WORKERS VANGUARD

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ARVN troops being evacuated from central Vietnam. AP

All Indochina Must Go Communist!

No U.S. Intervention!

No Coalition Governments!

Life Magazine

Nguyen Van Thieu

New York Post

Lon Nol

APRIL 7 Since the beginning of the current offensive by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and National Liberation Front (NLF) against the U.S.-backed puppet regime of Nguyen Van Thieu, Saigon troops have abandoned one town after another without a fight. Beginning with Thieu's order to evacuate the Central Highlands in the middle of March, panic has gripped the South Vietnamese army (ARVN). The most experienced combat units fled from Hue and Quang Tri, soldiers shedding their uniforms and weapons, commanders leaving behind well over $1 billion in arms and literally hundreds of tanks and aircraft.

In the space of a little over two weeks the area controlled by the Thieu regime shrank to a perimeter less than 50 miles to the north and east of Saigon. While the Mekong delta to the south is still shown in white on the military maps published in U.S. newspapers, ARVN units there are reportedly isolated, without ammunition and transport and commanded by incompetents –in short, militarily worthless. Even in the "capitol sector" the puppet army is outnumbered by DRV/NLF forces and without hope of reinforcement. The South Vietnamese military command is now actually trying to seal off Saigon from the several thousand troops evacuated from Da Nang and other coastal cities where their marauding led to a total breakdown of social order well in advance of the approach of DRV/NLF units.

Although U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Weyand claimed to be confident that the Saigon army "still has the spirit and capability to defeat the North Vietnamese" as he was leaving South Vietnam last week, this view is not shared by anyone else. Asked what could be done in Vietnam, Vice President Rockefeller replied candidly, "It's really too late to do anything about it" (*New York Times*, 4 April). The only debate at present is whether the Saigon regime's future can be counted in terms of days or weeks.

Already a week ago, the leading military commentator in the bourgeois press reported "increased pessimism in the Defense Department over the South's ability to hold Saigon" and that U.S. officials "considered that the North Vietnamese had sufficient strength in the sector now to mount an offensive" (*New York Times*, 1 April). Yet in the ensuing days there has been no move toward the capital. Why?

Stalinists Say "Implement the Peace Accords!"

The reason is political. As the NLF has been saying since the spring of 1973, what the Stalinists want is to implement the

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Labor Reformism and Stalinism in the ILWU

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No Coalition Governments!

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Paris "peace" accords, and more specifically to create a coalition government of national reconciliation, composed of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG), parts of the present Saigon regime and a so-called "third force" of non-aligned elements. According to a March 31 statement by the NLF-dominated PRG, its program remains the application of the peace accords despite the stunning disarray of the Saigon armed forces; the only obstacle standing in the way of a coalition government, it says, is the tiny clique around Thieu. The current lull in military activity around Saigon by the DRV/NLF forces is above all an invitation to some kind of a coup to oust Thieu.

This is the same "strategy" followed by the Stalinists elsewhere in Indochina. In Laos a coalition government exists although there is no doubt that the Pathet Lao could drive out the right-wing generals tomorrow. In Cambodia Stalinist-led insurgents have refrained for months from driving straight into Phnom Penh precisely in order to encourage a coup against the Lon Nol regime and the formation of a coalition government with elements of the bourgeoisie. As in Cambodia, where the puppet army is in shambles and businessmen are fleeing the country in droves, the Vietnamese NLF may have increasing difficulties in finding significant bourgeois forces with whom to form a coalition government. But there should be no question about the Stalinists' desire to maintain capitalist regimes in Indochina and elsewhere.

Far from being something new, the call for a coalition government has been part of the NLF policies since it was formed 15 years ago. The 1960 NLF "Program" demanded that "this regime must be overthrown and a government of national and democratic union put in its place composed of representatives of all social classes, of all nationalities, of the various political parties, of all religions...." This is a far cry from a call for socialist revolution. Moreover, at present the PRG is reportedly discussing with Duong Van Minh, a liberal pro-American former president of South Vietnam.

To those who follow the *Reader's Digest* view that all this talk of coalition government is just a smokescreen, it should be pointed out that in August 1945 the Viet Minh under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh actually set up such coalition regimes in both Saigon and Hanoi on the basis of the existing capitalist state apparatus. In the south the Stalinists greeted the arrival of British occupation troops and went so far as to put down a popular uprising (led by the Trotskyist International Communist League) against the imperialist occupation (see "Stalinism and Trotskyism in Vietnam, Part II: Saigon Insurrection 1945," *WV* No. 20, 11 May 1973).

Trotskyists Demand "Break with the Bourgeoisie!"

The Stalinist policies of conciliating imperialism and the native bourgeoisie spell defeat for the workers. The August 1945 "revolution" was drowned in blood as the British and French imperialists proceeded to drive out the Viet Minh. The Geneva "compromise" of 1954 meant the abandonment of the south to a U.S. puppet regime which has lasted 21 years; millions of Vietnamese workers and peasants have died as a result of the refusal of the Russian, Chinese and Vietnamese Stalinists to consummate a military victory which was easily within their grasp.

Such policies —whether in the guise of "peaceful coexistence," "two-stage revolution" or a "popular front"—are common to all Stalinists and are the expressions of the interests of a parasitic bureaucratic caste sitting atop the property relations of a workers state. Fearful that an international proletarian revolution would topple them from their privileged positions, these bureaucracies seek peace with the class enemy even at the cost of tremendous suffering for the working masses.

This is the lesson of the failure of the popular fronts in Spain, Chile and elsewhere. When the Stalinists have taken power (as in North Vietnam or China), this has only been under conditions of extreme disorganization of the local bourgeoisie and the absence of an organized proletariat fighting in its own class interests. Even in these exceptional cases, what the Stalinists create is a bureaucratically deformed workers state in which the proletariat must carry out a political revolution in order to open the way to the construction of socialism.

While the Stalinists seek to ally with the "anti-imperialist" national bourgeoisie in the backward capitalist countries, the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution explains that the bourgeoisie of the backward countries, out of fear of the proletariat and because of its close ties with imperialism and domestic feudal and semi-feudal forces, cannot carry out even the democratic tasks of the bourgeois revolution. It is necessary instead for the proletariat, leading the peasantry, to establish its own class rule in order to achieve real national independence, agrarian revolution and democracy for the working masses. Such a permanent revolution would quickly pass over to socialist tasks, not halting at some artificially determined "democratic" stage.

Thus rather than calling for implementing the terms of the robbers' peace, which at this point means stopping a potentially victorious military offensive and placing in power some form of popular-front capitalist regime, Trotskyists demand that the DRV/NLF break with the bourgeoisie and take Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane. No coalition governments!

