethnic Chinese as a potential "fifth column" should Peking decide to renew its invasion. As Trotskyists we have no confidence that the Vietnamese bureaucracy will safeguard the rights of national/racial minorities, least of all a minority which they regard as a potential enemy. But the outraged protests of the Peking Stalinists about anti-Chinese chauvinism on the part of Hanoi are patently cynical, coming from a regime which has institutionalized Han-chauvinist oppression of national minorities in its own country. Moreover, Peking's invasion of Vietnam earlier this year sharply exacerbated anti-Chinese sentiment in Vietnam as well as the grave economic problems which have contributed to the magnitude of the present departure.

### NO ASYLUM FOR VIETNAMESE WAR CRIMINALS!

The "humanitarian" concern of the imperialists extends primarily to those who should now be sitting in jail in Vietnam. In 1975 the international Spartacist tendency demanded "No Asylum for Indochinese War Criminals" and called for the return of these vicious killers to Vietnam to stand trial before the Vietnamese workers and peasants. We warned that these thugs could become a stridently rightist organizing center for attempts to restore capitalist rule in Indochina, as well as for attacks on the working class of their new country of residence.

This has already begun to happen. In April, 200 goons from the Greater Overseas Alliance for the National Restoration of Vietnam and the Vietnamese Association of Australia staged a vicious attack on a trade-union organized concert in Sydney to aid Vietnam. Vietnamese counterrevolutionaries were also employed by the now-toppled Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua (with no more success than Thieu's ARVN in Vietnam).

We certainly do not welcome the arrival of well-heeled anti-communists whose specialty is trade in prostitutes and opium. However, it could only be chauvinist to campaign against admission of the mass of the "boat people." In Britain a racist clamor is being raised by the fascist National Front and other right-wingers who have decided to play up the "yellow peril" theme rather than anti-communism.

### COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY CRUSADE

While making no concessions to anti-Asian chauvinism directed against the "boat people," revolutionaries must intransigently combat the anti-

communist furor which the bourgeoisie has whipped up over their plight. The current frenzy comes in the context of U. S. president Jimmy Carter's anti-Soviet "human rights" crusade, which is also aimed at allies of the USSR, like Vietnam. Carter's junior partners in Ottawa have taken up the "human rights" refrain with gusto. At the Commonwealth Conference, prime minister Joe Clark urged the ex-British colonies to take a hardline anti-Soviet stance as the solution to the outpouring of "boat people" from Vietnam.

Canada has already demonstrated its desire to aid its American big brother in avenging U. S. imperialism's humiliating defeat in Vietnam. In March, the Trudeau government expelled Vietnamese consular official Ho Xuan Dich after he spoke at two meetings organized by the Canadian Peace Congress to protest the Chinese invasion of Vietnam (see "TL Protests Expulsion of Vietnamese Diplomat," SC No. 35, April 1979).

But the "humanitarian" anti-communist publicity being churned out about the boat people is more than hypocrisy. The imperialists are itching to take punitive action against Vietnam. They can hardly take any more non-military measures since economic and political sanctions are already in full force. And the crushing U. S. defeat in Indochina four years ago makes direct military intervention in the near future unlikely. However, there remains a danger that the imperialists will egg China into trying to teach Vietnam another "bloody lesson." Additionally, skirmishes with Vietnamese vessels and an extension of military/financial backing for Thai-based anti-communist guerrillas cannot be ruled out. Whatever such measures the imperialists take, Trotskyists will rally to the unconditional defense of Vietnam against imperialist attack or counterrevolution.

Indochina today is still poor, war-torn and wracked by ethnic hatreds, its central vital rural regions devastated by imperialism's decades-long war against Vietnam. The bleeding away of thousands of the most talented and skilled layers of Indochinese society, the ethnic Chinese, necessarily damages the economic foundations of the deformed workers state. In part, the exodus is due to the powerful disintegrating pressure of the world capitalist market on this economically relatively backward region.

But the Stalinist bureaucracies are unable to counteract imperialist pressure by extending the revolution. With their narrow nationalistic policies they help create the conditions for such a mass outflow. While Trotskyist revolutionaries defend the deformed workers states against imperialism and domestic counterrevolution, we point out that only victorious socialist revolution throughout the capitalist world--and political revolution to oust the bureaucracies from Peking to Moscow and Hanoi--can open the road for a genuine socialist federation of Indochina.■

(Adapted from Spartacist Britain, July 1979)

# Free the Cossette-Trudels!

On August 7, Jacques and Louise Cossette-Trudel, two former members of the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ), were sentenced to two years imprisonment for the 1970 kidnapping of British Trade Commissioner, James Cross. In handing down the sentence Judge Yves Mayrand cited the need to set an "example" as a deterrent to terrorists and added that "the court would set a dangerous precedent if there were no jail term" (Toronto Sun, 8 August). In addition to their sentence of two years in jail the judge made a highly unusual stipulation that the two ex-FLQers not make any public statements or even give any interviews to the press for three years.

