

The Only Choice: Build a Workers Party!



The passive exterior of the electoral contest in the U.S. conceals the real struggle beneath a shroud of phony issues important only to a small handful of the ruling class, its politicians and hangers-on. The cynical competition between two politicians who seek the "middle ground" of capitalist acceptability with equal fervor is rightly treated with the most notable disinterest and contempt in years by the working and oppressed masses.

The urgent need for a mass working-class party has become more nakedly clear since the last presidential elections than at any time since the immediate post-war period. Essentially unrepresented by any section of the trade union bureaucracy, militant workers created a massive strike wave in response to the inflation and economic downturn of the late 1960's and early 1970's. Record numbers of contract rejections and wildcat strikes, highlighted by such events as the "illegal" Postal workers' strike of 1970, underlined the disaffection of the workers from all their so-called "friends" in the two capitalist parties, from the government and from their bureaucratic union leaderships.

Temporary Rupture

The imposition by the Nixon Republicans of state wage controls, long advocated by liberal Democrats and many trade union bureaucrats, finally forced some of those same bureaucrats to openly break tactically with the government. Strained with too many betrayals, the traditional collaboration of the unions with bourgeois politicians was thrown into jeopardy. A mass workers party is an urgent objective necessity

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to defend the unions against the intensified anti-labor assault of the government and both capitalist parties.

Bureaucrats long committed to class collaboration increasingly found themselves mouthing empty threats to form a labor party. Such threats came to an end, naturally, when the election period began in earnest. They were, however, an indication of the extent to which the union bureaucracy is forced to attempt a posture of defensive militancy against capitalist attacks on the unions to stifle rank-and-file pressure within.

A Dire Warning

Paying little attention to the current efforts of the trade union bureaucrats

to rustle up enthusiasm for one or the other bourgeois camp, the workers view the choice presented to them as a distasteful one, essentially between two evils. Cynicism and apathy greet even such issues as the Watergate break-in and charges of Republican espionage and sabotage against Democrats, which represent a genuinely bonapartist disregard for the niceties of bourgeois democracy. They are shrugged off as "one group of thieves robbing from another," with the expectation that bourgeois politics is always like that. Such acts are a real warning of the readiness of the ruling class to dispense with its democratic robes

and institute the bonapartism of one-man rule whenever necessary. McGovern, of course, represents no "democratic" guarantees against such reaction.

McGovern has proved his reliability to the ruling class with his thorough unreliability to everyone else. His long trail of broken promises and "changes of mind" have demonstrated in advance his intention of doing what every "lesser evil" always does when finally entrusted with guardianship of the bourgeois state—the exact opposite of what he says.

Nixon's leading position is based heavily on negative factors and the lack

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SL/RCY Demonstrate Against Israeli Terror Raids



Boston area Spartacist League and Revolutionary Communist Youth (SL/RCY) held a demonstration at a Harvard University-sponsored forum featuring Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin on 3 October. The Israeli bourgeoisie used the Munich killings as justification for a world-wide campaign of racist, nationalist hysteria against Palestinian and other Arabs and for a brutal, military gang-raid into Jordan, Lebanon and Syria which left hundreds dead. In addition, the international bourgeoisie is using the Munich events to prepare for the possibility of imperialist intervention in the Near East and, having beefed up the elite state security forces specializing in the repression of the workers' movement, to attack Arabs throughout the world and initiate a crackdown against the left, under the guise of stopping any future "terrorist activity." Despite attempted intimidation by the Jewish Defense League at the demonstration, the SL/RCY presented its call for working-class unity in the Near East and against Zionism and Arab nationalism.

SFCC Administration Bans Reds: RCY Leads Fight Against Cold-Warriors

Editorial Miscellany

Polish Bonds Up 350%— Czarist Bonds Next?

The latest activity of the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy, previously in the news for their scabbing on the British dock strike, has been to establish the basis for the repayment of pre-World War II bonds issued by the previous capitalist government. Shortly before the official announcement, the sales of the Polish bonds, previously selling for 9% of their face value moved up to 33%, an increase of 350%! Thus, not only were the bond-holders assured of a nice pre-Christmas package by the Poles but the largess was spread to the Wall Street speculators as well.

Coming immediately after the Russian wheat deal with the United States and the Soviet willingness to begin settlements of WW II aid, the Polish deal can be viewed as another attempt by the bureaucracy to ingratiate itself with the West at the expense of the East European and Soviet workers. The *New York Times*, quick to pick up on this, stated that some bonds were held by the "little people" i.e., Polish immigrants who purchased them for "sentimental reasons" and the like. In actuality, the bonds specifically selected for redemption were "bearer bonds." Such bonds, which list no records of the various holders and are therefore untraceable, were used in the past for the shadiest manipulations and deals by those who were not interested in making their affairs public.

The redemption of pre-"revolutionary" bonds has long been joked about in the West by such diverse sources as the *New York Times* and *Playboy* magazine. For the Polish working class who must now labor to pay Western capitalists the profits on bonds as long dead as those who originally issued them, the event is no laughing matter.

SWP "Debates" the Stalinists — And Itself

An often-heard Stalinist "answer" to charges levelled by Trotskyists against numerous counter-revolutionary Stalinist betrayals—such as the signing of the 1954 Geneva Accords, which handed the southern half of Vietnam back to the imperialists, from whom it had just been wrested—is that these sellouts are merely compromises "forced" on the revolutionary forces by imperialism. As an example, the Stalinists cite Lenin's forced acceptance of the harsh German peace terms at Brest-Litovsk in 1918.

It should be a lesson to would-be Trotskyists that the SWP/YSA completely reinforces this reasoning in its 13 October *Militant* article, "Debate in antiwar movement over supporting '7-point peace plan.'" This "debate" with the CP supporters of the Vietnamese NLF/PRG "7-point peace plan" completely omits any mention of the counter-revolutionary role of the Vietnamese Stalinists, which is responsible for the continued genocidal war by the U.S. and is clearly reflected in the "peace plan" itself!

Instead, the article argues that the anti-war movement should not support any particular settlement since the "Vietnamese liberation forces" may be "forced" as Lenin was in 1918, "to make concessions." The article implies that just as Lenin called some German socialists "scoundrels" for supporting the monstrous terms forced upon the Soviet Union in 1918, the "Vietnamese" would not want us to support the bad aspects of what they accept. Nowhere is there a word of distinction between Lenin's Bolsheviks and present Vietnamese Stalinist tops, or between the Vietnamese people and heroic libera-

tion fighters on the one hand and the treacherous company of Ho Chi Minh and Le Duc Tho, who have betrayed the Vietnamese workers' and peasants' aspirations and struggle at every step of the way, on the other. This Vietnamese Stalinist treachery has included the physical slaughter of Trotskyist cadre and other working-class leaders in 1945-46 in order to crush revolution and pave the way for the return of the French.

All this is forgotten by the SWP in its opportunist rush to unite with the American Stalinist supporters of this treachery in the "anti-war movement."

Until the 27 October *Militant* that is, which dredges up a speech by Fred Halstead from last summer to cover this opportunism with a few remembrances from its Trotskyist past, as if in answer to its earlier article. Criticizing the compromises in the "Peace Plan," Halstead also attacks the Soviet and Chinese bureaucrats for not providing adequate military guarantees to protect Vietnam. Does he remember the "sectarian" Spartacist demand for a Soviet nuclear shield to cover Hanoi and Haiphong against U.S. bombings? The SWP equates the defense of the Vietnamese revolution with simple opposition to U.S. interference in the name of self-determination. It thereby reinforces as legitimate, in advance, any rotten compromise the Stalinists may be "forced" to come up with in order to prevent the revolutionary culmination of the struggle against U.S. imperialism. This is modified by "Trotskyism" in name only, tacked on to divert the attention of the more serious supporters from the real meaning of the SWP's reformist, pop-frontist program on the war.

Let no one say there is a trace of Trotskyism left in the SWP/YSA.

Class Defense for Fired Journalist Squashed

During periods of working-class upsurge and increasing governmental assaults on the gains of the labor movement, some sections of the professional, middle-class intelligentsia side with the labor movement and come under attack despite the often feeble, reformist or revisionist nature of their pro-labor ideas. Such is the case with David Deitch, an economics and political columnist recently fired by the *Boston Globe*, a major mouthpiece of the liberal, pro-McGovern bourgeoisie. Reflecting the viewpoint of the "progressive" trade union bureaucrats, Deitch's articles supporting Irish rebels, British strikers and meat cutters, aerospace and longshore workers against the wage-cutting Pay Board conflicted with the *Globe's* anti-working class policies. They finally fired him in August on a trumped-up contract violation charge, providing an opportunity for a major defense campaign through the unions centering on the government attacks on labor. Unfortunately, this opportunity has been squandered by the phony labor leaders and left.

Local union bureaucrats called a press conference, but failed to say what action the labor movement should take or how it should fight government attacks such as wage controls, all of which are supported by McGovern, who is their candidate as well as the *Globe's*. The bureaucrats' do-nothingism was matched by the classless impotence of the fake left. Progressive Labor and the Socialist Workers Party fought together to obscure the class nature of the firing with a multi-class appeal for "civil liberties" aimed at students and professors, while the NCLC opposed action in favor of debates with bourgeois economists at

Letters

France
5 October 1972

... In the article about the OCI, about the elections: There were elections in 1967 for the "National Assembly" (Chamber of Deputies) in which the "left" (from the "radicals" to the CP) nearly got the majority. This "Chamber of Deputies" was dissolved by DeGaulle in the middle of the 1968 general strike. New elections were organized in July 1968 which all extreme-left organizations (including the OCI) boycotted, because they were obviously a maneuver by DeGaulle to break the strike. ... The mandate of this "Chamber" is about to expire (March 1973).