Orphans and Imperialist Hypocrisy

While the puppet army and the Saigon government are rapidly disintegrating, the Ford administration is "reassessing" its policy and accumulating a flotilla of warships off the coast of South Vietnam. Already on the scene, according to an Associated Press dispatch, are four aircraft carriers, five destroyers, a half dozen amphibious ships and elements of a Marine Corps division (*New York Times*, 7 April). The U.S. president also announced last week that he is prepared to intervene with troops in order to "save American lives," the same excuse given by former President Johnson for the 1965 U.S. invasion of Santo Domingo. Socialists and labor militants must denounce these preparations for imperialist aggression, demanding the immediate withdrawal of all imperialist forces from Southeast Asia and cessation of U.S. aid to the puppet Saigon and Phnom Penh regimes.

An integral part of these preparations is the current propaganda offensive concerning the refugees and orphans. While Ford and Rockefeller tell the public that the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who poured out of Hue and other coastal cities are "voting with their feet" the media have mounted an anti-communist campaign focusing on the bewildered faces of orphan children who supposedly must be "saved" from a fate worse than death at the hands of the "Viet Cong." That this disgusting reactionary chauvinist demagogy is consciously orchestrated by the government in order to build support for intervention and military aid was admitted by none other than the U.S. ambassador to Vietnam, who told a leading official of the Saigon regime that the orphans and refugees would be invaluable to "help create a shift in American public opinion" in favor of Saigon (*New York Times*, 7 April).

The imperialist hypocrisy of these napalmers, terror bombers and defoliators is limitless. The very planes which are bringing in weapons and ammunition to prolong the war and the suffering of the Vietnamese people are flying out several thousand babies in an allegedly "humanitarian mission." Even the tragic death of more than 100 of these innocent children in an airplane crash is used to whip up anti-communism. The fact that most of the children were fathered by American GI's and then abandoned is conveniently ignored.

The Great Refugee Hoax

As to the refugees "voting with their feet," this is another concoction of the imperialist propaganda mills. The *New York Times* (26 March) reported the results of its own correspondents' conversations with numerous refugees:

> "In the last few weeks, New York Times correspondents in South Vietnam have interviewed hundreds of refugees from different parts of the country. Each refugee has been asked why he or she chose to join the human tide, abandoning home, possessions and livelihood. "'Because everyone else is going,' was a typical reply. Not one said it was because he or she feared or hated Communism."

Who are the refugees? The overwhelming majority of them have left their homes in fear of being left behind in a war zone. Eight years of bitter experience have seared into their memories one fact: when DRV/NLF forces take control of a village or a town, the Americans bomb it mercilessly.

This is also behind the tale of the 3,500 supposedly massacred by the NLF in Hue during the Tet offensive of 1968. There is no way of determining who killed the people in 19 mass graves which were subsequently discovered. But what is known is that at the end of February fully one half of the city was flattened by U.S. saturation bombing, necessarily causing numerous casualties, and the retaking of the city by Saigon soldiers and U.S. Marines was accompanied by widespread looting and rampaging.

There are, of course, those who have good reason to fear DRV/NLF control. These are the collaborators of U.S. (and before that French) imperialism and oppressors of the Vietnamese working people. Capitalists, officers and high-ranking officials of the Saigon regime include many who are guilty of heinous crimes against the people and will do anything to escape to Paris or Honolulu. Unfortunately, many of them may succeed because of their connections and wealth.

But most of the scenes of crazed brutality, of children being trampled on and civilians shoved off boats, are the work of remnants of the routed puppet army. The reign of terror during the last days before the fall of Da Nang to the DRV/NLF was caused particularly by elite, essentially mercenary units with a long history of brutalizing peasants and workers in the guise of rooting out communism. The responsibility of the U.S. rulers and their Vietnamese lackeys for creating these bands of professional murderers is manifest.

No Coalitions! No U.S. Intervention!

Top U.S. leaders are reportedly now conferring on plans for a "limited" intervention with the Seventh Fleet and airborne troops, presumably to establish an enclave around Saigon and a corridor to the South China Sea. Socialists must be prepared to mobilize massive protests against renewed imperialist aggression,

WORKERS VANGUARD

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TELEGRAM:

Militant Seamen Protest U.S. Vietnam Intervention

To President Ford:

We demand an immediate stop to the use of merchant ships to advance U.S. intervention in Indochina through phony "humanitarian" schemes. False excuses of evacuating U.S. citizens and Vietnamese civilians are being used to endanger seamen's lives and oppress working people of Vietnam so that business interests will be protected. This is the same old excuse always used for U.S. military aggression such as in the Dominican Republic and Lebanon. Seamen and the rest of labor have no interest in protecting the interests of the international conglomerates which you represent!

(signed) Militant-Solidarity Caucus in the NMU

(a non-official, rank-and-file group of working seamen who are members of the National Maritime Union of America)

and in particular to call for action by the organized working class against another Indochinese adventure, whose victims will be the working people of the entire world.

The U.S. ruling class does not desire an essentially hopeless military involvement in Indochina, as demonstrated by the difficulties which Ford has experienced trying to obtain increased military aid for Saigon. Even in the relatively short run, intervention by an expeditionary corps cannot alter the basic fact of accelerating disintegration of the Saigon regime. The fundamental threat to a military victory by the DRV/NLF forces remains the Stalinists' own class collaborationism.

At the time of the signing of the Paris "peace" accords in January 1973 we wrote that due to the extreme fragility of the corrupt Thieu regime, the continued presence of DRV/NLF troops in the South and the difficulties for the U.S. in re-invading, "the ceasefire does not mean an immediate liquidation of the struggle and could well eventually lead to a Viet Cong victory in the South." "However," we added, "this gamble is based on the fundamental *strategy of betrayal* which has been the essence of Vietnamese and international Stalinist policy since the inception of the struggle."

With the disappearance of more than half the ARVN and the hold of the puppet regime in Saigon growing shakier daily, the chances for a coalition government with bourgeois forces and the maintenance of the capitalist state apparatus grow increasingly dim. On the one hand this may lead to intensified efforts by the imperialists to impose an enforced settlement from the outside, efforts which are only aided by the fact that today both Henry Kissinger and the Vietnamese Stalinists are calling for implementation of the Paris peace accords.

But if in spite of the Stalinists' strategy of class collaboration Vietnam should pass out of imperialist control, and a bureaucratically deformed workers state is set up as the result of a military victory by the DRV/NLF, a political revolution will be necessary, through revolutionary action by the working class under the leadership of a Trotskyist party, in order to open the road to socialism. The key task facing revolutionary socialists in Indochina is the construction of Trotskyist parties, part of the struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International, as the necessary precondition for establishing the democratic rule of the working class.

—No U.S. Aid to Saigon and Phnom Penh! Immediate Withdrawal of All U.S. Forces from Southeast Asia!

—No Coalition Governments! Down with the Robbers' Peace! Take Saigon, Phnom Penh and Vientiane!

—For Labor Strikes Against Imperialist Intervention in Indochina! Oust the Bureaucrats—Build a Workers Party—Forward to a Workers Government!