Judge Mayrand's decision was not well received by the bulk of the English-language bourgeois press. A lead editorial in the August 8 Toronto Globe and Mail entitled "Terrorism the Easy Way," demanded that the Cossette-Trudels be given a "penalty that fits the very ugly--and contagious--crimes which they committed." But while the bosses' press screams for vengeance, from the standpoint of the interests of working people and the oppressed the Cossette-Trudels committed no crime and should be immediately released from prison and from all limitations on their rights to free speech.

Although Leninists oppose individual terror as impotent and inevitably counterproductive, we unconditionally defend those whose acts of terror are directed against the class enemy. The 1970 kidnappings of Cross and Quebec labor minister, Pierre Laporte, by the FLQ provided the pretext for the Trudeau government to bring down the War Measures Act and send troops into Quebec to round up hundreds of leftists, labor militants and nationalists. But despite the price inflicted upon the working class and oppressed the kidnappings were directed against symbols of capitalist oppression and we unconditionally defend the Cossette-Trudels against persecution by the bourgeois state.

Today, the Cossette-Trudels are thoroughly tamed mainstream Péquistes--which did not escape the notice of the liberal Toronto Star. In contrast to most of the rest of the bourgeois media the Star lauded the sentence and commended the Cossette-Trudels for their denunciations of terrorism and the FLQ. The Star reminded the English-Canadian chauvinists who were screaming for a more severe sentence for the Cossette-Trudels that "Louis Riel was hanged for treason in Regina in 1885 and Canadian history has regretted that act of vengeful justice ever since" (9 August).

The Tories have particularly "regretted" it.



EX-FLQERS JACQUES AND LOUISE COSSETTE-TRUDEL. UPC

Since the time Riel was hung by a Conservative government, the Tories have had virtually no support in Quebec. Perhaps fearful of whipping up nationalist sentiment on the eve of Quebec premier René Lévesque's "sovereignty-association" referendum, the Clark government has made no comment on the Cossette-Trudel case. The Liberals and the NDP have also said nothing and even René Lévesque expressed his hope that the sentence would close the book on the 1970 "October Crisis."

Various bourgeois newspapers have speculated that the relatively short prison terms the Cossette-Trudels were sentenced to and the general reluctance of all the bourgeois parties to reopen the book on the "October Crisis" may be connected to the involvement of a mysterious "sixth man" in the kidnappings. Playing up speculation that the "sixth man" is a police informer, an August 11 article in the Globe and Mail summarizes the evidence: a former RCMP staff-sergeant who acknowledged the existence of the "sixth man" but claimed that he was not arrested due to "poor follow-up" procedures; the refusal of Quebec Justice Minister Bedard to respond to a question concerning the identification of the "sixth man" by a member of the Union Nationale; and the insistence of the judge in the Cossette-Trudel trial that the court would not delve into the events surrounding the kidnappings. The terms of the Cossette-Trudel's sentence, particularly the prohibition on public statements, have also fueled speculations of a "cover-up."

Unlike various phony socialists like the ex-Maoist muddleheaded liberals of In Struggle! or the cowardly fake-Trotskyists of the Revolutionary Workers League, the Trotskyist League has opposed the bourgeois state's persecution of the Cossette-Trudels and all other ex-FLQers charged with attacks on the class enemy.

Free the Cossette-Trudels! Let them speak! ■

# Workers Government: Dictatorship of the Proletariat or NDP in Power?

**P**icture for a moment New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Ed Broadbent kneeling before the Governor General, former NDP Manitoba premier Ed Schreyer, preparing to be sworn in as prime minister. To connect this image with the seizure of state power by the working class is ludicrous. Yet during the past federal elections the fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) proclaimed that "the road forward to a workers government" began with:

"stepping up the CLC campaign to support NDP candidates, with the goal of electing a majority of NDP members. In Quebec, the unions could begin the task of building a mass labor party."  
--Socialist Voice, 21 May

The truth is that the election of a pack of careerist social democrats to Parliament Hill has nothing to do with the fight for a workers government. But the miserable opportunists of the RWL deliberately try to equate the two in order to rationalize their "strategy" of promoting the NDP within the working class. In this they follow the lead of the trade-union tops who have long advocated a "fight at the ballot box" as a diversion from a fight on the picket lines.

## THE WORKERS GOVERNMENT SLOGAN AND THE FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

For Leninists the call for a workers government is a call for a government based directly on organs of proletarian power (soviets, factory committees, trade unions), led by the revolutionary vanguard party and committed to the expropriation of the capitalist class. In short, it is a popularization for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In a presentation to the Spartacist League/Britain last winter Joseph Seymour, Central Committee member of the Spartacist League/U. S., explained the motivation for introducing the workers government slogan into the propaganda of the Communist International at its Fourth Congress in 1922:

"It was an attempt to address the following real

and important contradiction. Many social-democratic workers wanted their own party to carry out a socialist programme, were open to a coalition government with the Communists and were even willing to establish such a government on the basis of proletarian organs of power, not parliamentarism. In other words, many social-democratic workers accepted the essential programmatic core of the dictatorship of the proletariat, while retaining illusions in their leaders and distrusting the Communists. At the same time, the social-democratic leaders were demonstrated counterrevolutionaries who in a revolutionary situation would sabotage proletarian state power and pave the way for bourgeois reaction."