After the general strike, feeling that he couldn't succeed in integrating the unions into the state apparatus by brute force, DeGaulle tried to do it through a "referendum" (April 1969) which sent him back to Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises (where he died somewhat later). After DeGaulle's resignation, Presidential elections were organized (May-June 1969) where Krivine ran for President and where the OCI fought for a single workers candidate on the first round, and for a boycott on the second round... because the two candidates left were bourgeois (Pompidou and Poher)....

Communist greetings,
William

Cambridge, Mass.
5 Oct. 1972

To the Editor
Workers Vanguard

Comrades,

The article on the OCI which appeared in the September issue of *Workers Vanguard* contained an inaccurate telescoping of the OCI's position toward elections in 1968 and 1969. In June 1968, the OCI correctly called for a boycott of the parliamentary elections on the grounds that "participation in them simply meant approving the final destruction of the general strike" (WV,

September, 1972). Only after the defeat of DeGaulle's referendum the next spring, in April, 1969, which caused him to resign and provoked new presidential elections, did the OCI call, as WV stated, "for a single workers' candidate without a program."

In addition, I would draw your attention to two other points. Since that article appeared, the OCI has somewhat increased its criticisms of the French CP in its press (*Informations Ouvrières*). In particular, it has published the article written by Trotsky for an intervention in the CGT in 1935, to which the article refers. However, the exact extent of this leftward motion remains unclear as yet.

Finally, the July, 1972 issue of the OCI theoretical journal, *La Vérité* (No. 557), includes a position on Cuba which is curiously close to that of the SL. In discussing the POR, the OCI is led to evaluate the nature of the Cuban state as follows:

"During the course of the specific period in which these upheavals took place [in Cuba], and at the point of the most direct confrontation with imperialism, the thorough mobilization of the masses and the existence of organs such as armed workers militias undeniably gave to Castro's government a clear character of a workers' and peasants' government, in the sense that the Communist International gave to this term, ... and created the elements of a revolutionary situation which posed the problem of the total destruction of the bourgeois state and of the establishment of working class organs of power, workers' and peasants' councils.

"But whereas the Transitional Program considered that if a 'workers' and peasants' government' was established (in the sense indicated above) it would in fact only represent a 'brief episode in the path toward the true dictatorship of the proletariat,' in Cuba, the process has not gone through to completion. Castro's government has neither given way to a government which would have emerged from the

MIT! SWP Senatorial candidate Don Gurewitz called upon "all candidates for public office, including Senator Brooke," to defend Deitch, and for community control of the mass media. PL members gave holiday speeches for socialism at two defense rallies that have been held, but red-baited Spartacist League members, who were alone in calling for unconditional defense of Deitch by the labor movement through class action in the name of labor solidarity. The only result of PL's approach has been a utopian consumer boycott of the *Globe* which naturally has achieved nothing.

Deitch views himself as some sort of community representative on the mass media. This is just an apology for his complete failure to help organize and prepare the labor movement for the conflicts ahead. This would involve attacking his friends in the trade union bureaucracy, which insists on trying to "free" the capitalist state from the embrace of capitalism, instead of launching a struggle against it.

Bowlerizing Their Own History

The American International Socialists in their *Workers' Power* of 28 September ran a fund drive column which offered as a motivation a brief history of the IS' aims and origins. The column stated:

"During this period [the reactionary and repressive era of the 1950's], the organization holding the revolutionary socialist views which the International Socialists represent, dwindled to the point where it existed only as a federation of scattered groups called the Independent Socialist Clubs (ISC)."

Now in truth, they didn't "dwindle," they quit. In 1958 Max Shachtman and

Hal Draper's Independent Socialist League dissolved into the Socialist Party-Social Democratic Federation on the SP-SDF's terms: a signed statement forswearing and denying any version whatsoever of Leninism or Trotskyism. And in that period, as now, the SP-SDF was up to its armpits in pursuing American imperialist aims in the Cold War, which is why they so readily fell in with so many of the CIA's front groups and plots. Shachtman's support for the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba sickened even Draper who with others, such as Sy Landy, the IS' current National Secretary, began drifting out of the SP-SDF to ever so reluctantly create the IS as a sort of hybrid between the old ISL and New Leftism (losing Hal Draper along the way).

In recent years the opportunism of the centrist Third Camp tendency has led away from direct support to imperialism, which is why the IS today smothers a crucial and revealing half decade of its historical antecedents.

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Fake Lefts Push Protest Vote for Socialist Lesser Evil

workers' and peasants' councils, nor has it at this stage resulted in the reestablishment of a bourgeois government."

—*La Vérité*, No. 557, pp. 70-71

However, although the OCI's formulation clearly leads to the conclusion that Cuba is a deformed workers state, that is, that a petty-bourgeois caste based on proletarian property forms, has usurped political power, the OCI rejects this elementary Marxist conclusion. The OCI retreats, to give the following political characterization:

"To say this does not in any way mean that Castro is the same as Stalinism. Castro is the political expression of the radicalized Cuban petty-bourgeoisie, which has been led to establish an ever closer tie with Stalinism, because of its inability or unwillingness (there is no such thing as a 'spontaneous' or 'national' Marxism) to orient itself toward proletarian positions." (p. 72)

"The Cuban state is a bourgeois state. It will remain so until the power of the workers' and peasants' soviets reigns in Cuba." (p. 69)

In its desire to reject the Pabloist thesis, according to which the construction of the revolutionary party is no longer necessary, the OCI denies that petty-bourgeois forces can ever break with imperialism and establish a deformed workers state. According to the OCI's logic, Cuba just barely misses being a deformed workers state—the same logic which allows the Pabloists to "measure" quantitatively the class character of a state. Moved by its noble desire to reject Pabloism, but limited by its inability to grasp the theoretical basis of Pabloism, the OCI adopts the methodology of "inverted Pabloism."

Bolshevik greetings,
J. Sharpe

In capitalist elections dominated by bourgeois parties and secondary issues, the act of voting in itself has no political meaning. An electoral campaign or support for a candidate is only justifiable from the point of view of building a movement for a working-class alternative. Thus Leninists seek to use the elections, parliaments, congresses, etc., whenever possible, to expose them as frauds, counterpose a working-class program and mobilize the masses in a struggle for power. In addition, they sometimes give critical support to the candidates of another working-class tendency in the election provided there is some programmatic element in the campaign behind which the masses can in principle be mobilized.

The fact that this election is marked by a massive disenchantment with all the alternatives on the part of the working class represents at least a negative advance in consciousness, i.e., more workers are aware of what is not in their interest than the last time around.

Thus there will be greater mass abstention than usual, but this rejection accomplishes nothing unless it can be turned into a movement of the working class for itself. The attempt of groups such as Progressive Labor to get around this problem simply by raising abstention to the level of a principle is worthless, as is the "solution" of the International Socialists, which urges a vote for candidates of parties which it admits can only block the development of the workers' movement with more illusions. Abstention in principle is a sterile gesture long since rendered dead by the process of life itself. And voting for a candidate whose program is fully unsupportable is an equally sterile gesture which flows from an opportunist desire to avoid telling the truth for fear of appearing "abstentionist" and unpopular.

Often a bitter pill for opportunists to swallow, the truth is the beginning of revolutionary wisdom. Besides advocating all possible revolutionary use of even the pseudo-democratic Czarist Duma elections, Lenin also sought to establish legal as well as "illegal" (underground) Bolshevik political work. Yet he struggled for years against the "liquidators" (mostly Mensheviks) who sought to establish a fully "legal" Marxist vanguard party when, under the fact of Czarist political repression, the opportunity for such a party was lacking and the attempt to set one up was actually just a cover for opportunism and abandonment of the struggle for such a party.

The IS position is carried to its logical conclusion by the pseudo-Trotskyist, opportunist grouping around Harry Turner's *Vanguard Newsletter*, which urges a vote for either the SWP, SLP or CP on the explicitly moralistic, impotent grounds that "hundreds of thousands of American socialists" should have a way to indicate that, "in fact, they do exist" (VNL, September 1972). Turner then has the hypocritical effrontery to conclude that, "we do not find a position of critical support to be warranted for any of the socialist parties on the ballot". If he really believes there are "hundreds of thousands" of genuine socialists in the U.S., why can't he find any of them actually doing anything supportable from the standpoint of socialism?

The candidates of the Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party and Socialist Labor Party offer absolutely nothing to workers seeking to break from capitalist politics, even if taken with a heavy dose of criticism. They are socialist in name only—in their program, not at all. The blatantly reformist and pro-capitalist Communist Party campaign only builds up McGovern as a "lesser evil" to Nixon,

while the SWP's purpose in running is solely to divert would-be revolutionists into sterile, reformist, petty-bourgeois and anti-working-class protest politics (see *WV* No.'s 8 and 11). And the irrelevant SLP runs candidates as a ritualistic gesture of ultimistic sloganeering divorced in principle from any concrete effort to defeat reformism and bourgeois dominance of the labor movement with class-struggle politics. In the privacy of the voting booth, one fake-left "protest vote" is as good as another. And the "socialist" vote, like the rest of the election returns, is an "index" of the workers' consciousness. But the attempt to make this over into a politically meaningful response to capitalist electoral domination is sheer illusion.