—All Indochina Must Go Communist! Forward to the Rebirth of the Fourth International! ■

At San Francisco State:

Charges Brought Against Anti-Nazi Demonstrators

APRIL 7—In the context of sharp economic crisis and an upsurge of violent racism around the issue of school integration, small but vicious fascist groups are becoming increasingly active in various parts of the country. Recently at San Francisco State University a left-liberal professor invited Bay Area Nazis to present their "point of view" to an "Advocates and Issues" debate class.

Spartacus Youth League (SYL) members in the class protested this invitation and promised a demonstration against the Nazis. On the SFSU campus the SYL initiated and energetically built a united-front "Ad-Hoc Committee to Stop the Fascists" (CSF) around the demand "No Platform for the Fascists!"

The CSF call drew some 150 to an angry but disciplined demonstration outside the classroom building on March 10. After an hour of picketing, some participants broke away from the line to enter the building and crowd the debate classroom, where they began an hours-long exchange between the professor (Ted Keller) and students awaiting the Nazis.

As the crowd dwindled in the afternoon, rumors circulated that the fascist scum had earlier entered the building, taking refuge in a nearby office. An investigation of the building proved the rumor to be true. The barricaded door of the office was rushed by the remaining demonstrators, and after some time the door suddenly opened to reveal seven Nazis protected by campus and local cops.

In flying-wedge formation the cops and fascists charged for a waiting van to escape from the enraged students. Fists flew, the fascist received a few well-placed blows; one was flattened out on the pavement. A student was clubbed by a portable fire extinguisher, following which the Nazi sprayed the chemical contents in the student's face.

In the wake of this success in denying paramilitary ultra-rightists a campus forum, the S.F. State campus newspapers, local press and wire services were filled with coverage, photos and editorials on the demonstration. Now the university administration, along with some faculty members and students, is raising a hue and cry of "free speech for all"—including Nazis—on the grounds that sadistic killers deserve equal legal rights under "democracy."

Marxists know that bourgeois justice is not "equal" and thus it is not surprising that the advocates of free speech for Nazis are now threatening to gag militants who protested the Nazis' appearance, specifically the SYL and Progressive Labor. Two formal complaints have been filed against the CSF demonstrators, with recommended reprisals including expulsion of individual students, eliminating official recognition of the SYL and PL, and banning them from use of campus facilities.

In the face of this gag threat, the SYL has initiated a SFSU March 10 Defense Committee around the demand "No Reprisals!" A petition being circulated by the committee against the reprisals has been signed by, among others, Professor Keller of the debate class; Charles Garry, lawyer; the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA); individual members of the Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB); and the Partisan Defense Committee, legal defense arm of the Spartacist League. Letters appealing for support of the defense campaign from Bay Area trade unions have also been sent.

Although Progressive Labor is one of the groups threatened with possible expulsion, it refuses to participate in the defense committee. The RSB, which held its own sectarian mini-demonstration on March 10, told the defense committee that "we don't unite with Trots" and also refused to participate. Originally expressing interest in participating in the March 10 Defense Committee, the YSA has been lukewarm and has limited its support to minimal petitioning. In a letter to the campus paper *Zenger's* (19 March), the YSA termed the anti-Nazi demonstration "unfortunate" and a "disruption."

A press conference will be held at the S.F. State campus on Wednesday, April 9, at 2 p.m. to publicize the issues and charges faced by the anti-fascist demonstrators. The press conference will be held under the auspices of the March 10 Defense Committee. Confirmed speakers include Charles Garry, lawyer; Martha Phillips of the SYL; and Darlene Fujino of the Committee for a Militant UAW, an opposition caucus in Local 1364 (Fremont). Following the press conference, a film on Nazi atrocities ("Night and Fog") will be shown by the SYL. ■

Defend Anti-Nazi Demonstrators!

The March 10 Defense Committee is collecting funds to pay for preliminary legal consultation in connection with the charges brought against students and organizations involved in the demonstration against Nazis at San Francisco State University. Readers of *Workers Vanguard* are urged to contribute through the Partisan Defense Committee. Checks should be payable to "Partisan Defense Committee" and earmarked for "March 10 Defense Committee." Mail contributions to PDC, Box 633, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.

CORRECTION

The article "Portuguese Left in Crisis" in our last issue contained a misleading sentence which stated that the Trotskyist position of unconditional military defense of the deformed workers states could include "defending or *placing in power* a parasitic bureaucratic caste which would have to be overthrown in a *subsequent* political revolution" (emphasis added) in a situation such as that presently existing in Portugal where there is a vacuum of revolutionary proletarian leadership. This non-Trotskyist formulation implies a concept of revolution by stages.

It is true that a Trotskyist party in Portugal would certainly conclude military blocs with Stalinist-led forces against imperialism or in confrontations with the reactionaries, but it would at all times struggle for the independent political and military mobilization of the working class under its own program. The only defense of the historic gains of the October Revolution is the struggle for socialist revolution throughout the capitalist countries and political revolution to oust the treacherous bureaucracy of the deformed workers states, a struggle led by a Trotskyist vanguard under the banner of a reborn Fourth International.

Toward the Weekly WORKERS VANGUARD!

Observant readers of *Workers Vanguard* will have noted that the last issue of *WV* was more attractive and readable than the preceding issues. The change is due to new photocomposition equipment purchased to facilitate the transition to a weekly frequency, which is urgently needed as the complement to the greatly expanded political tasks of the Spartacist League/U.S. As a vital, informative and polemical weekly, *WV* will be a crucial part of the continuing transformation of our press into an active organizer seeking to offer concrete leadership to class-struggle militants while providing clarity and direction in the fight for the Leninist program of socialist revolution.

The acquisition of our new technical equipment marks a significant step toward the achievement of the weekly. We wish to thank our subscribers and friends for their material and moral support to this important undertaking.

Demonstrate Against Imperialist Chief Gerald Ford!

—Immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops and aid from Southeast Asia!

—Military Victory to the NLF and Cambodian FALN!

—All Indochina Must Go Communist!

Law School—Yale University
New Haven

Friday, 25 April
at 6:30 p.m.

For further information:
New Haven SYL: (203) 432-1170
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Condemn RSB Gangsterism!

At an April 7 demonstration at Columbia University against military recruitment on campus, members of the Revolutionary Union (RU), Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB) and Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) initiated a savage attack on members of the Spartacus Youth League and trade unionists who supported the demonstration. Members of the RSB, who outnumbered the SYL at least four to one, jumped SYL members when they attempted to join the picket line, dragged three of them to the ground and continued kicking them in the head and back.

It is imperative that all students, faculty members and campus workers denounce this cowardly and vicious assault by the RSB!

8 April 1975
SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE

Union Militants Murdered in Argentina

MARCH 29--As the death toll from rightist terror squads continues to mount in Argentina (111 political murders in the first 83 days of 1975, the vast majority of the victims being leftists), an increasingly shaky Peronist regime is lashing out wildly against "Marxist" parties and all sectors of the labor movement not under the thumb of pro-government bureaucrats.