--Spartacist Britain, May 1979

The discussion of the workers government at the Fourth Congress was conditioned by the disastrous experience of the Hungarian Soviet Republic of March-August 1919. Throughout the brief history of the Hungarian Soviet government, which was composed of a social-democratic majority and a communist minority, the social democrats systematically worked to undermine proletarian power and prepared the way for the victory of the counter-revolution.

Especially in light of the Hungarian experience, Zinoviev, who wrote the resolution on the "workers government," correctly wanted to express the position that the social democrats could not and would not defend the dictatorship of the proletariat. However he did so by constructing a confusing terminological schema of "workers governments":

1. Liberal workers' governments, such as there was in Australia; this is also possible in England in the near future.
2. Social-democratic workers' governments (Germany).
3. A government of workers and the poorer peasants. This is possible in the Balkans, Czechoslovakia, Poland, etc.





WORKERS GOVERNMENT--NOT PARLIAMENTARY CRETINISM, BUT TROTSKY'S RED ARMY.

4. Workers' governments in which communists participate.

5. Genuine proletarian workers' governments, which in their pure form can be created only by the communist party."

--Jane Degras, ed., The Communist International 1919-1943 Documents, vol. 1: 1919-1922, (1956)

The first two were seen as phony workers governments. The third and fourth were considered weak or transitory workers governments because the social democrats would not defend them. In his summary remarks at the congress, Zinoviev categorically stated: "Yes, dear friends, in order to erect a workers government one must first overthrow and vanquish the bourgeoisie." By Zinoviev's criteria, the RWL is struggling for a phony "workers government."

Zinoviev's famous list of "workers governments" has been seized on by virtually every ex-Trotskyist revisionist who wants to abandon the fundamental principles of the Leninist party and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Joseph Hansen used the label to justify political support to the Cuban Castroite regime. Ernest Mandel and Michel Pablo characterized Ben Bella's Algeria as a "workers and farmers government." There was

plenty of ambiguity in the discussion on the workers government slogan at the Fourth Comintern Congress. But it was just that--and not the anti-Leninist program for a "workers government" that is neither bourgeois nor proletarian in its class character. All the participants in the discussion categorically denied that the workers government slogan was a call for the capitalists' social-democratic lackeys to assume the task of administering the bourgeois state on behalf of the bosses.

During a revolutionary upsurge when the question of proletarian power is posed, but the proletariat still remains under the leadership of reformist and centrist parties, the "workers government" slogan can be concretized as a demand upon these parties. But this is precisely a demand that these parties break with class collaborationism and parliamentarianism and govern on the basis of organs of proletarian power. In Russia between February and October 1917, the Bolsheviks several times called on the Mensheviks and other fake-socialists to dump their capitalist coalition partners in the Provisional Government and to take power in their own names on the basis of the soviets which they controlled. In 1934 in Spain it was imperative to

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## Workers Government...

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call on the Caballero wing of the Spanish Socialist Party to form a workers (Soviet) government when it was leading an armed insurrection against the bourgeois government. But to call on the wretched, right-wing social democrats of the NDP to form a "workers government" in Canada in 1979 is a parliamentary cretinist caricature of that revolutionary slogan.

Perhaps the RWL revisionists think that workers in Saskatchewan already have "their own" government--led by NDP Commissar Allan Blakeney. Like every other social-democratic government this "workers government" serves the bosses by smashing strikes, slashing wages and cutting social services. Against the RWL's social-democratic perversion of the Leninist Comintern's slogan of the workers government, the Trotskyist League upholds the model of the Bolshevik-led Soviet Republic.

### THE RWL AND THE WORKERS GOVERNMENT

The slogan of the workers government has recently come into vogue within the United Secretariat (USec), the international coalition of fake-Trotskyists to which the RWL is affiliated. In line with its "turn to the class"--one hundred and thirty years after Marx wrote the Communist Manifesto--the reformist American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has adopted the call for a "workers government" as another of its pseudo-orthodox trimmings. The SWP has rediscovered that the Russian Revolution is the "classical model"--a model which it claims has its most contemporary expression in the Islamic revolution of Ayatollah Khomeini and his reactionary muslim clergy. For the members of Ernest Mandel's centrist ex-International Majority Tendency (IMT), who in the heady days of guerrilla warfare were the foremost champions of "armed struggle" as the "only road," the popular front has supplanted the vicarious Guevarism of yesteryear as the road to a "workers government."