We note by way of conclusion that the IS discusses only the SWP and SLP of the "socialist" electoral alternatives, ignoring completely the Communist Party, which is not only the leading contender for the "protest vote," but also the most working-class of the lot, by its composition and existing support in the class. Is it the sheer number of illusory "alternatives" that makes the IS' head spin? Or is the IS unwilling to advocate a vote for the more blatantly reformist and pro-capitalist CP, yet unable to say why, given the logic of its argument? Turner is willing to vote for any of them in order to prove that he "in fact, does exist," and feel that he is doing something useful, but the IS abstains on not being abstentionist on the CP campaign. Perhaps the two groups should get together and resolve this, in the interests of opportunist consistency. ■

For Turner's Vanguard Newsletter, Discretion Is Indeed the Better Part of Valor: Harry, Are You Listening?

In the September 1972 issue of *WV* we began an article on VNL by stating:

"In the July-August issue of *Vanguard Newsletter (VNL)* there appears a letter from the "Committee for Rank and File Caucuses" (CRFC) challenging the Spartacist League to publicly defend our statement that VNL/CRFC leader David Fender called the cops to open up the "public" Workers League forum at the St. Louis Labor for Peace Conference. The CRFC letter charged the SL with a deliberate "misrepresentation of fact" and challenged us to a "public forum" to debate the incident in question. This is the first time in the SL's eight-year history as a tendency that the accuracy and integrity of our press—despite its highly polemical, frank and revealing character—has been so challenged. We accept the CRFC's challenge and are prepared to confront the CRFC before any body in the socialist and working-class movement. We want to make known throughout the socialist and labor movement that this erstwhile proletarian revolutionist, David Fender, called upon the class enemy to decide a struggle within the workers movement."

The following is the chronology and extracts of correspondence and published material around the Fender/cops incident:

1. 10 JULY letter to SL by "CRFC" Malcolm Kaufman, reprinted in July-August 1972 *VNL*: "If you still stand by the charges raised in your leaflet we presume the SL will accept our challenge."

2. 28 JULY letter to "CRFC" by SL: "As it happens, we are now preparing a much fuller treatment, for our public press, of Vanguard Newsletter and the CRFC. At that time we, and/or you, might be interested in a debate between our two groups."

3. SEPTEMBER 1972 *WV* article on pages 6, 7 and 10 entitled: "'Trotskyist' Lonely Hearts Club: WHAT IS VANGUARD NEWSLETTER?": "We accept the CRFC's challenge and are prepared to confront the CRFC before any body in the socialist and working-class movement."

4. 29 SEPTEMBER letter to VNL: "In the July-August issue of your publication you printed a letter signed by Malcolm Kaufman of Socialist Forum in his capacity as an officer of your joint front group, CRFC ("Committee for Rank and File Caucuses") in which Kaufman gratuitously undertook to deny and defend David Fender from the accusation, publicly made by both the Workers League and ourselves, that Fender brought the police into a WL 'public' meeting. Kaufman, jointly on all your behalfs, challenges us to a debate on this issue. It strikes us that to propose a debate over an alleged act of violation of the elementary class line by a socialist merits not a debate but a commission of inquiry into the facts to hear witnesses etc. and come forth with a finding. A debate is the appropriate vehicle for a clash of opinion. Nonetheless in our September issue of *Workers Vanguard* in the lead paragraph of our article, 'What is Vanguard Newsletter?' we publicly accepted the debate challenge.

"Lo and behold, a month has passed and we have not heard from you.

Continued failure to respond to our acceptance of your challenge can only lead us and others to conclude that on this issue, for you discretion is the better part of valor. We would also like to suggest to Brother Kaufman that he not be so hasty in the future to go to bat in defense of the political misconduct of his factional bloc partners, especially over incidents which are witnessed by four Spartacist League supporters as well as numerous others in the radical movement."

5. 2 OCTOBER letter to SL by Harry Turner of VNL:

"The letter of Cde. Malcolm L. Kaufman of Socialist Forum, Secretary-Treasurer of the Committee for Rank and File Caucuses (CRFC) of July 10th informed you that CRFC and its component organizations were ready to answer your charges in a public forum at a 'time and date to be set at your convenience.' The Spartacist League's letter of July 28, 1972 in response to that letter merely stated that you were: 'preparing a much fuller treatment for our public press of Vanguard Newsletter and the CRFC. At that time, we and/or you might be interested in a debate between our two groups.'

"In the circumstances, we consider your raucous claim that our 'delay' in responding to your 'challenge' represents a capitulation to your dastardly attack on Cde. Fender to be ludicrous in the extreme."

Get it?—to hear Turner in his 2 October letter: We challenged them to a debate, and as far as the debate is concerned our September *WV* doesn't exist,

Whether or not we ever have the public confrontation initially demanded

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by that blustering crew, what shows in this concrete case is the relationship between centrism and political dishonesty. That is, *centrism* is "revolutionary in words, opportunism in deeds" and *dishonesty* is a means to cover the contradiction between revolutionary pretense and opportunist reality. ■

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Aftermath of Munich Killings:

International Witchhunt Against

Even before the gunplay began at the Munich airport, Nixon responded to the Black September seizure of hostages from the Israeli Olympic team by initiating the opening shot in what has become an international witchhunt against Arab nationals living or traveling abroad. On September 5 Nixon called for international collaboration in hunting down anyone suspected of being an "Arab terrorist." In this election year, when myth and media have it that the road to the White House passes through Tel Aviv, and Nixon and McGovern rush to outdo each other in Zionist demagoguery as if they were running for president of the JDL instead of the U.S., Nixon's racist and sinister anti-Arab diatribe immediately found an echo as McGovern tried to outshriek the incumbent the next day before the Board of Rabbis of Southern California. For once backing up promises with deeds, a campaign of deportation, harassment and imprisonment has been launched against Arabs in the U.S. and Europe.

Many Palestinians, who often make up the educated elite in oil-rich Arab countries, are brought to the U.S. and Europe on college scholarships in the hopes of returning them to the oligarchies as pro-imperialist technocrats. And many unskilled Palestinians, along with other Arab workers, are brought into Europe as super-exploited foreign labor. The wave of anti-Arab repression has been most vicious in West Germany, where the authorities' hands are stained with the blood of the Black September guerillas and the Israeli athletes, and where 60,000 Arab residents (the largest Arab population in Europe except for France) are concentrated.

Anti-Arab Hysteria

Following the Munich massacre, the West German public was served up an orgy of anti-Arab hysteria. The mass circulation tabloid *Bild* ran huge headlines warning "NEW BLOODBATH THREATENS." Already the West German authorities have expelled nearly 100 Arabs, raided dormitories which house Arab students, banned two Palestinian organizations (the 1,000-member General Union of Palestinian Workers and the 800-member General Union of Palestinian Students) and restricted travel in and out of West Germany by Arabs (on October 4 the West German government announced that over 1,000 Arab travelers had been denied entry into Germany since the Munich events). The SPD is seeking to push through parliament a new restrictive law for aliens as a device to expel foreign workers, and a "special detachment" of the Bundesgrenzschutz ("Federal border defense") is being set up to detect and harass so-called terrorists.

In Perugia, Italy, a university town with 2,000 Arab students, 200 of whom are Palestinians, dormitories have been raided and Arab students expelled or imprisoned. In the U.S. a campaign of harassment and surveillance has been launched against Arab students, travelers, seamen and even diplomatic delegations of the Arab states by the Justice Department's Immigration and Naturalization Service, the FBI and the State Department. This wave of racist and anti-democratic repression by the imperialist governments of course emboldens Zionist terrorists like the U.S. Jewish Defense League and other ultrarightists to step up intimidation and violence (such as the October 4 bombing of a Palestinian bookstore in Paris) against Arab students and other residents.

Bombings and Crocodile Tears

Of course Israel has its own way of "avenging" Munich, first with bombing

Joint Declaration of Israeli and Arab Socialist Militants

The following statement is reprinted from Informations Ouvrières No. 577, 13-20 September, organ of the French Organisation Communiste Internationale. The OCI identifies the document as a "joint declaration of the Trotskyist 'Vanguard' group of Israel and of some Palestinian Trotskyist militants who are struggling together in the Near East for the construction of the revolutionary party and the reconstruction of the Fourth International. This declaration responds politically to the situation created by the terrorist act of Munich which delivers up the Palestinian masses defenseless to the massacres undertaken by the Meir-Dayan government, with the support of the reactionary Near East regimes and of imperialism." We note only that the declaration, which concludes with a call for a "constituent assembly of Palestine" to install a "Socialist United States of the Middle East into which the Palestinian soviet republic will be integrated," fails to also raise the slogan of self-determination for the Palestinian and Hebrew peoples, which is a vital link to defuse the long-standing national hostilities and direct the hatred and combativeness of the working people squarely against the class enemy at home.

Proletarians of all countries, unite! The main enemy is at home!

All of the world's imperialist governments, their politicians, their priests of all faiths, their journalists, their political branches in the Middle East: the government of Meir-Dayan, the Hussein regime, the Sadat government, and with them Nixon, all shed pious tears over the Munich victims or declare themselves "moved" and embarrassed over the break in the Olympic "peace."

Workers and militants, peoples of the world! Those who, today, bow down hypocritically before the Jewish victims of the "terrorists" are lying!