Last week a massive dragnet was mounted by federal and provincial authorities who occupied the heavy industrial center of Villa Constitución. More than 200 persons were detained in this action, including several leaders of the Metal Workers Union (UOM) at the Acindar steel plants. In retaliation a Peronist guerrilla group, the Montoneros, shot the assistant chief of police and the next day several dozen guerrillas attacked two police stations and then ambushed an armored relief column.

Despite the guerrilla theatrics (there were no reported deaths), the real action in Villa Constitución was carried out by hundreds of metal workers who occupied three major plants (which together produce 60 percent of the country's steel) in answer to the invasion by police and army units and the arrest of local union leaders and activists. After six days of the sitdown strike police were finally able to take control of the plants on March 27, but workers vowed to continue the strike.

The government claimed to have discovered a secret plan to paralyze the heavy industrial zone from Rosario to Buenos Aires. However, the police army occupation was clearly an attempt to placate jittery Peronist union leaders. The UOM section in Villa Constitución had earned the ire of the national bureaucracy by recently demanding a minimum wage of 525,000 pesos (US$350) a month and a sliding scale of wages. Given the more than 50 percent inflation rate during the last 12 months, top union bureaucrats are afraid that a rank-and-file explosion could break out at any time.

Early on the authorities detained the secretary-general of the UOM section in Villa Constitución, Alberto Pichinini. A year ago Pichinini was the principal leader of a week-long factory occupation at Acindar which succeeded in forcing the reactionary UOM bureaucracy to hold elections at this key center. (The local unions had been under receivership for the preceding four years.)

During the past year efforts by Peronist labor czars to eliminate all potential leaders of an anti-bureaucratic rebellion have included placing several "combative" union locals in receivership and murdering numerous left-Peronist and independent union leaders. One case which illustrates the extent of this reign of terror is that of a paint factory, Miluz, near the national capital.

In late 1973, following a factory occupation some weeks earlier, the workers of Miluz elected a young militant, Jorge Fischer, as shop steward and member of the plant committee. When, next April, the plant committees of Acindar metal workers followed up their successful sitdown strike with a "national anti-bureaucratic plenum" in Villa Constitución, Fischer attended as a delegate from Miluz.

"Anti-bureaucratic plenum" at Villa Constitucion. Militant

At the meeting Fischer, who was also a leader of Política Obrera (PO), an ostensibly Trotskyist group aligned with the French OCI, called for the formation of a national anti-bureaucratic opposition tendency in the unions. Although this proposal was defeated due to the desire of reformist local bureaucrats to gain the support of left Peronists, it did draw the attention of the Political Secretariat of the National Presidency. Perón's office sent a note to the painters union asking for information about participation by the Miluz delegation at the Villa Constitución meeting.

This signal set off a series of attacks on Fischer and his comrades that ultimately led to their murder. In August leaflets were distributed at the factory signed anonymously by "authentic Peronists" and threatening the assassination of Fischer and Miguel Angel Bufano, another union activist at Miluz who was a member of PO. In October Fischer's house was ransacked by a commando claiming to be police, and his father was beaten and kidnapped (although he was released a few blocks away when his abductors realized they had missed their target). In both cases the attacks were sharply repudiated by union meetings at Miluz.

Then on December 13 Bufano and Fischer were kidnapped near the factory by a gang of more than 20 armed thugs. Two days later their disfigured bodies were discovered full of bullet holes.

The authors of this crime could have been located easily, for they were seen waiting outside the factory for *four hours*. Workers reported this suspicious behavior to the police, who sent a car to investigate. However, when Fischer and Bufano were seen leaving the factory, one of the members of the gang ordered the uniformed police officer to leave, which he did. The group then hauled the two militants off a mini-bus in which they were traveling. The authorities claim they have no clues!

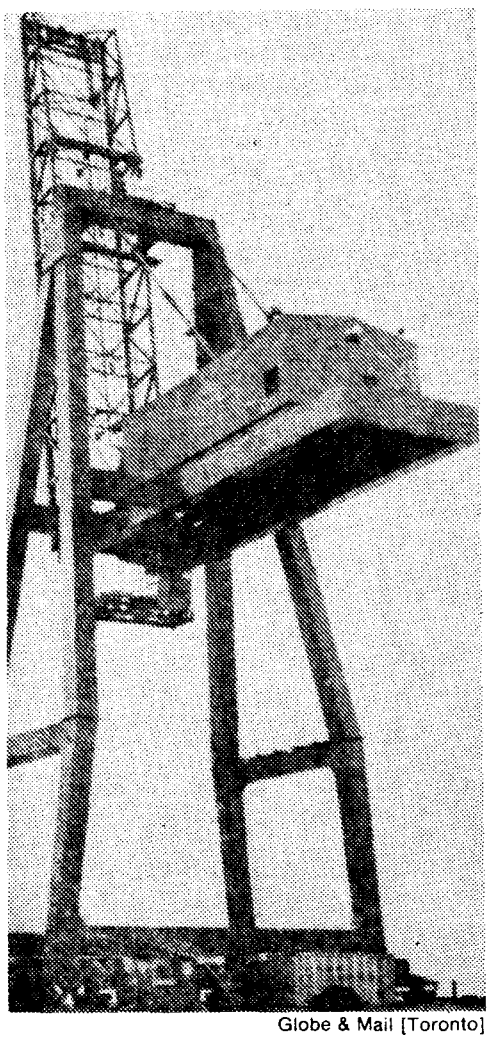
Two weeks later, in retaliation for the assassination of Fischer and Bufano, a commando of the ERP (People's Liberation Army, often referred to—falsely—as "Trotskyist guerrillas") shot the head of personnel and the manager of the plant. This stupid act of vengeance did not in any way aid the Miluz workers in recovering from the serious blow they had received, and in fact invited further attacks by the company, police and union bureaucracy.

However, another union militant who had been associated with Fischer and Bufano, Hector Noriega, did take up the struggle, attempting to put life into the frightened plant committee. On February 14 he, too, was kidnapped and murdered, along with two other leftist union militants.

The brutal assassinations of Bufano, Fischer and Noriega must be vigorously protested internationally, together with those of militants of other tendencies who have been subjected to the rightist terror. During 1974 seven supporters of the PST (Socialist Workers Party, a sympathizing group of the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" led by Ernest Mandel) were killed by anti-communist gunmen. Among the victims was César Robles, a member of the PST's National Executive Committee.

A second Argentine sympathizing group of the USec, the LCR (Revolutionary Communist League, formerly the Red Faction of the PRT/ERP), lost two of its members in December in a police attack on their house. One of these was Mario Rodríguez, a delegate to the Tenth World Congress of the USec. In the same month another member of Política Obrera, Ester Raquel Kitay, was arrested at the Buenos Aires airport on her way to an interna-

Canadian Longshore Strike Scuttled



Globe & Mail [Toronto]

Container crane at port of Vancouver.