Keeping up with the latest political fashion in the USec, the RWL has also adopted the workers government slogan. Naturally there are differences within the RWL over the application of the slogan (as there are over everything else). Louis Paquette, representing a tendency in sympathy with the SWP wing of the USec, submitted a document to the RWL's last convention which baldly stated that "the workers government is not the dictatorship of the proletariat" (Report on Governmental Perspectives and Our Strategy). Paquette stands on the ex-League for Socialist Action (LSA) tradition of abject subservience to the NDP codified in such slogans as "Build the NDP" and "Win the NDP to Socialism."

In the pre-convention discussion a small minority of Mandelites led by ex-Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire (GMR) honcho, M. Lafitte, scored Paquette for a position which "could potentially constitute a

revision of the Marxist theory of the state." Lafitte oh-so-politely ("excuse me in advance if, at times, I polemicize against formulations which Paquette has since modified") chides Paquette for substituting electoralism for socialist revolution and eliminating the need for proletarian organs of power as the basis upon which the proletariat can become the ruling class. Lafitte goes on to say that for the RWL and its predecessor, the LSA:

"... the question of a workers government within the Canadian state has always since 1951 been raised in relation to our electoral policy and to our governmental slogans within the framework of bourgeois democracy, and without taking Quebec into account..."

--"On the Concept of a 'Workers Government'"

What Lafitte is referring to here is the 1951 liquidation of the Canadian Trotskyists into the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, the predecessor of the NDP. To the LSA's capitulation to the NDP, Lafitte

GRIGORII  
ZINOVIEV



counterposes the European Pabloist tradition of capitulating to Stalinism as well as social democracy and upholds Mao's China, Castro's Cuba and Ho Chi Minh's Vietnam as models of "workers governments."

However Lafitte's real difference with Paquette is the latter's challenge to Lafitte's long-held Quebec Bundism: the necessity for the "independence" of the struggle of the Quebec working class. For Lafitte, the class struggle is limited by the boundaries of "La Belle Province":

"Paquette takes the fatal step. He proposes a strategic framework for the revolution in the Canadian state in which the formation of a single workers' government is necessary to the creation

of two workers' states, one in Quebec, the other in Canada."

It is all very well to oppose a common struggle to put the NDP and a few Quebec labor bureaucrats onto the government benches in the House of Commons. But the nationalist Lafitte opposes it for the wrong reason--because it violates the sacred "independence" of the Quebec working class from the rest of the North American proletariat.

Neither of the RWL's two founding English-Canadian components, the reformist LSA or the right-centrist Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG), ever had much use for the workers government demand. The LSA favored the call "For an NDP Government." The RMG, which originated as a left split from the LSA in 1973, initially recoiled from the LSA's grovelling before the NDP. Yet in its 1974 federal election campaign the RMG explicitly rejected the workers government slogan on the grounds that it would either be confused with an NDP government or it would be interpreted as the dictatorship of the proletariat (and thereby alienate the ex-New Leftists the RMG sought to attract).

The much-heralded fusion of the LSA and RMG (and the RMG's sister group in Quebec, the GMR) to form the RWL did little to resolve their conflicting opportunist appetites. The "unity" between the LSA and RMG/GMR was achieved largely by papering over factional differences. While the ex-RMGers accepted the LSA's NDP loyalism in English Canada, they remained committed to petty-bourgeois nationalism in Quebec. Thus when the RWL had to concretize its governmental slogan in time for the federal elections last May all the old factional hostilities reappeared. In the end the conflict between Québécois nationalist and social-democratic appetites in the RWL was "resolved" by calling for two "workers governments"--one for each faction! The RWL's election propaganda featured two contradictory governmental slogans: "For a Workers Republic of Quebec--For a unitary Workers Government" (of NDP hacks and Quebec labor bureaucrats).

Thus each faction gets its own slogan and each its own national turf. The ex-RMG/GMRers can push "Independence and Socialism" for Quebec while the ex-LSAers campaign for votes to the English chauvinist NDP in English Canada. With the transfer of the RWL's national headquarters (and several leaders of the ex-RMG) to Montreal this fall, English Canada is abandoned to the NDP loyalists of the ex-LSA. Whereas the RWL has yet to win self-determination for Quebec, perhaps the warring factions and cliques within the RWL may accomplish their own "independence." ■

### Trotskyist League Directory

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 Box 26 Station A, Vancouver, B.C.  
 Winnipeg.....(204) 589-7214  
 Box 3952 Station B, Winnipeg, Man.

## Khomeini...

(continued from page 3)

Stalinist principle to defend the "Trotskyites" of the HKS. But even the HKS' own comrades in the fake-Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers League (RWL) flatly refused to endorse or participate in the demonstration. When approached by a TL member with the proposal for a united front protest in defense of the HKS the Toronto organizer of the RWL replied that his organization did not want to be associated with those who "oppose the revolutionary process" in Iran. For the RWL opposition to the "revolutionary process" means opposition to Khomeini's theocratic dictatorship--a "process" which could well cost the lives of its own comrades.