Mr. Brundage, president of the International Olympic Committee who bowed down before Hitler in Berlin in 1936 and who had blocked access to the games to athletes of Jewish descent, is "crying."

Those who, in 1948, sowed hatred among Jewish and Arab Palestinian workers, are lying. They divided the Middle East and Palestine to rule it—the U.S. leaders and those of all the imperialist countries, with the complicity of the leaders of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Today, they say: "Enough of the Palestinian 'terrorists'! Enough of the Palestinians!" This international unanimity is in fact a call for a new pogrom organized against the Palestinian masses.

Workers and militants, let us not forget! "They" have all agreed on the

plan proposed by U.S. imperialism. All of them: Hussein the butcher, and Meir-Dayan. All of them: Nixon and Brezhnev. All of them: Sadat, following Nasser and the King of Araby, they all agreed on the "Rogers plan" in August 1970. The Rogers plan is the political and military framework through which Hussein organized the September 1970 massacre and had tens of thousands of Palestinians assassinated in order to crush the struggle by the Arab people of Palestine for their national independence. They were massacred because, at Irbid, the Palestinian workers had built soviets to carry out the democratic and national tasks of the revolution.

Terrorism and Class Struggle

Workers and militants! At what point in history does the Munich act of terror take place—an act which is opposed to the interests of the laboring masses in all countries and most of all, opposed to the interest of the Arab masses of Palestine. It takes place at a time when strikes organized by factory union committees against the Histadrut (integrated into the government apparatus of Meir-Dayan) are developing; at a time when street confrontations in Jerusalem are taking place; demonstrations of anti-governmental solidarity with the Palestinians expelled by the army (the opening of Rafiah and the land in Arba in 1972 and of Riram and Ikrit in 1950). At a time when the

holy union was splitting apart in Israel when the class struggle was again breaking through nationalist and racist chains. This is the moment when the terrorist act at Munich tends to weld the Jewish workers to the bourgeois state and to its Meir-Dayan government, their enemy. From now on, a new obstacle has arisen to the necessary realization of unity among Jewish and Palestinian Arab workers, and through that unity, the unity of all workers of the Middle East.

The "Black September" organization is mainly the creation of some guerilla fighters from Al Fatah who have sought a way out in individual terrorism after the feudal-bourgeois Jordanian regime, acting under the aegis of its imperialist protectors and with the complicity of the Soviet bureaucracy and the state of Israel, had crushed the Palestinian organizations.

"Black September," the expression of disenfranchised elements of Al Fatah sees itself as an organization for revenge against Hussein. The death of Abou Ali Iyad (the military leader of Arafat's branch of Al Fatah), tortured to death by Hussein's executioners consecrated the failure of a policy of conciliation with the Jordanian feudal bourgeois regime, a policy with which the Al Fatah, Habash's PFLP, Hawatmeh's and Al Saika's DPFLP were associated. In every epoch and in all countries, refuge in individual terrorism has represented a tragic and erroneous response to the real problems.

The Palestinian Resistance Betrayed By Its Leadership

We—the Israeli Vanguard group and Palestinian Trotskyist militants—point out:

Before the 1970 massacres, Arafat in the name of Al Fatah, considered the butcher Hussein as his "brother"; Habash, in the name of the PFLP, felt that the problem of the political regime and the nature of the Jordanian state was not the central question to be settled. Hawatmeh, in the name of the DPFLP affirmed his solidarity with Arafat, who proclaimed his solidarity with Hussein, who received, under the pretext of the Rogers plan, tanks and planes to crush the Palestinian masses.

We say: *It is because none of the leaders of the Palestinian resistance have seen the destruction of the feudal bourgeois Jordanian state as a precondition to the solution of the problem of the national independence of the Palestinian people; it is by not drawing the lessons of the September 1970 defeat to their conclusions that "Black September" rapidly accepted once again the political control of Al Fatah, in particular after the murder of the deputy butcher of Amman, Wasfi Ta'at.*

That is why "Black September" now allows Al Fatah to act out two com-

raids into Lebanon and Syria on September 8, then a massive invasion into Lebanon on September 16. The former operation, according to the *Christian Science Monitor* of September 11, resulted in 126 casualties in Lebanon and 200 in Syria. Emulating U.S. "search and destroy" missions in Vietnam, where the entire population—human, animal and vegetable—is wiped out to find the "enemy," the latter operation was termed "combing and purging" and involved a force of 5,000 men and 200 armored cars.

Like the U.S. in Vietnam, the Israelis claim that it is only terrorist military bases that they are attacking. But of the seven villages

that were attacked in the September 8 bombing raid into Syria, three are in the far north, separated from Israel by the entire territory of Lebanon. And of the five Lebanese villages attacked, one is nearly 100 miles from the Israeli border. The September 16 raid into Lebanon destroyed a new water filtering plant serving 70 villages, one hospital and two schools, and killed 23 civilians. A taxi with seven passengers was flattened into an 18-inch-high metal pancake by an Israeli Centurian tank. Obviously, Israeli terrorism has as its aim not only revenge, but the hope of provoking a repetition of the Jordanian civil war of September 1970, when Jordan responded to Israeli raids not by counter-attacking Israel but by

wiping out the guerilla movement within its territory.

The "Black September" group which took credit for the Munich events took its name from this bloody suppression of the guerilla movement in Jordan in 1970. The Jordanian civil war was only the culmination of the struggle that every Arab regime in the Near East has waged to subordinate Palestinian self-determination to its own nationalist appetites.

The hypocrisy of Nixon's condemnation of the terrorism at Munich is duly demonstrated by the House of Representatives' recent disclosures that the CIA "Phoenix" program, which primarily consisted in torturing suspected NLF supporters, resulted in the cold-

Arabs, Reds

plementary scenarios: the fundamental one of subordination to the feudal-bourgeois regimes of the Middle East and another of terrorist pressure on governments which are in too much of a hurry to negotiate with the Israeli government.

In fact, there can be no doubt that rather advanced negotiations are underway in the Middle East. Thus a former minister of the court of King Hussein came to Israel for three months for a "cure." Thus the under-director of the Jordanian secret services recently visited his "family" which lives in occupied territory. All these visits, all these talks have only one aim: to force the masses to accept the United-Kingdom-Trans-Jordan-Cis-Jordan-Gaza which has been put forth by Hussein and Washington, or some other form of imperialist territorial division.

The recent secret encounters between Allon, the vice-president of the Israeli council, and Hussein; the "indiscretions" of Israeli journalists close to Dayan concerning the future map of the area; the statements of Rached El Charva, the mayor of Gaza, on Amman radio after his lengthy conversations with Hussein—all this on the one hand, and on the other hand the semi-official confirmation which Israeli radio gives to the Dayan plan, as revealed by *Time* magazine—all these maps which the rulers draw in the living flesh of the Palestinian people demonstrate the dead end into which the petty-bourgeois organizations have thrown the Palestinian masses.

We say: there is no other path for the laboring Israeli and Palestinian masses, for the exploited and oppressed masses on the two banks of the Jordan than that of the common struggle against the Meir and Hussein governments. This is the path by which we will liberate the imprisoned Palestinian militants.

Workers, Palestinian militants! We warn you: individual terrorism has carried out a new Al'Brk; it has facilitated a new September 1970. The peasants on the Golan heights, the Palestinian refugees herded into the Southern Lebanese camps will have no refuge when the Israeli, Lebanese and Syrian armies strike their blows. A new September 1970 is on the program of reaction in the Middle East and worldwide.

The Palestinian Masses Menaced With the Worst

What is being prepared is even more than a new September 1970, because in September 1970, even though the masses suffered serious losses, the Palestinian people remained upright. What the Meir-Dayan government, with the support and complicity of Hussein and all governments, including the Moscow bureaucracy, wants to bring about is the destruction of all the political cadres

of every tendency, of the Palestinian people. In Gaza and in the zone occupied by the Israeli army, repression is already combined with setting up of Palestinian "Quislings," the instruments of imperialism, the Arab feudal-bourgeois states and the state of Israel against the people.

Israeli and Palestinian workers, workers of the entire Middle East! Faced with the open or de facto alliance of Meir-Hussein-Frandgié-Sadat-Assad, with the failure of the current Palestinian organizations, we say:

To unite the Arab workers of Palestine and the Jewish workers of Palestine, we must undertake a common struggle for the constituent assembly of Palestine. We say that today, given the bloody dramas which unfold in the Near East, the expression of the decomposition of world imperialism, we, the Vanguard group of Israel and Palestinian Trotskyist militants, who bear the whole weight of the impasse in which the peoples of our country are plunged because of the delay in the international proletarian revolution, are discussing these difficult problems of strategy and of slogans which will allow us to unite the Jewish and Arab workers of Palestine. Thus it is with the slogan of the Constituent Assembly of Palestine, on which discussion is open in our organizations and with all militants.

There is only one road: the revolutionary mobilization of the laboring Jewish and Arab masses against imperialism, against the bourgeoisies and the caste of landowners, for a united Palestine with the two parts which constitute it—Jewish and Arab, for the abrogation of all measures of expulsion taken since 1948, for the expropriation without indemnification or repurchase of Jewish and Jordanian capitalism, and of the land possessed by the caste of landowners, for the return of the land to the tillers, against the division of Palestine perpetuated directly by Zionism and the Hashemite regime—let us unite to install the Socialist United States of the Middle East into which the Palestinian soviet republic will be integrated, whose internal legislation will be decided fraternally by the Israeli and Palestinian working masses in power.