Bureaucrats Bow to Anti-Strike Edict

VANCOUVER, March 30—A three-week-old strike by British Columbia dockers ended in bitter defeat last week as the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Canadian Area leadership acquiesced to emergency federal strikebreaking legislation. The longshoremen were forced back to work under the terms of their old contract, subjected to binding arbitration on disputed issues, and denied the right to strike until 1977. This pitiful capitulation by the ILWU brass now opens the door for similar anti-strike laws to be used against other workers under federal jurisdiction, notably postal employees.

The dockers were not even given a chance to vote on whether to obey the government edict. No doubt fearing a repeat of the contract vote only a few days earlier, when the membership heavily rejected a settlement recommended by the leadership, the union bureaucrats simply told the ranks to return to work at "informational" local meetings on March 26.

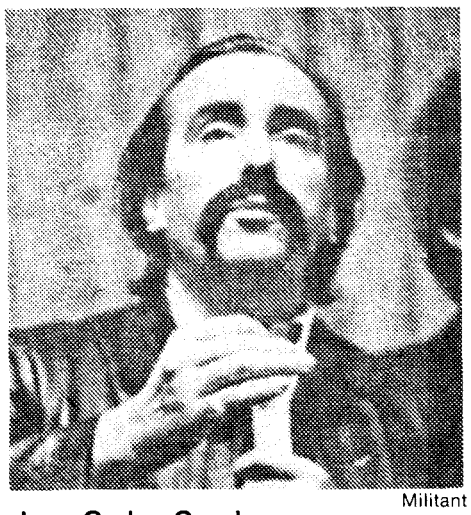
Leaflets were circulated at the Local 500 meeting here calling on the union to defy the back-to-work legislation, as well as calling for a coast-wide longshore strike and for solidarity from other unions (notably postal and government workers) leading to a British Columbia-wide general strike against government strikebreaking. However, according to longshoremen interviewed by a *WV* reporter, when a militant attempted to raise a motion containing these demands during the meeting he was ruled out of order. When he challenged this undemocratic ruling by the chair, the challenge was also ruled out of order.

This is the second time in 30 months that the federal government has smashed a West Coast longshore strike. As in September 1972, the anti-strike law received support from the parliamentary caucus of the social-democratic NDP (New Democratic Party). NDP Leader Ed Broadbent tried to cover up this despicable scab action by moving an amendment to the law stipulating a minimum wage increase of $1.15 per hour (an offer the strikers had already rejected). But when this was turned down, the NDP voted for the government's strike-breaking legislation anyway.

ILWU Canadian Area president Don Garcia charged that the law "emasculates the union." But the main force crippling the union in the fight against layoffs and inflation, preventing an effective defense against the government/employer attack, is the pro-capitalist labour bureaucracy.

What is needed to replace the sellout labour tops is a leadership committed to a program for victory in the class struggle, for the expropriation of industry and the creation of a planned economy under a workers government. Only the construction of opposition caucuses in the unions based on such a transitional program can prevent future sellouts such as this.■

Jorge Fischer Politica Obrera



Juan Carlos Coral Militant

tional meeting of the OCI-led "Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International." Kitay was subsequently severely tortured by the authorities.

The wave of terror against leftist and militant labor activists in Argentina, whether carried out openly by the police or covertly by the "Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance," is clearly the responsibility of the treacherous Peronist leaders. Although placed in office by the workers' votes, Peronism is a bourgeois populist movement which is prepared to destroy the unions if necessary to maintain capitalist rule.

However, this did not stop the opportunists from capitulating to the popularity of "el gran líder." When the Peronists won the March 1973 elections PO termed this "an unquestionable triumph of the working class against the military *gorila* clique" (*Política Obrera*, 19 March 1973). The PST went even further, offering critical support to the "positive measures" of the Peronist regime of Hector Cámpora and declaring, "Without confusing the banners, Dr. Cámpora can count on our proletarian solidarity" (*Avanzada Socialista*, 30 May-6 June 1973)!

In contrast, we wrote at that time that:

> "...the current Peronist regime will be a government of reaction....The regime will employ any means necessary to firmly establish bourgeois 'law and order' even if this means outlawing all 'communist' organizations, government 'intervention' into militant unions and massacres of striking students and workers. To call for critical support, tolerance, negotiations for a workers program or any policy other than intransigent opposition to the Cámpora government is to abandon the path of proletarian revolution and prepare the way for the massacres."
>
> "Argentina: The Struggle Against Peronism," *WV* No. 24, 6 July 1973

Today, as Peronist union leaders talk of going into opposition to the government of Isabel Perón (without, however, breaking from Peronism), we must reiterate our warning and state once again that only a Trotskyist policy of working-class independence can lead to victory for the socialist revolution. Bourgeois populism, Stalinist popular frontism and Castroite guerrillaism mean defeat and bloody massacres.■

We reprint below a leaflet published by the Los Angeles Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League (SL/SYL) on the occasion of a speech given there by Juan Carlos Coral, leader of the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers Party). Coral is currently on national tour putting forward the views of the minority of the "United Secretariat," of which the PST is a sympathizing organization and with which the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP) has fraternal relations (claiming that it is prevented from joining the USec because of reactionary legislation in this country).

While sharply criticizing Coral's capitulationist line toward the Peronist regime, SL/SYL members helped physically repel a goon squad attack at his speech in Chicago. In Los Angeles, the SL/SYL was officially requested by representatives of the SWP to participate in defense squads for Coral's two public meetings, which we did. We are ready to defend his right to speak elsewhere despite the profound political differences which separate us from the PST's social-democratic reformism.

The Reformist Tricks of Juan Carlos Coral:

On Wednesday (March 12th) when Compañero Coral spoke at UCLA, members of the Spartacus Youth League asked him why:

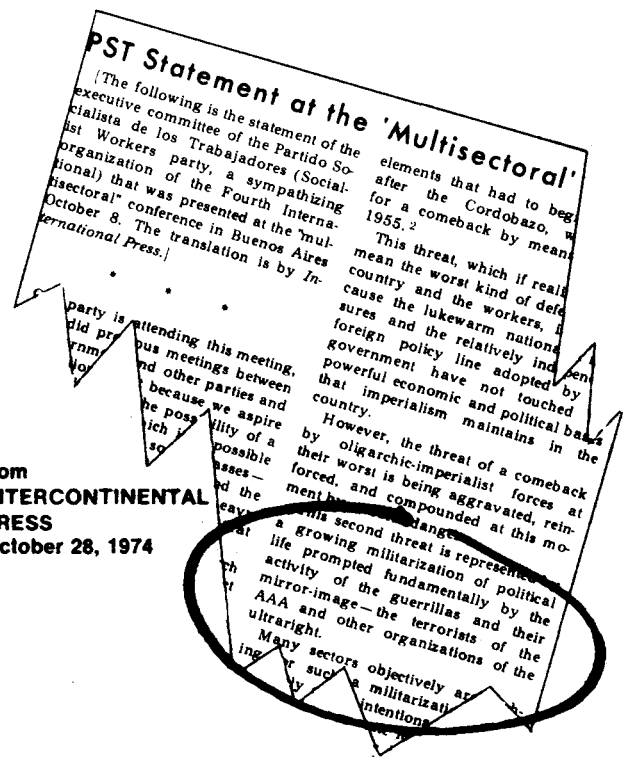
- The PST had denounced the Argentine guerrillas as the "mirror-image" of the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance and other organizations of the ultra-right.
- The PST pledged itself to "fight for the continuity of" the Peronist government, when that government was itself backing the right-wing terror.
- The PST had a consistent record of capitulation to Peronist pressures.