In this the RWL follows the lead of its American mentors in the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), and the SWP's Australian satellite, both of which have also recently attempted to sabotage actions in defense of the HKS militants and others under attack from the Islamic reactionaries. In the U.S. the SWP physically excluded the Spartacist League/U.S. from HKS defense actions and then sought to justify its goon attack with a vicious slander campaign. The Australian SWP abandoned its own demonstration rather than march with advocates of proletarian opposition to the mullahs.

On July 18, at a meeting of the International Women's Day Committee in Toronto a motion was put forward by a former member of the RWL to endorse the TL-initiated demonstration. While the motion was supported by the overwhelming majority of women at the meeting the two members of the RWL in attendance discreetly abstained. These cowards did not have the guts to defend the RWL's scandalous support for Khomeini's "revolutionary process" in a meeting of feminists. But at least a few RWLers place a higher value on the defense of their imprisoned comrades and the oppressed of Iran than on petty organizational sectarianism and abject prostration before the mullahs. One such RWLer even felt strongly enough about this to march in the demonstration on July 19.

Unfortunately the response of the Toronto collective that publishes the Body Politic, Canada's leading gay newsmagazine, was also marked by sectarianism. Despite the fact that homosexuals are being executed daily in Iran for the "crime" of their sexual orientation, only one member voted to endorse the demonstration. Those members of the collective who voted not to participate in the action used the lame (and self-fulfilling) excuse that it would not be a "mass" demonstration. Such sectarianism can only stand in the way of the urgently needed defense of the Iranian left and labor movement. A strong, united defense of the HKS, the Fedayeen, women, homosexuals and trade unionists is a burning necessity! Hands off the Iranian left! Defend the HKS! ■

# Carter's Secret Service Gags American Phone Worker



Jon P. Fishback  
CARTER'S GOONS DRAG DELEGATE MARGOLIS FROM CWA CONVENTION.

In front of hundreds of stunned delegates, U. S. Secret Service agents dragged union official, Jane Margolis, from the floor of the 41st Convention of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) in Detroit, July 16. The Secret Service attack came shortly before U. S. president Jimmy Carter was

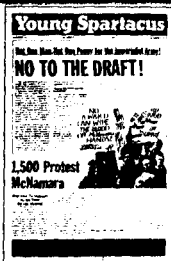
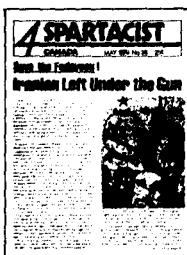
scheduled to address the convention. Margolis, an elected delegate and member of the executive board of CWA Local 9410 (San Francisco), was handcuffed and detained by the agents who claimed they had "reports" that she was a threat to the life of the president. But while Carter had his armed thugs to stifle any opposition to his anti-labor policies, the only weapon Margolis had was the truth.

Margolis is a spokesman for the Militant Action Caucus, an opposition group in the union which has repeatedly opposed government interference in the labor movement and the alliance of the CWA bureaucracy with Carter's strikebreaking Democratic Party. Earlier that day Margolis tried to put forward a motion to her union to refuse to let its convention be used as a platform for Carter, who fills the coffers of the oil barons while he pleads with American workers to make "sacrifices" and abide by his seven percent wage guidelines. But the CWA bureaucracy, which puts its support to the Democratic Party above the interests of the membership, saw to it that Margolis' motion never got on the floor.

In the aftermath of the attack on Margolis, elements in the bureaucracy attempted to launch a smear campaign against her. But this was cut short by an outpouring of letters and telegrams supporting Margolis and protesting the outrageous Secret Service action. Margolis' local in San Francisco voted overwhelmingly to send an official telegram demanding a White House apology and to hold a demonstration outside the San Francisco Federal Building protesting the Secret Service thuggery. Similarly, CWA Local 11501 (Los Angeles) passed a motion protesting the violation of Margolis' democratic rights and demanding an apology from the White House. ■

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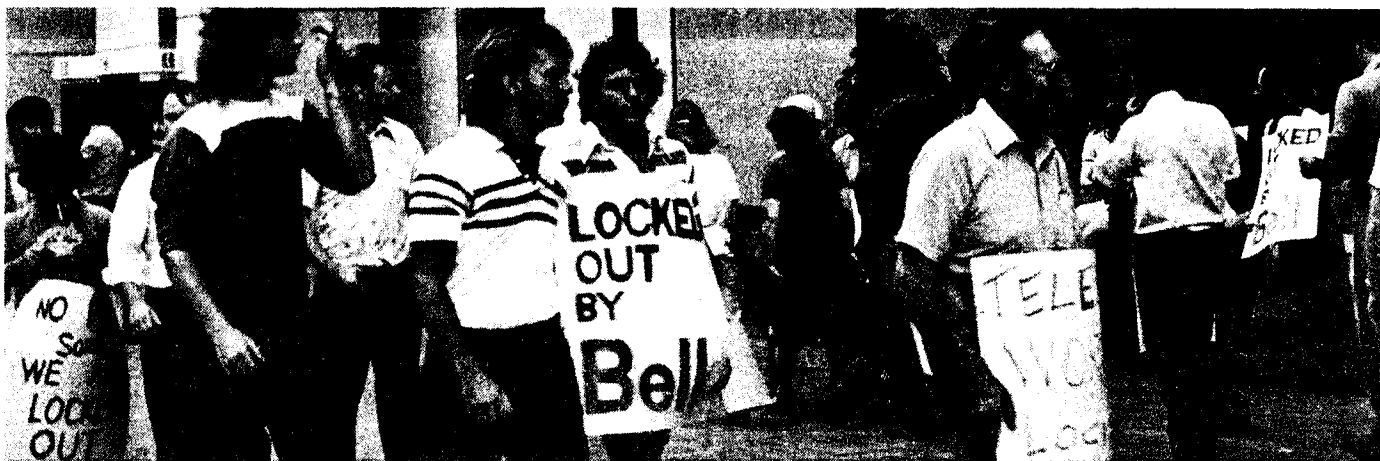
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LOCKED OUT BELL WORKERS PICKET IN TORONTO.