Workers, we repeat: those (imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy) who divided Palestine in 1948, those who accepted and supported the Rogers plan in 1970, those who gave political and material support to General Numeiry who massacred all the leaders of the Sudanese union movement and the Sudanese CP—the facts, the events, have demonstrated the real content of the policy of peaceful coexistence.

The 'Vanguard' group of Israel and the Palestinian Trotskyist militants affirm their will to continue the fight in their countries against imperialism and their own bourgeoisie.

—translated by J.S.

blooded murder of more than 20,000 Vietnamese. Likewise, Golda Meir's pieties about Munich are only a smoke-screen to hide the daily terror that Israel perpetuates in the occupied territories. The Israeli government recently arrested the JDL's Meyer Kahane for airfreighting out of the country weapons and explosives to use in a terrorist campaign against Arabs living abroad, no doubt resenting Kahane for pre-empting their governmental prerogatives.

Two Kinds of Terror

Marxists must draw a class line between terrorism directed at the class enemy—such as Black September's assassination of the Jordanian Prime

Minister, the U.S. Weatherpeople's attempts to blow up corporate buildings, the kidnapping of industrialists in France by Maoists or in Argentina by the Revolutionary People's Army (ERP)—and indiscriminate terrorism, itself essentially racist in character, such as the Munich events or the Lydda massacre where three Japanese sympathizers of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) indiscriminately machine-gunned airline passengers, killing 26 (including 11 Puerto Ricans who had come to visit Christian holy places) and wounding 72. (The PFLP dubbed the Lydda slaughter "Operation Deir Yassin" after an Arab village in which the Zionist terrorist commandos of the

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of an alternative. However, he has also managed to create the illusion of an ability to somehow solve or at least ameliorate social problems with his tricky maneuvers. This, and the support he enjoys with the bulk of the ruling class itself, is based on his real though temporary successes as manager-in-chief of the executive committee of the ruling class. This includes the so-far successful imposition of wage controls, de-fusing the Vietnam war as an issue by reducing U.S. casualties, and the diplomatic "coup" of taking advantage of the willingness of the Peking and Moscow bureaucratic elites to collaborate and betray the workers in order to bail out a politically weakened U.S. imperialism—all long-advocated liberal measures. To the better-off workers and middle-class layers, especially white ethnic minorities, increasingly including Jews, Nixon provides an illusion of security for limited but hard-won gains through his barely-disguised appeals to racism over the busing issue.

Whether or not the persistent peace-deal rumors flowing from Kissinger's high-powered comings and goings are based on fact is immaterial, since in either case, fully according to plan, they can only benefit Nixon in the elections. The lesson here is that secret negotiations between a workers state and an imperialist one can only benefit imperialism. The North Vietnamese do not insist on open negotiations (they made a despicable pretext of such insistence only at the beginning) because they have no interest in using them as a plat-

form from which to speak to the American workers with propaganda for internationalism, after the model of Lenin and Trotsky's handling of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk in 1918 to reach the German workers. The North Vietnamese Stalinists naturally prefer secrecy. Negotiating only to save the power of the bureaucratic elite in Hanoi at the expense of the Vietnamese workers and peasants, their peace terms allow Vietnam to remain divided, with capitalism firmly in power in the South, enabling the U.S. to get a deal virtually whenever it wants to.

The Real Meaning of Politics

The importance of elections under capitalism is that they reflect the relationship of forces and give the revolutionists a chance to reach the workers with their program, when everyone's mind is turned to politics. At present, however, the election is entirely dominated by secondary issues, fought out ritualistically by two parties equally dominated by the big bourgeoisie. The several so-called working-class parties fielding candidates offer no alternatives, since they are completely dominated by reformism and back-handed support to McGovern and create more illusions than they destroy. The difference between this election and most previous presidential elections is that the working class is increasingly aware of its lack of alternatives, but not of what to do about it.

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Irgun systematically murdered all 254 inhabitants in 1948.)

Individual terror directed against the class enemy, no matter how inevitably counter-productive and substitutionist, is still an act of class hatred against oppression, and its perpetrators must be defended against bourgeois repression. But while one can understand how the plight of the Palestinian people drives groups like the PFLP and Black September to desperate and frenzied acts, nonetheless indiscriminate mass terror such as at Munich or Lydda is completely indefensible. The Irgun at Deir Yassin also claimed to fight in the name of the oppressed. The correct Leninist insight that the chauvinism of the oppressed is not to be equated with the chauvinism of the oppressor must not be perverted into a justification for pogroms. Thus the current bombings in Northern Ireland of Protestant workingmen's pubs is no less vicious than the bombings of the Catholic workers' pubs. Each goes to escalate the communal savagery and make more difficult the achievement of united working-class action against the real oppressors: the rulers in Belfast, Dublin and above all London.

Witchhunt Against Left

The response of the ostensible left to terrorism was a measure of its departure from class principle. Progressive Labor simply denounced all individual terror and called for "People's War"—a strategy which the Palestinian resistance tried from the June 1967 war until the 1970 Jordanian civil war, when they discovered that unless a clear revolutionary program is posed, the institutionalized terrorism of the state can outlast the guerilla terrorism of attrition. Instead of "People's War," the Socialist Workers Party called for "mass action," which they did not bother to define but which, if modelled on the SWP's practice in the U.S., would consist of attempting to organize legal, peaceful parades in the occupied territories where parades are not legal and what demonstrations do take place are never peaceful.

The Munich events have taken on a more sinister significance for the left given the slander campaign of the bourgeois press to link the formally Trotskyist United Secretariat with Munich (*Newsweek*, 18 September 1972) and the Lydda massacre (*The Economist*, 23 September 1972). This is part and parcel of the bourgeois press' drive to create an international witchhunt atmosphere directed immediately against Arab nationals but having as its ultimate target the socialist and labor movement. This attempt to rationalize in advance an international witchhunt against leftists is as ill-informed as it is ominous. The *Newsweek* article actually maintains that the Fourth International was founded in 1969 in Brussels; *The Economist* seriously alleges that the Fourth International (by which it means the United Secretariat) supplied Czech weapons to the terrorists who carried out the Lydda massacre—as if Czech Stalinist bureaucrats, timid Trotskyist revisionists and lunatic-fringe Japanese Maoists were in a common conspiracy!

While never relinquishing our opposition to the substitution of individual terrorist acts for the revolutionary mobilization of the working masses, and while relentlessly opposing as entirely outside the boundaries of class violence any acts of indiscriminate terror, revolutionary militants throughout the world must refuse to be intimidated by the vicious witchhunt smear campaign of the bourgeois press. We must come forward proudly as the defenders of the democratic rights of the Arab residents in Europe and the U.S. We must redouble our efforts to bring about the creation of proletarian vanguard parties in the Near East to expose the genocidal ambitions of the Zionist and Arab bourgeois regimes (the "progressive" bonapartist as well as the overtly reactionary) and to press forward the rights of the Near Eastern peoples to self-determination, welding together the laboring masses of the Near East for the world-wide proletarian conquest of power which alone can destroy the Meirs, the Arafats and the Husseins and their imperialist masters.

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The working class needs a mass party of its own, controlled by it and ruled in its interests, to put forward its own program in its own name and fight for a workers government. Such a party would raise demands in the interests of all the workers and at the expense of the capitalist class, and would lead the massive class battles necessary to accomplish these aims, which would necessarily culminate in the seizure of power by the working class, expropriation of the capitalists, and reordering of society for socialism. Yet such a mass revolutionary party cannot be created overnight. The many small political groups calling themselves working-class political parties are unworthy of the name from the standpoint of program. The Spartacist League, which alone maintains a consistent working-class program, begins with the premise that a Leninist vanguard party must be created through the political defeat of this fake left, which remains as an obstacle to Marxist consciousness in the working class.

The trade unions are the only existing mass organizations of the working class. But they are completely dominated by cynical, corrupt, and openly pro-capitalist bureaucrats who are thoroughly tied to the two capitalist parties. It is precisely this bureaucracy, with its innumerable ties to the capitalist system and parties, that prevents the working masses from taking up a struggle for their real interests through their mass organizations. Thus millions of workers, as yet unfamiliar with revolutionary Trotskyism and the Spartacist League, are in immediate need of a program which both breaks the hold of this reformist bureaucracy and unites the entire working class in a political struggle for power. As important as revolutionary work in the trade unions is at this time, the few cadres available can only hope to set a small example of what needs to be done. They cannot now create a mass workers party simply by their own growth and the process of revolutionary regroupment under the present relationship of forces.

The Demand for a Labor Party

It is for this reason that Marxists raise the call for a workers party based on the trade unions. The call is made because of the great disproportion in strength between the authentic Marxist working-class forces and the reformist trade unions, which makes the unions the central arena for the struggle for a break from capitalist politics. The labor party demand is an attempt by the communists to initiate and link up with tendencies within the unions making a real break with the bureaucracy on the question of independence from the two capitalist parties.

The labor party question historically has produced a recurring right-wing adaptation running from Pepper-Lovestone in the 1920's to Wohlforth (Workers League) in the current period. Their position, that the labor party is a historical necessity, is a rationalization for an opportunist two-stage theory of building the vanguard party. For Marxists, on the contrary, the labor party demand is a tactic, aimed at a section of the trade union movement, and represents the most direct route to the building of the revolutionary vanguard party in that period. A labor party is a historical possibility, but not the only or even necessarily the most desirable way in which a mass working-class party can come into being.