These very grave charges are documented in the leaflet attached, which was also distributed Wednesday.

What was Coral's response? The most disgusting demagoguery, evasion, slander and outright lies.

To the first charge Coral replied: But we never said that.

Our response:



PST Statement at the 'Multisectoral'

[The following is the statement of the executive committee of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (Socialist Workers party, a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International) that was presented at the 'multisectoral' conference in Buenos Aires October 8. The translation is by *International Press.*]

party is attending this meeting, did pr... ...us meetings between ...nd other parties and ... because we aspire ...he poss...ility of a ...ich ... possible ...sses— ...d the ...

...elements that had to beg... after the Cordobazo, ... for a comeback by means ... 1955.[2]

This threat, which if realiz... mean the worst kind of defe... country and the workers, ... cause the lukewarm nationa... sures and the relatively ind...pen... foreign policy line adopted by ... government have not touched ... powerful economic and political base ... that imperialism maintains in the country.

However, the threat of a comeback by oligarchic-imperialist forces at their worst is being aggravated, reinforced, and compounded at this mo... ...this second threat is represented ... a growing militarization of political life prompted fundamentally by the activity of the guerrillas and their mirror-image—the terrorists of the AAA and other organizations of the ultraright.

Many sectors objectively ar... ...r such a militarizati... ...intentions...

from INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS October 28, 1974

This is taken from the official translation reproduced by the PST's loyal co-thinkers. WHAT IS CORAL'S ANSWER TO THIS? Can you imagine Lenin calling the Social Revolutionaries the "mirror-image" of the Black Hundreds, comrades of the PST and SWP?

Coral further hinted that the members of the Spartacus Youth League were armchair enthusiasts of guerrilla warfare, like those who criticized the PST from, he says, "comfortable offices in Paris."

Comrade Coral is clearly directing his insults at the wrong target –he has confused the international Spartacist tendency with the centrists who make up the majority of the organization the PST sympathizes with, the "United Secretariat of the Fourth International." This group, *like the overwhelming majority of the predecessor group to the PST did in the '60's,* advocated the dead-end guerrilla road.

The Spartacist League, *unlike the SWP and top PST leader Nahuel Moreno,* has never abandoned a Leninist critique of guerrillaism. The SL was born in the struggle against the capitulation to Fidel which took place inside the SWP.

Does Coral deny that Moreno and the SWP used to advocate the guerrilla road? They have not abandoned it today out of a concern for Leninist proletarian struggle, but are instead motivated by a fear of upsetting the bourgeoisie. We have never endorsed guerrillaism, *nor* do we equate the comrades of the ERP [Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo—Revolutionary People's Army, whose leaders were formerly the official representatives of the United Secretariat in Argentina] with the ultra-right today. The PST statement quoted above is not criticism, but craven capitulation. To find a consistent *left* criticism of guerrillaism, you must look to the Spartacist League.

It is also unlikely, Comrade Coral, that any attacks on the politics of the PST will come from the supporters of the United Secretariat majority in the United States. Leaders of this group were observed vigorously applauding you in Chicago, and they will hesitate to raise any strong criticism because it would "be unpopular" in this audience, *and* hurt their chances of crawling on their bellies back into the SWP.

To the other charges of the SYL, Coral had one basic response: demagoguery. While he *admitted* that the PST "fights for the continuity" of the government, (a very different approach than that of Lenin and Trotsky), his weapon was only the cheapest of insults. Yes, Comrade Coral, we do keep records of the writings of the PST, just as Comrade Trotsky kept such records. This, we know, prevents you from rewriting history, but it is a weapon in the service of the working class.

The charge that people, whether in New York, or Los Angeles, or Paris should not presume to comment on what is happening in Buenos Aires and Córdoba, is the most revolting anti-internationalism. It is not, however, original. We last heard it in the service of Allende's popular front road to defeat.

To the SWP we point out: Coral is a photograph of the road you are travelling. You admire his influence, his ability to gain audiences with Perón. You overlook the fact that he *boasts* of capitulations which you label "unfortunate formulations." Soon you will boast of all the PST's capitulations too. We are confident, however, that in the class struggles to come you will be exposed before the working class as the social democrats you really are.

To the supporters of the United Secretariat majority we say: Your leadership tells you to go back into the SWP, which is so clearly rotten, and tells you that it is Trotskyist with slight "deviations." Your leaders shrink from exposing Coral in public. This alone must tell you that you are not in a revolutionary organization!

To the others in the audience: As you can clearly see, this is not some obscure and "sectarian" debate, as the SWP and Compañero Coral will claim. It is, instead, of burning and immediate importance. If you are an academic dabbler in Latin American studies, you can ignore the issues we raise. If not, you too will demand of Coral a response on why he lied, and on the treacherous record of the PST.

SPARTACIST LEAGUE
SPARTACUS YOUTH LEAGUE

Labor Reformism and Stalinism in the ILWU

Harry Bridges and the Co

The legend of Harry Bridges as a fighting "rank-and-file" leader of American labor, and of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) as a militant left-wing union has grown dull with tarnish. Where is the militancy of a union whose leadership has permitted the number of longshore jobs to be slashed by more than half as a result of successive "Modernization and Mechanization" deals with the maritime bosses? What kind of fighting spirit is there in bureaucrats who order ILWU longshoremen to scab on their brothers *in other locals of the same union*, by shipping scab borax during the bitter 1974 Boron strike and now handling goods diverted from Vancouver in the recent Canadian dock strike?

Who believes any more in the fine words of ILWU resolutions about labor solidarity with Chilean workers and the United Farm Workers, or against the Vietnam war, when they know that the International leadership sabotaged the boycott of goods to and from Chile, has moved scab grapes for years, and never stopped loading war matériel to Vietnam—even during the 1971-72 strike? And what is left-wing about San Francisco Port Commissioner Harry Bridges who collaborates with the shipping companies' politicians such as Joseph "Operation Zebra" Alioto and ostentatiously crosses the picket lines of the ILWU's own office workers? There is indeed little glimmer left of the great militant traditions of the strikes of 1934 and 1936-37 out of which the union emerged.

Even the cravenly reformist Communist Party (CP), the chief builder of the Bridges legend since the 1930's, has been forced to publicly recognize that something is wrong in order to maintain the most minimal credibility as a pro-working-class organization. The CP still refuses to call for Bridges' ouster, or even to criticize him by name (instead it refers obliquely to unnamed "non-struggle elements"). But the "M and M" contracts of 1960 and 1966, which at the time were uncritically reported in the pages of *People's World* (West Coast CP weekly) as "precedent-shattering" and "a revolution," now come in for criticism in a recent series of articles on the union.