SC Photo

# Victory to the Bell Strike!

TORONTO, August 13--Bell Canada operations across Ontario and Quebec were hit by a full-scale strike today by 15,000 telephone installers, repairmen and technicians. Since early July the phone workers, members of the Communications Workers of Canada (CWC), have been staging a series of one-day rotating strikes and "work-to-rule" job actions. But the 24-hour walkouts didn't budge the phone company. Bell retaliated against the one-day rotating strikes with punitive three-day lockouts. The weak-kneed CWC bureaucracy pleaded with Bell for lockouts equal to the length of walkouts. But Bell wouldn't submit, forcing the CWC to call an all out strike.

The strikers are demanding an end to forced overtime and a shorter workweek to combat the company's automation/speed-up/job-cutting drive. The union's other key demand is for a 17 percent wage increase in the first year of the contract which would give CWC workers wage parity with B.C. phone workers. Predictably the company is pleading poverty and claiming that it doesn't have the money to meet the union's demands. But it has had no trouble coming up with \$23 an hour for the management scabs who have been working 12-hour shifts through the strike/lockout, out of the \$370 million profit that it made last year.

Bell has launched a massive propaganda blitz against the CWC, taking out newspaper ads proclaiming company "generosity" and apologizing to the public for delays in service. In Quebec, Bell has accused the strikers of severing telephone service cables and burning down a long-distance circuit hut. On July 31, 100 militant picketers in Montreal responded to the company offensive by shutting down Bell's Dorval data centre until enough cops were brought in to escort scabs across the line.

The patriarchal Bell system treats its employees like serfs, imposing forced overtime, absence

control and no paid sick leave until after five years of service. Bell has been able to impose these nineteenth century labor conditions on its employees through exploiting "in-house" or company unions. Finally, after 31 years of company unionism, Bell craft and service workers broke with the Canadian Telephone Employees Association (CTEA) and formed the independent CWC in 1976. To try and curb further inroads on company unionism, earlier this year Bell negotiated a 12 percent wage increase over one year with its 18,000 clerical employees, also organized in the CTEA. But Bell's 7,600 operators, organized in another company union--the Communications Union of Canada--voted 3,498 to 2,728 to join the CWC in July.

Bell is out to smash the CWC strike in order to arrest the development of a strong, united, independent union in the communications industry. The company is already demanding that the CWC give up the right to strike as a condition for further bargaining. But the CWC must not be left to stand alone. The way to beat back the hated phone monopoly is to mobilize all phone workers in a solid offensive to shut down the phone company. All Bell employees must go out now in a united strike for a joint contract that would lay the basis for one industrial union of phone workers.

Such a solid strike would spell the end of company unionism and could win such demands as: a big pay hike and a full cost-of-living allowance; a shorter work week at no loss in pay; and an end to forced overtime, absence control and the rest of Bell's Victorian labor discipline. The phone company is one of the most hated monopolies and is well known for extorting exorbitant rates from the public. Against Bell's anti-union publicity campaign phone workers should demand the nationalization of Bell without compensation! Shut down Bell! Victory to the CWC! ■

## Auto Layoffs...

(continued from page 16)

Canada, but Canadians only have 10.2 per cent of the jobs." Calculating that Canadians should have 3,500 more jobs the article demands an end to the layoff of Canadian auto workers by adjusting the auto pact.

For the Canadian UAW brass the solution to the mass layoff of auto workers in Windsor is more layoffs in Detroit! Militant auto workers must combat this poisonous nationalism which can only serve to divide the union by pitting Canadian and U.S. workers against each other in a scramble for an ever-shrinking number of jobs. Auto workers across North America must stand together and fight to end layoffs at the expense of the bosses, not their American class brothers and sisters.