Furthermore, the labor party slogan can have no meaning other than a deliberately reactionary one if taken separately from the Trotskyist revolutionary working-class program—the tran-

sitional program. The labor party slogan must be seen as providing a vehicle for the struggle for this program and for working-class power. It is thus aimed at creating and strengthening an alternative communist leadership to the existing bureaucracy. The position that a labor party is inevitably necessary for the American revolution is a justification for tail-ending the union bureaucracy as the Workers League does, making appeals to it rather than counterposing a revolutionary program against it. The WL line consciously limits the labor party program to one that is reconcilable with bureaucratic reformism, and leads to support for all bureaucratic "labor" party rhetoric including hailing statements by labor traitors like Abel whose sole and explicit rationale is social-chauvinism or outright anti-communism, particularly on Vietnam.

Trotskyists and the Labor Party

Before 1938, the Trotskyists did not advocate the formation of a labor party based on the trade unions. As Trotsky pointed out, it was not yet determined whether the workers would seek their first political expression through a mass formation based on the trade unions or through a mass revolutionary party based on individual membership.

In the face of the capitalist crisis and massive unemployment in the early 1930's, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) bureaucracy pursued disastrous business-as-usual and arch-conservative policies. Meanwhile the Depression stimulated a considerable leftward shift in the masses, which was reflected in the American social-democracy (Socialist Party), through increased worker-membership and in the development of leftward-moving centrist formations such as the Musteite American Workers Party. Stalinist and Musteite dual unions also registered some surprising successes. These trends culminated in 1934 when there were three city-wide general strikes all led by professed reds—in San Francisco by the Stalinist Communist Party, in Minneapolis by the Trotskyists and in Toledo, Ohio by the Musteites. Thus, the basis for a mass working-class party appeared to be through the path of programmatic regroupment among the socialist tendencies, who were threatening to mobilize the entire working class over the heads of the official trade union leaders.

The Trotskyists actively pursued this opportunity, attempting to link up with the main motion of the masses and create by the most direct possible road a single revolutionary vanguard party standing at their head. To this end, they fused with the Musteites in 1934 and entered the Socialist Party two years later. Conditions changed shortly thereafter. It was on the basis of objective conditions and tactical opportunities to build a vanguard party existing at the time that the Trotskyists opposed the raising of the labor party demand, as it appeared that such a party could only be a conservative competitor to the massive socialist formations.

Thus in 1935, when the CP revived the labor party demand temporarily as part of its rightward turn (away from the "third period" and toward the popular front and bloc with Roosevelt), the then-Trotskyist Max Shachtman wrote a noteworthy article entitled, "The Problem of the Labor Party." After reviewing the history of the Farmer-Labor movement of the 1920's, Shachtman raised several arguments against the labor party demand. One was that since the unions had become generally less progressive and the bureaucracy more reactionary since 1900, with no foreseeable signs of change, any labor party was likely to be deliberately anti-revolutionary and there was no reason to assume that the U.S. would have to follow the British experience. An additional argument was more fundamental and not historically specific: that any call for a labor party necessarily implied a reformist program, which was how the Pepper leadership of the early CP had approached the Farmer-Labor campaign.

Developments in the American labor

movement were about to make Shachtman's reasoning academic. The radicalization of the workers and growing strength of the socialists did not go completely unnoticed in the AFL bureaucracy. A section of the bureaucracy, led by John L. Lewis and Sidney Hillman, belatedly realized that if the AFL was not going to organize the mass production industries along industrial union lines, the reds would. Despite the significant growth of the Stalinists and considerable growth of the Trotskyists, the rise of the CIO qualitatively strengthened the trade unions relative to the socialist movement, thereby reversing the trend of the early Depression period.

Furthermore, the CIO drive quickly exhausted the possibilities of working-class advancement by simple trade unionism, posing the necessity of political influence. This required the fundamentally counter-revolutionary CIO tops to weld the unions much more firmly to the capitalist parties, through identification with Roosevelt's Democratic Party, than had ever been the case before. In addition, the New Deal greatly strengthened the authority of the Democratic Party within the working class, the Communist and Socialist vote falling from almost one million in 1932 to under 300,000 in 1936. With these historic changes, the labor party question was placed firmly back on the agenda for a long time to come.

In 1938, on Trotsky's initiative, the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), with some internal opposition, reversed its labor party line and decided to make the labor party demand a major part of its program. Trotsky cut the Gordian Knot of the objection that any call for a labor party was a reformist substitute for a revolutionary party: he explained that the SWP should call for a labor party to carry out the Transitional Program. During the discussion, the context for viewing the labor party demand was made clear (Shachtman, incidentally, switched positions, causing Cannon to remark later at how well he wrote on either side of any question):

"Do we then become a Labor Party party, like the Lovestoneites or Thomases, carrying on an abstract, general, universal and perpetual campaign for a labor party? Nothing of the kind. We need a position that enables us to give the concrete revolutionary answers to the specific situations as they arise."

—Max Shachtman and James Burnham, SWP Majority discussion article, 1938

Thus the labor party demand is a maneuver, a tactical turn, a shift away from a path that has been blocked off and onto another road *toward the same goal*. It is a tactic, designed to meet a specific set of historic circumstances and accomplish certain limited goals, not a substitute for an entire revolutionary strategy. It is similar to the fusion with the Musteites and entry into the Socialist Party undertaken by the Trotskyists before 1938 in that it is another kind of attempt to build the revolutionary party through polarizing another party along fundamental class lines. At all times, we are for building the revolutionary vanguard party, standing at the head of the masses in the class struggle, by the most direct path available.

Bureaucrats and the Elections

The current fundamental attack on the labor movement by both bourgeois parties gives the labor party demand a directness and relevance it has not had for the past twenty years.

The narrowness of the union bureaucracy's left turn in walking off the Pay Board, and its generally reactionary political character, is underlined by the AFL-CIO's policy in the current election. Given McGovern's decisive lead in the Democratic primaries, the Meany bureaucracy engaged in the deliberately symbolic gesture of championing Henry Jackson, the "Senator from Boeing"—the most right-wing candidate in the race barring Wallace. Although the union bureaucracy can certainly attack McGovern (like any other bourgeois politician) for his anti-labor record, their split from the

Democratic Party was clearly to the right. The AFL-CIO "neutrality" is back-handed support for Nixon designed to help re-establish the Humphrey-Jackson leadership in the Democratic Party after a resounding McGovern defeat. Meany's hostility to McGovern reflects his fanatical anti-communism and support for the aggressively militarist wing of the American ruling class. The Meanyite bureaucracy, with its base in the labor aristocracy, feels threatened by McGovern's adaptation to New Left populism. The Meanyite bureaucracy's de facto support for Nixon, when Nixon is openly attacking the very basis of unionism, demonstrates once more that the existing labor bureaucracy is organically incapable of forming a fighting labor party. There is a widespread notion, common to both opportunists like the SWP and Workers League and to utopian radicals like Marcuse, that ruling groups are infinitely adaptable to pressure from below. In reality, the policies available to any actual ruling group, whether a class in power or a bureaucratic layer subordinate to it, are sharply limited by the needs and attitudes of its social base, an evolved complex of vested interests and its own historically developed ideology. It is precisely the inevitable rigidity of established ruling groups that make revolutions, violent upheavals and organizational splits both necessary and possible.

The existing union bureaucracy is essentially a product of the late 1930's and the systematic purge of its left wing in the late 1940's-early 1950's. Its own attitudes are unalterably shaped by the Democratic Party's political hegemony over the labor movement since Roosevelt and by the Cold War. The bureaucracy's ties to the Humphrey-Jackson wing of the Democratic Party are based on innumerable political, social and financial relations. The bureaucracy's ties to American imperialism are not only based on general support for U.S. foreign policy, but on active counter-revolutionary intervention, in collaboration with the CIA and similar agencies, in foreign labor movements. Within the working class, the Meanyite bureaucracy rests on older, white, skilled workers whose main organizational base is the construction craft unions, most of which, along with the Teamsters, are openly backing Nixon.

The Bureaucracy Can Be Shattered

Rigidly conservative and increasingly alienated from the union ranks both politically and socially, the American labor bureaucracy is now fragile and can be shattered. The new layers of militant young workers, especially those doubly disaffected by special oppression (such as black and Spanish-speaking workers), view the privileged conservative union bureaucrats, like they view the "friends of labor" politicians, with suspicion and resentment. The socially conservative Cold War labor bureaucracy finds its stranglehold increasingly precarious, as its function as the "labor lieutenants" of capital depends on its ability to channel an increasingly restive working class into the policies of class collaboration. In this context the demand for a labor party as an integral part of the struggle for revolutionary leadership in the unions and the construction of a Leninist vanguard party acquires renewed urgency.

The rising line of working-class discontent can sweep the entrenched bureaucracy from office, but in the absence of a powerful and fully class-conscious leadership it may do so only to replace the discredited Cold Warriors with a slicker version of the same, armed with social-democratic rhetoric for duping the class instead of with the old lead pipes. Those who would pose a labor party demand stripped in advance of its revolutionary transitional program, in alliance with the labor bureaucracy instead of over the political corpses of the Meanys and Woodcocks, would doom the working class to an illusory victory in the consolidation of a new "progressive" facade for the more effective continuation of the same class treason. ■

SFCC ADMINISTRATION BANS REDS:

RCY Leads Fight Against Cold-Warriors

The Revolutionary Communist Youth, youth group of the Spartacist League, chapter at the City College of San Francisco has been leading a fight against the suppression of its legal rights as a campus organization by anti-communist administrators and Student Council members since September. The mask of bourgeois democracy has been ripped away once again in an ugly move that threatens the rights of every organization to the left of Youth for McGovern on all community college campuses in California and presages new anti-communist virulence by campus administrators.