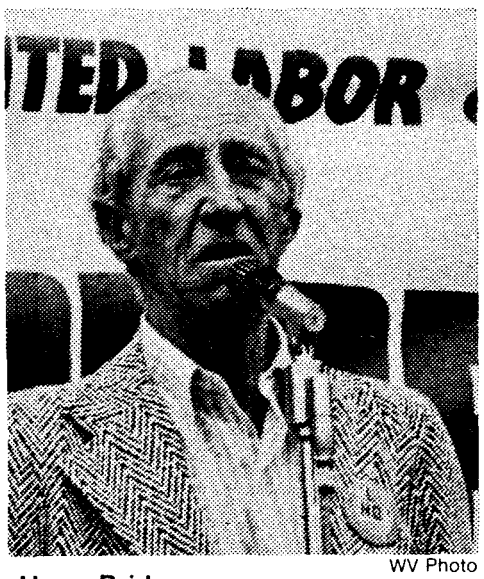
The Stalinist Archie Brown, a well-known spokesman for CP views in the union, still plays a compromising role that helps keep Bridges in power, but he uses his editorship of the Local 10 "Longshore Bulletin" to make oblique criticisms of the leadership. *People's World* (19 October 1974) even dares to criticize Bridges' alliance with Alioto, despite the CP's own sorry history of support for Democratic Party politicians.

The Record Begins Early

There is historical truth to the ILWU legend that lies beneath the years of accumulated tarnish. The 1930's strikes were great struggles which made big gains for the working class; the government spent years trying to deport Bridges for "Communism" (a label that never fit); and though he was never more than an opportunist union bureaucrat, Bridges did refuse to go along with the cold-war McCarthy-period witchhunt. Beyond that the "legend" is so much bunkum, dreamed up by the Communist Party to cover a record of class collaborationism, grossly racist national chauvinism and other betrayals. The real story is one of endless sordid betrayals of the working class, betrayals which flow inevitably from the simple trade unionism of Harry Bridges and the Stalinist reformism of the Communist Party. The record begins with the very origins of the union.

In the early 1930's, the CP was in its ultra-left "Third Period" phase—on Stalin's orders social-democratic and trade-union leaders were denounced as "social-fascists" and the CP was instructed to set up its own separate "revolutionary" unions. In San Francisco this took the form of the Marine Workers Industrial Union (MWIU), which counterposed itself to the conservative, AFL International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). In maritime as in other industries the "Third Period" dual unions were artificial contrivances which failed completely to mobilize the masses of workers. When an upsurge began in 1933, workers left the company union and joined the ILA, not the MWIU. As preparation for its later right turn, the CP in effect admitted the failure of the "red" union by calling for MWIU groups to be formed in the ILA (see *Western Worker*, the predecessor of *People's World*, 17 July 1933).

At about the same time a grouping known as the "Albion Hall" group (after the hall where they met), arose in the ILA under the leadership of Harry Bridges. It called for unification of longshoremen on a coast-wide basis, uniform working conditions, a master contract rather than separate port agreements, and union hiring halls. Many personally courageous



WV Photo

Harry Bridges

CPers participated in this group, helping to lead the well-known 1934 strike.

Out of this strike emerged the Maritime Federation of the Pacific—a grouping of seven maritime unions which took as its motto the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all"—which could have led to a militant industrial maritime union. The details of this struggle—in which longshoremen secured most of their demands, most notably the union hiring hall—will not be recounted here. Suffice it to note that it was lucky for the CP that the strike did not occur before it did. Had it broken out earlier, the Stalinists would have denounced Bridges as a "social-fascist" for not leaving the ILA, and a bloc with him would have been out of the question.

From the "Third Period" to the Popular Front

The "Third Period" was so destructive of working-class unity that in Germany Hitler came to power without a serious struggle against fascism by the world's most powerful workers organizations. It was after this disaster for the world proletariat that Stalin began to take fright and now desperately sought to make alliances with the so-called "democratic" bourgeoisie in order to deter a German invasion of the USSR in the expected World War. In countries courted by Stalin as future military allies, the Communist Parties were instructed to subordinate the class struggle to "popular front" alliances with liberal sections of the ruling class willing to ally with the Soviet Union. This policy led to the bloody betrayal of the working class in Spain and other countries as the liberal bourgeoisie predictably proved to be more afraid of the workers than of the fascists.

The new Stalinist policy meant re-entering the unions to ally with officials who were only yesterday denounced as "social-fascists." On the Bay Area waterfront, the Stalinists immediately sought respectability. They viewed with alarm the continued job actions of seamen who wanted to extend some of the gains of the 1934 strike to the ships. They used their influence in the Maritime Federation of the Pacific to justify moving "hot cargo" when ships that had been struck by a Stalinist-controlled seamen's group in New York sailed into San Francisco. They also organized electoral support for the Democrat Roosevelt, thus reinforcing the class collaborationism of the trade-union bureaucracy and helping prevent the militancy of the big strikes from leading to the creation of a mass workers party.

"Collective Bargaining is Class Collaboration"

The right turn of the CP coincided with Bridges' developing position. From rank-and-file militant in 1934, Bridges had become a trade-union bureaucrat, debating employer representatives before fashionable audiences in San Francisco and eager to find a *modus vivendi* with capitalism which would at the same time preserve the longshore union. "Class collaboration can't be condemned in a flat, general statement," he said in 1939. "Collective bargaining is class collaboration" (quoted in Charles Larrowe, *Harry Bridges*).

It was this spirit that Bridges brought to the strike and negotiations in 1936: protect the members' interests through collaboration with the bosses. More specifically, since longshoremen had less to gain from a strike in 1936 than the seamen, who had yet to get recognition for their hiring halls and ship delegates, Bridges sought to arrive at a separate settlement for West Coast ILA longshoremen. Employer intransigence and immense pressure from the mobilized rank and file prevented this, but Bridges sought respectability by every available means. Together with the Stalinists, he managed to delay the strike for a month ("to help get Roosevelt elected"), then acceded to employer demands to move "perishable cargo" during the strike.

The latter demand caused division within the Maritime Federation, as Bridges and the Stalinists tried to force this betrayal on the newly elected and more militant syndicalist leaders of the Sailors Union of the Pacific. In the 1934 strike, maritime solidarity had been so strong—including members of all the different unions as well as the unaffiliated, not only longshoremen but also sailors, cooks and stewards, maritime engineers and firemen, even mates and pilots—that as soon as a ship hit the port of San Francisco its entire crew would walk off in support of the longshoremen. This tradition and the rules of the Maritime Federation, according to which none of the unions could return to work until all were satisfied, served to frustrate the determined efforts of Bridges and the Stalinists to sabotage the strike.