UAW International president Doug Fraser is now talking vaguely about making "job security" an issue when the contract officially expires on September 14. For Fraser, this amounts to little more than modifying his penny-ante scheme of paid "personal holidays," which in practice has functioned as an absence-control program and has not saved the job of a single UAW member. But for auto workers the contract fight must begin now, before hundreds of thousands more have been thrown into the street and the union has frittered away its enormous potential social power. It is crucial that the UAW revive its historic weapon of the sit-down strike. This is the way the union was built in 1937, and it provides the only effective means of combating mass layoffs implemented by the auto bosses today.

While the UAW bureaucracy has not lifted a finger to stop the layoffs, several militants at the Dodge Truck plant in Warren, Michigan (where half of the 7,000-man workforce has been axed) put forward a resolution at their union meeting on June 10 calling for sitdown strikes to demand: no layoffs, unlimited unemployment benefits and recall rights and for government take-over and full funding of the bankrupt SUB funds. Unfortunately the local union bureaucracy and an assortment of fake-leftists combined to table the motion.

In Detroit, where angry auto workers have demonstrated repeatedly against the closing of Chrysler's Dodge Main factory Fraser has recently declared that saving the Hamtramck plant will be a "bargaining issue" in the contract negotiations. But how does Fraser intend to save Dodge Main? His newest scheme is to demand U.S. government subsidies for Chrysler and a seat on the board of directors for the UAW!

In the U.S. Chrysler has appealed for a \$1 billion cash handout from the U.S. government, while in Canada the corporation has threatened the jobs of 15,000 Canadian Chrysler workers unless the federal and provincial governments bail them out of their present crisis.

## UAW Local Protests GM Attack on Leftist

At the General Motors Van plant in Scarborough, security guards have recently escalated their harassment of members of labor and socialist groups attempting to distribute literature to the workforce. On June 15, a gang of these company goons chased and pushed a representative of the Nicaraguan Working Group leafleting in the parking lot, then turned on two United Auto Workers members who protested this thuggery. At a June 24 Local 303 unit meeting, the two UAW militants put forward the following motion which was passed unanimously:

Whereas we are in negotiations, the company is attempting to intimidate our members by having their security guards harass and physically intimidate distributors of labor and socialist literature at our work place. On Friday 15 June a brother was physically assaulted by chief security guard Grimshaw for protesting the physical intimidation of a member of the labor movement who was attempting to distribute literature at the plant.

Be it resolved that the GM unit of Local 303 call on the Executive of Local 303 to

- 1) Demand that the company end all censorship in the plant and immediately stop interfering with the right of union members to obtain and read labor and socialist literature at the plant as this constitutes a violation of our right to read what we want to read and constitutes company interference in the affairs of the union.
- 2) Go on record for the deletion of sections of Paragraph 160 and Document Number 18 of the Master Agreement which require prior company approval of literature displayed or distributed at the plant, including union literature.
- 3) Demand that GM immediately dismiss the head of security--Grimshaw.

Instead of meekly petitioning Joe Clark or Jimmy Carter for handouts for Chrysler, auto workers must demand that the company open its financial records to committees of elected union members. If it cannot afford to operate its plants, Chrysler should be nationalized without compensation. As for a seat on the board of directors, this fraudulent scheme copied from European social democrats is simply a ploy to divert auto workers from militant struggle by deluding them into believing that the company will then become more responsive to their needs.

Fraser further announced that in light of Chrysler's financial condition, it would not be a strike target in 1979, adding ominously that he would listen

## Pressmen's Jobs Endangered

# Vancouver Press Strike Settled

VANCOUVER--The strike which shut down Vancouver's two daily newspapers, the Sun and the Province, for eight months ended June 29. The 1,400 Pacific Press employees returned to work with a contract that conforms with the dangerous pattern of setbacks imposed on printing trade unions across North America. As in the strikes waged against the Washington Post, the New York Times and the Montreal Star, the key issue in the dispute was pressroom manning scales. While the final settlement was not the union-busting defeat suffered by the pressmen at the Washington Post, it left the crucial issue of manning scales to be resolved by a "neutral" arbitrator.

Unlike many strikes in the newspaper industry the Vancouver press unions pledged to stand together and not return to work until all six unions had a contract. Throughout the strike the press unions published their own newspaper, the Vancouver Express, which provided jobs and income for the strikers, although its news coverage was often no less anti-labor than the capitalist papers it replaced. But in the last months of the strike the inter-union solidarity broke down as the other union bureaucrats in the informal bargaining council began to pressure the pressmen to compromise on the manning clause. Finally the pressmen caved in and agreed to arbitration of the manning scales but they continued to hold out for higher wages and a shorter contract.

In the last month of the strike the pressure was

stepped up and rumors began to circulate that the rest of the unions would scab should the pressmen stay out. On June 22, the Express was closed down. Although the editors claimed a shortage of newsprint as their excuse it was clear that the end of the Express was calculated to put the final squeeze on the pressmen. On June 24 the pressmen accepted the 40-month contract which gives them a 35 percent wage increase--hardly enough to keep up with the official rate of inflation--and leaves their jobs in jeopardy. In a highly suspicious maneuver the bargaining council bureaucratically refused to release the exact results of the pressmen's vote--allegedly because it was too close!