Despite its fulfillment of all the usual requirements for legal status, including a faculty advisor, 15 registered signatures and an official constitution, the RCY chapter was denied recognition by vote of the Student Council on 19 September in a mood reminiscent of the flag-waving 1950's. Campus police and police science majors, who comprise 5 out of the 14 representatives on the Student Council, contributed heavily to the rabid anti-communism behind this vote. On further consideration of what such a dangerous precedent would mean, however, the council reconsidered and took another vote, in which recognition passed. The RCY was thus legalized—temporarily.

Flanagan's Statutes

It was now the turn of the Administration to act. When RCY chapter President Sue Miles applied for a literature table on campus the following Wednesday, she was informed that the RCY was *not* legal and directed to Assistant Dean of Student Activities Flanagan. Flanagan informed her of the newly discovered rule that a motion to reconsider must pass by a 2/3's ma-

majority, and since the council's motion had only passed by a simple majority, the vote making the RCY legal was invalid, despite the fact that the chairman of the meeting at the time had ruled otherwise. In addition, Flanagan passed out to all members of the Student Council at the meeting the same day a copy of California Code Statute 25512—hastily taken out of mothballs for the occasion. The statute states that a campus affiliate of any political organization on the California ballot may hold meetings and distribute literature on community college campuses. It is completely inapplicable, however, since nowhere does it *prohibit* organizations *not* on the ballot from being active on campus. Thus in order to make his "case" more convincing, Flanagan was also forced to rummage through the barrel of blatant anti-communist laws. He came up with a statute from the State Education Code prohibiting groups that advocate the violent overthrow of the U.S. government. This is tantamount to accusing the RCY of a felony—without proof. Emphasis is being placed on the first statute, which would provide a new and dangerous precedent that could be applied against the left at all community colleges in California.

Despite the virulent anti-communism on the council, Flanagan's attempt to intimidate it with these two statutes and veiled threats that it shouldn't do anything "illegal" succeeded only temporarily. The RCY immediately mobilized supporters and began a full-scale defense campaign. Within two days, the RCY and others had collected 360 signatures of students supporting its right to be on campus. The campus chapter of the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), youth group of the Socialist Workers Party, aided in the collection.

Although it does not participate in working-class political defense, as exemplified by its disgusting refusal to defend Juan Farinas of the Workers League against anti-labor persecution, the YSA/SWP has so far aided the Revolutionary Communist Youth in this case on a strictly civil liberties basis. On 25 September, Young Socialists for Jenness and Pulley (YSJP) and the Student Mobilization Committee (SMC), two YSA/SWP front groups, held a defense rally on the CCSF campus which mobilized students to march in solidarity with the RCY into the Student Council meeting which was to again discuss the question.

Student Council Circus

The council meeting was a ridiculous circus, with students shouting out and one of the cop representatives announcing that he had to leave to go to court just before the crucial vote. Hanna Takashige of the YSJP and the president of Young Voters to Re-Elect President Nixon both appealed for the RCY's rights at the meeting on the grounds of civil liberties for all. Because of the large audience filled with students opposing the ban, both Jay Frank and Sue Miles of the RCY were able to speak at length to the body. While emphasizing their contempt for bourgeois democracy and the entire illegitimate proceedings, they explained the fraudulent nature of the case in full to the council and audience, and described the program and practice of the RCY. Miles discussed the experience of the rise of fascism in Germany and the McCarthy period in the U.S., and the need for a united front defense of the RCY. Despite repeated interrup-

tions and calls to order, she was allowed to finish amidst applause from the audience. In a roll call vote, legalization passed 9 to 2 with 2 abstentions. But the Administration continued to deny implementation!

In a San Francisco *Chronicle* article on the Student Council meeting the next day (26 September), Miles was quoted denouncing the Administration's throttling attempt as "a thinly veiled attempt to smash the left." The article indicated the tactic of the Administration, quoting Flanagan to the effect that the RCY was still illegal, but that a final decision would have to come from Administration President Harry Buttmer. Buttmer insisted that he must check the "legality" of the decision, collect lawyers' briefs from both sides, etc. This is a stalling maneuver designed to dissipate the indignation aroused by the original exclusion of the RCY by giving everyone plenty of time to forget.

The RCY chapter declared that it will not be driven off campus by "legal tricks," but will stay to fight for its program of revolutionary socialism, which includes nationalization of the higher education system under student-teacher-worker control with complete open admissions made meaningful with stipends for all students, and abolition of the degree system "flunk-outs," all military research and ROTC. The RCY rejects the theory that the students

be replaced by more open dictatorial rule by the bourgeoisie in order to crush the working class. It is in the interest of the working class to defend what rights are allowed it under bourgeois-democratic forms, but with its own means of defense, a clear understanding of the class nature of its enemy and no illusions as to the "protection" afforded by the shibboleth of democratic slogans!

The RCY chapter has welcomed the support of all groups sufficiently consistent in their democratic principles to speak up, such as the pro-Nixon conservatives and YSA liberals. A Committee to Defend the RCY has been formed around the following slogans: Rescind the ban! Full legal status for the RCY! For the right of full political expression for all organizations! End political harassment of all organizations by the state and administration! But the RCY has sought to expose the class nature of the attack and put forward its socialist program as the only alternative. In addition, the RCY emphasizes a united front of the left and defense through reliance on mass action rather than legal maneuvers and court battles, although these cannot be ignored.

A picket was held on 12 October which received only token support from the YSA and none from the Black Student Union or SDS chapter, though members of these groups had signed the petition defending the RCY's rights. SDS spokesmen said individuals had supported the RCY, but that SDS as an organization has not had a meeting yet to decide! This month-long stall only reflects the traditional Stalinist refusal of Progressive Labor, which completely dominates SDS, to defend against the bourgeoisie Trotskyists and others it disagrees with. The Young Workers Liberation League, youth group of the Communist Party, demonstrates this more directly by refusing to support the RCY's rights in any way whatsoever.



Sue Miles, RCY.



Asst. Dean Flanagan.



RCY supporters protest anti-communist ban.

as a group are inherently a revolutionary social force, and calls for political solidarity with the Spartacist League in the struggle to build a revolutionary, working-class vanguard party. The Buttmer-Flanagan gang have made clear their intentions of "purifying" the campus of any organization which seriously struggles for socialism. Their purpose is to defend capitalism and elitism in higher education, thereby excluding the working class, promoting war research, etc. This is a class attack on the entire working class and left.

For Working-class Defense!

The question of democratic rights of all groups is secondary. It is the left that is under attack, not right-wing groups that are "not on the ballot." With the ripping away of the shroud of "student government," which everyone knew was a joke to begin with, Buttmer-Flanagan have demonstrated in a small way the ease with which bourgeois democracy itself may

These groups are only digging their own graves, since if the ban on the RCY is allowed to stand, it will enable the Administration to make similar attempts to eliminate any or all left-wing organizations, and establish a useful precedent for the same purpose elsewhere in the state and country. It is essential that all organizations and individuals on the left protest the ban and solidarize with the RCY in the name of working-class solidarity, retaining fully the right to express their own views, program and criticism. For unconditional defense of the left against the class enemy! ■

Leaflets on the anti-communist ban available from CCSF Revolutionary Communist Youth:

Student Council Excludes Communists! and Rescind the Ban!

Revolutionary Communist Youth, Box 40574, San Francisco, Calif. 94140

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WORKERS VANGUARD

West Coast Bureaucrats Run Amok—

CWA Paper Launches Smear Campaign Against Caucus

The trade union bureaucracies throughout the country are intensifying their efforts to ensure their continuing survival by working out new arrangements for "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist state, as exemplified by the complete subservience of all wings of the bureaucracy to the two parties of capitalism in the elections. In such a period, it has become more important than ever for revolutionists to work within the unions to expose and politically defeat these traitorous bureaucracies which stand as roadblocks to working-class action and to replace them with a leadership committed to proletarian principles. The alternative, as Trotsky correctly pointed out in 1940 in *Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay*, is that the trade unions will be made to serve as "secondary instruments of imperialist capitalism for the subordination and disciplining of the workers and for obstructing the revolution..."

The initial form of revolutionary organization within the unions is the caucus, which is the nucleus of the alternative, militant leadership for that union. Such a caucus, based on a correct political program, must expose the union bureaucrats as unwilling and unable to fight for the class interests of the workers. Transcending simple bread-and-butter unionism, it must use its program to link proletarian class consciousness with a unified perspective of general social struggle against capitalism.

In the present period, exemplary work is being carried out along these lines among telephone workers by the Militant Action Caucus (MAC) of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 9415. The regime of Local President Loren Blasingame typifies the bankruptcy of union leadership in a period in which the militancy of the ranks has been increasing. At the end of the last nationwide CWA strike, Blasingame's administration simply walked out on an overwhelming vote by the membership to reject the settlement and stay out, leaving those who obeyed the vote to fend for themselves.