With their own newspaper and the tremendous union solidarity that marked the beginning of the strike, the Vancouver press unions could have turned the tide against the profit-hungry publishers. But the strike was crippled by the bureaucrats' backstabbing. The threat to the very existence of the printing trade unions must be combated by an industrywide campaign to win a shorter work week at no loss in pay; to organize the unorganized and to raise wages and manning standards to a uniformly high level across the continent. But such a campaign cannot be fought on the basis of narrow craft-unionism. The recent string of setbacks and defeats for press unions across North America points to the urgent need for a genuine industrial union in the printing trades with a leadership committed to waging a militant, united fight against the press barons. ■

seriously if Chrysler requested special treatment in this summer's negotiations. Chrysler responded by demanding a two-year wage and benefit freeze from the union. Although they rejected this the Solidarity House bureaucrats left the door open to accepting a substandard contract for Chrysler workers similar to those already in existence for American Motor Company employees. Nor has this been lost on corporate negotiators for GM and Ford. Sensing the union's weak-kneed stance, they have hardened their own bargaining positions, claiming that they too cannot "afford" to meet the UAW's demands. Auto workers instead must throw out the UAW tops' one-at-a-time strike strategy and demand an industrywide strike of the entire Big Three. No contract extensions, and no substandard settlements!

Fraser and the UAW International have laid bare their contract "strategy": let the companies lay off

thousands of auto workers, then use this as an excuse to sell out the wages and living standards of the membership. UAW militants must counter this by leading a fight for coordinated, effective plant occupations in Canada and the U.S. to smash the layoffs. From that struggle they could assemble a core of effective fighters to become the leadership of a militant strike that will defend the jobs of auto workers through winning a shorter workweek at no cut in pay.

Such a leadership would seek to build a workers party based on the unions, dedicated to fighting for a workers government, to expropriate major industry and plan production for use. Only in this way can we do away with the anarchic production of capitalism, with its continual depressions, inflation and hardships for working people and the poor. ■

(Adapted from Workers Vanguard, August 3, 1979)

## Mass Layoffs Hit Auto

As 1979 North American contract talks opened between the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the Big Three auto companies, the first waves of a massive economic downturn crashed over the industry. Triggered by the manipulated gas shortage cooked up by Big Oil with the connivance of U.S. president Jimmy Carter, auto sales in the U.S. have plummeted, inventories are at record levels and the introduction of 1980 models has been delayed.

The effects of the current economic slump in the American economy will not be confined to the U.S. The North American economy is highly integrated--close to 70 percent of Canada's exports are to the United States--and any downturn south of the border is inevitably felt in Canada. This is particularly true in the auto industry as a large percentage of the cars assembled in Canada are destined for the American market.

The mounting unemployment in auto has now become industrywide, as giant General Motors announced in late July the indefinite layoff of more than 12,000 U.S. auto workers. The GM workers join 12,000 Ford workers and 24,000 Chrysler workers already out on the streets as a result of plant and shift closings in the U.S.

The mass layoffs have not stopped at the border. In Windsor some 2,000 auto workers have been put on "indefinite" layoff in the past year. Last summer's shutdown of Chrysler's Tecumseth Road truck plant cost 900 jobs, while 500 of the 2,300 workers in Chrysler's engine plant were laid off. The laid-off auto workers know that they will not have an easy time finding another job in a city in which the official unemployment rate hovers at 12 percent. Ford has just put 580 workers at its Windsor engine plant on indefinite layoff, and has announced plans to do the same to 650 production workers at Oakville in September.

Only a few months ago most of these unemployed auto workers were slaving ten hours a day, six days a week on the assembly line. Even then they were only barely keeping up with inflation which is presently running at 14 percent in the U.S. For



DETROIT AUTO WORKERS PROTEST LAYOFFS.

WV Photo

auto workers, such alternating periods of grueling overtime and mass unemployment are nothing new. Yet as UAW members confront the familiar evils of inflation and mounting layoffs in the 1979 contract negotiations, they do so with growing awareness of the need for a new strategy to defend their living standards.

The 1974 depression, in which 40,000 Canadian and 300,000 American auto workers were jobless, made it clear that the industry's Supplementary Unemployment Benefits (SUB) program was no answer to mass layoffs. In 1974-75 both the Chrysler and GM SUB funds ran dry. Tens of thousands of auto workers subsisted on greatly reduced or no income at all, while many were forced to give up homes and automobiles. This time Chrysler's SUB funds are running low again, and are expected to run out at any time.

While Solidarity House is telling U.S. auto workers to "write your congressman," in Canada the union leadership is pleading with the Clark government to renegotiate the auto pact. This protectionist agreement between the U.S. and Canada was designed to assure the Canadian bourgeoisie a "fair share" of North American auto and parts production. An article in the June issue of *Solidarity*, published by the Canadian UAW, complains that "13.4 percent of Chrysler's North American sales are in

(continued on page 14)