MAC's Program Wins Election

More recently, the leadership was discredited by its cowardly handling of the Franklin Street affair, in which it refused to mobilize the ranks in response to company firings and suspensions despite widespread sentiment for a strike and a one-day walk out by Franklin St. operators. Subsequently, the MAC's candidate, Jane Margolis, won an election for alternate representative to the executive board, despite the fact that her leadership-backed opponent enjoyed real prestige as a militant. The difference between the candidates was the MAC's consistent militancy, its demonstrated leadership capacity and its full political program which guides all of the MAC's actions and which was described in detail during the elections. It included such demands as: end racial and women's oppression—equal pay for equal work; equal access to all job categories; for an equalized wage system—raise the lower paid categories; end unemployment—30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay; end government control of unions—no court or cop interference in union affairs; rank-and-file control—for direct election of shop stewards; immediate unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Southeast Asia—labor strikes against the war; nationalize the phone company and all major industry under workers' control; a workers party based on the trade unions—toward a workers government (see *WV* No. 10).

The need for a labor party has been underscored within the CWA during this election period by the political maneuvering of the union bureaucrats. Joseph Beirne, International President of the CWA, announced several months ago that the union would not support George Meany's pro-Nixon "neutrality" program, but will funnel political contributions to McGovern. The September issue of *Labor News*, a newly-revived newsletter circulated to all Local 9415 members by the local bureaucrats, also endorsed McGovern without bothering to go through such formalities as a discussion among the membership or a vote.

In the face of bureaucratic support for McGovern, the MAC has intensified its campaign to dispel the illusions about the Democratic Party as a "lesser evil" and about Democratic "friends of labor," and to expose the underlying interests of Beirne and Blasingame in creating these illusions in order to keep the workers in line by keeping them tied to the Democratic Party. The MAC has emphasized in its recent literature that the Democrats, no less than the Republicans, are a political arm of the U.S. ruling class. The MAC has reminded telephone workers that McGovern called for a wage freeze long ago, voted for compulsory arbitration to smash the dock strike, and favors the anti-union "right to work" section of the Taft-Hartley Act. The MAC correctly points out the critical necessity for the trade unions to break with both ruling-class parties and assert their power politically through a labor party based on, and controlled by, the unions—a party to fight in the workers' interests and to struggle for a workers government.

Bureaucratic Venom At Its Worst

The significance of the threat which the MAC poses to the Local 9415 leadership has not been lost on them and they have retaliated with a series of vicious attacks, the most recent being a grotesquely slanderous "Letter to the Editor" of *Labor News*. This unsigned so-called "letter" had been circulating in mimeographed form until the bureaucracy, which had earlier opposed a newsletter for the local, decided to revive *Labor News* in order to print it and otherwise counter the influence of MAC.

The bureaucracy must take full responsibility for this piece of filth. The "letter" is nothing but a series of disgusting personal attacks and gigantic lies designed to discredit MAC and intimidate any serious opposition to the leadership. It accuses MAC of union busting, of being company agents and of taking the union to court—all lies which fly in the face of all of MAC's actions and its explicit program. It is a cheap and filthy slur which calls the membership "sheep" and treats them like sheep with its vile playing on male chauvinism. It stinks to high heaven of woman-baiting and sexual innuendo.

Disguised as a supposed "report" from a caucus agent to the company, "Ma" Bell, it begins:

"Dearest Mummy:
Reports from the Coast are super! Your girls have done it again. Union busting was never so fun. With their neurotic whines, the Mac Pac (better known) as the "mini-muddy-murky-multi-purpose raucus" clawed their way through another union meeting... this time the feline chorus managed to convince the sheep that their leadership was wrong for not calling a strike without the raucus' permission. Another great job done for our company by your broads.... (Strange their initials

spell out a man's name—might be some deep, subconscious lack here. After all, the only men I've seen them with are pale, shaking, downtrodden types....

"...they call for the end of government control of the unions, yet where did your star, Kathleen Strichmine, go when she was suspended—Uncle Sam NLRB." [emphasis ours]

This last point is only one of the most blatant lies. Blasingame's regime follows the principle of the bigger the lie, the better. What caucus member Kathleen Dicken actually did was appeal a company suspension based on a company charge of participating in an "unauthorized work action" to the NLRB. The caucus has never appealed to any section of the capitalist judiciary against the union.

The MAC wrote an answering letter to *Labor News* which, of course, was never published. Caucus members called at local and executive board meetings for opening of *Labor News* to signed letters by local members to no avail. They subsequently issued a leaflet to the membership entitled "*Labor News* Attacks MAC and the Membership" which pointed out that,

"The savage content of this anonymously authored letter renders everything else in the issue fraudulent, dishonest and patently self-serving.... Faced with the possibility of being voted out of office by a hostile membership, the paper is a cheap gimmick, revived by the local bureaucrats as part of their election machinery to ridicule and smear the only principled opposition in CWA."

The leaflet concludes by calling for censuring the misleaders for "an attack on the rights of the entire membership."

"Bell Wringer" Sells Out Program

One small group within the CWA which claims to agree with the MAC program, but not with its strategy of counterposing to the bureaucracy a leadership based on that program, is the group which publishes the *Bell Wringer*. This group, which is supported by the International Socialists (IS), split from the MAC several months ago and is now pursuing the kind of rotten, centrist politics typical of the IS itself, despite its early insistence of agreement with the MAC program. In fact, for a group which has had so brief a career, it has already rolled up an impressive record of despicable sell-outs. With no inkling of the necessity to struggle for union leadership based on a militant, working-class program, the *Bell Wringer* can offer no alternative except spontaneous membership action. Instead of clearly demanding the ouster of Blasingame, they say only: "We have our own criticisms of Blasingame, but we think it is up to the rank-and-file to decide what to do about him."

More recently, they declined to support the MAC demand of 30 hours' work for 40 hours' pay. Instead, they are backing the Company's "Affirmative Action Program" as the answer to discrimination in hiring! In the face of the forced transfers of six operators and the threat that more than 150 may be forced out of work, their response has consisted of a pathetic appeal to District Manager Alan Prestegard for a one-month advance notice of any forced transfers.

Several months ago, a MAC leaflet ("Strike to Defend Our Union") stated: "The *Bell Wringer* is not willing to wage a political struggle against the bureaucracy. They see themselves as a pressure group on the leadership and when they follow their position to its logical conclusion they will end up supporting 'progressive' union bureaucrats who will play the same rotten role as the bureaucrats we have now." And so it has come to pass, and in a remarkably short time. In blocking with "progressive" would-be bureaucrats, including Virginia Branning and Bobbie Williams, in the Committee to Elect Shop Stewards, the *Bell Wringer* group has fulfilled the MAC prediction perfectly.

Virginia Branning, who has consistently played the role of loyal opposition and lawyer for Blasingame, has only recently come out in favor of the election of shop stewards in order to "put the issue to rest," because it is always being raised from the floor. As the MAC has reminded the membership, it is also because she and Williams are key elements in the local counter-slate for the elections in November. She also states that she hopes that when more people become stewards, they will understand what a difficult job it is and be more sympathetic toward the leadership.

Bloc With Beirne's Regime

For fear of being exposed in its real, careerist aims, the Committee to Elect Shop Stewards has refused to meet with MAC members, despite the fact that the MAC has always been for the election of shop stewards, who are currently appointed by the local president. Furthermore, the committee's original "elected stewards" proposal gave veto power to the International! While this obvious crudity had to be withdrawn, the rotten bloc *Bell Wringer* has concluded with these local careerists still courts Joe Beirne's rabid CIA-linked anti-communist regime with subtler methods. *Bell Wringer's* opportunist, bureaucratic tail-ending reflects the classic historical role of a social-democratic grouping.

The heavy-handed and ineffectual Blasingame regime has become an embarrassment to the International, which would prefer a slicker local leadership capable of presenting a militant face while remaining loyal to Beirne. In this way, they hope to calm the growing rank-and-file unrest and undermine the impact of the MAC. Branning and Williams provide the perfect material for such a leadership. The International has already indirectly indicated its support for them through its representatives in Los Angeles and on the Local 9415 executive board itself.

Like Progressive Labor Party (which supports a Committee to Elect Shop Stewards in San Francisco), IS and the Communist Party, the *Bell Wringer* group is hoping to implement "union democracy" without undertaking the necessary struggle against the foremost obstacle to working-class politics—the trade union bureaucracies, which whatever their rhetoric are the sworn enemies of a vital and democratic labor movement because their own privileged position depends on keeping the workers passive.

Leadership of Nothing

The *Bell Wringer* has consistently refused to deal politically with the charges brought against them by the MAC. Borrowing an argument from the bureaucrats, they claim that to attack the politics of other groups would be "divisive"—as if it were not the bureaucrats who by their sellout policies daily divide and disarm the workers. But *Bell Wringer's* reluctance to politically confront the MAC did not prevent them from publishing a cowardly non-political attack on the MAC (*Bell Wringer*, 5 September 1972). Disingenuously defining themselves as "just a few people putting out a bulletin for our fellow workers... [with] no pretense of being the leadership of anything," they went on to attack the MAC for "hassling with other small groups in a clique-like and know-it-all fashion."

The *Bell Wringer* is right about one thing—they are not the leadership of anything. Within the CWA, the MAC stands as the only group whose program and strategy make it capable of leading a struggle not only for elected shop stewards, but for working-class political power. They are the only group which will not sell out the membership. The *Bell Wringer*, meanwhile, is going exactly where the MAC predicted their opportunism would lead them—right into the open arms of the bureaucracy! ■

Literature of the MAC caucus may be obtained by writing:

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