"Take the Fink Book"

The Roosevelt government was another major factor in the West Coast maritime strike. The maritime industry was particularly important to the U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie in its drive for hegemonic world control in a new world war. World conquest depended on secure shipping, which depended on disciplined maritime labor. The capitalist class was horrified by the results of the 1934 strike, and sought desperately to reverse its gains and find some way to control the workforce.

In 1936 the U.S. Congress passed the Copeland Bill, which sought to discipline seamen through the use of a "continuous discharge book." This "fink book" (as it was more accurately referred to by the seamen) would have enabled employers to spot agitators and union militants by their employment records, and was thus a blow at the hiring halls and the very unions themselves.

The attempt to introduce it coincided with the 1936-37 strike. For three months ships on both coasts were tied up as the government and employers sought to smash the hiring hall and seamen refused to take the "fink book." In the middle of this struggle, the CP came out with the incredible line, "Take the Fink Book and

The Stalinist Myth of Harry Bridges

"I'll sing you the Tale of Harry Bridges
Left his parents and his home
He sailed acrost that rollin' ocean
And into Frisco he did roam.

Now Harry Bridges saw starvation
Was a creepin' along that ocean shore
'Gonna get good wages for th' Longshoremen!"
That's what Harry Bridges swore."

— from "The Ballad of Harry Bridges"
by Woodie Guthrie
People's World, 4 August 1939

mmunist Party

burn it on the Capitol steps on May Day"!

> "They didn't bother to explain, of course, how thousands of seamen scattered on ships in every port in the world would manage to get their Fink Books back to Washington in time for the bonfire. At best it could have been little more than a token burning."
>
> Frederick Lang, *Maritime, A Historical Sketch and a Workers Program* (1945)

The "militant" Harry Bridges chimed in with the same line: in a speech to striking longshoremen and seamen he said flatly, "If refusing to take the Fink Book means continuing this strike, I say take the Book" (*ibid.*).

Despite the Bridges/CP backstabbing and capitulation, the ranks held solid. After 99 days the employers gave in and recognized the union hiring hall. The "fink book" was never introduced, although the government was able to force through official registration of seamen. Following the strike, Bridges broke with the ILA (which had loaded ships in Atlantic Coast ports while rank-and-file seamen were walking off in sympathy with the West Coast strikers) to form the ILWU. But under the weight of the divisive tactics of Bridges and the Stalinists, the Maritime Federation of the Pacific effectively ceased to function.

Revolutions? "Leave them to Earl Browder"

Thus Bridges and the CP consolidated a bloc based on common fundamental aims. Both sought to collaborate with the bourgeoisie, or at least with its more "enlightened" wing: Bridges in order to become and remain a successful trade-union bureaucrat, pressuring for reforms within the system; and the Stalinists in order to slavishly follow the foreign policy dictates of the ruling bureaucratic stratum in Moscow.

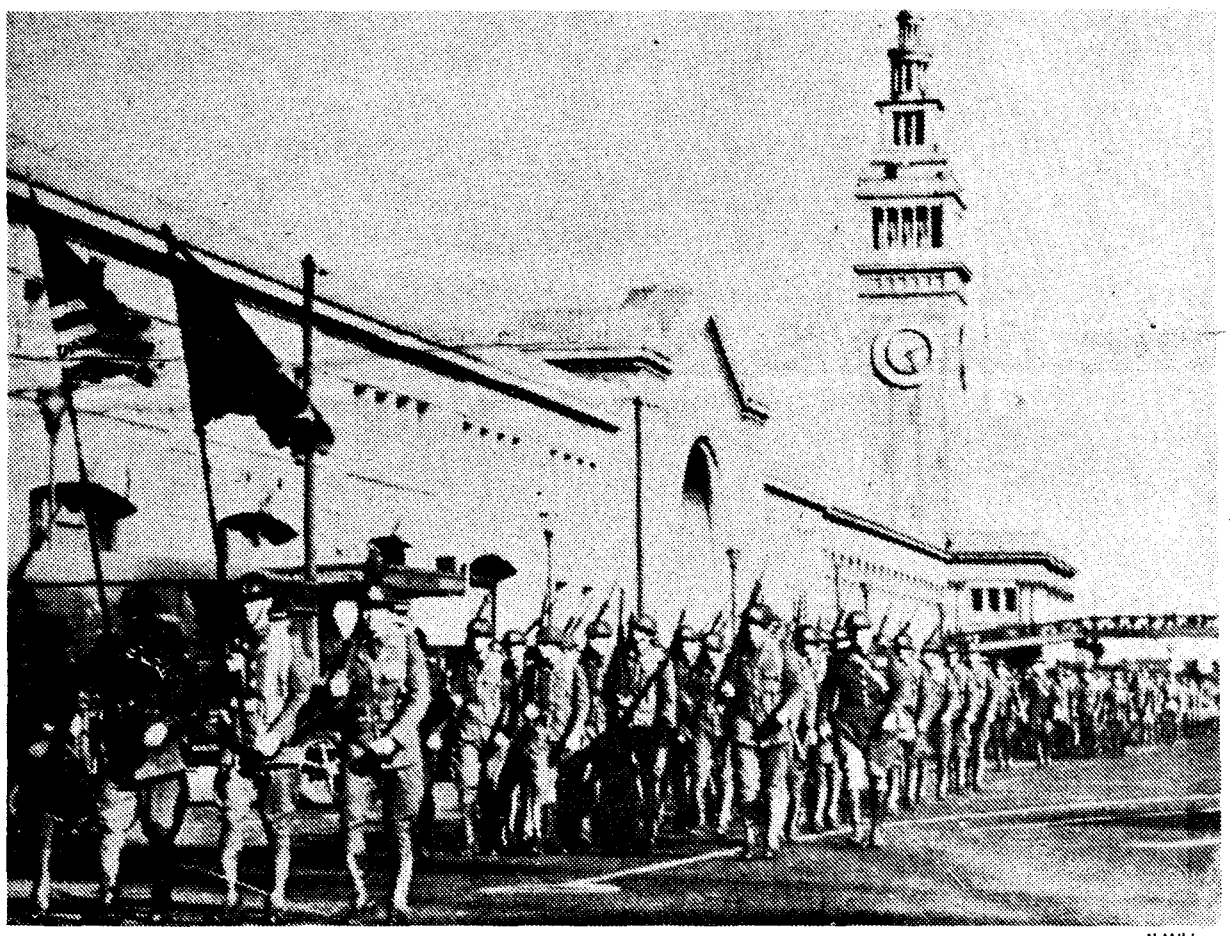
Bridges laid bare the nature of this bloc, and his role in it, at a deportation hearing in 1939, the first serious attempt by the government to deport him. Questioned extensively on his view of communism, Bridges pointed to the differences in stated goals:

> "I have no opinions on revolutions, except that they have happened in the past and they can conceivably happen in the future....Leave them to [CP head] Earl Browder; that is apparently his job. But my job is hours, wages and working conditions...."

He also repeatedly affirmed his loyalty to the "American system":

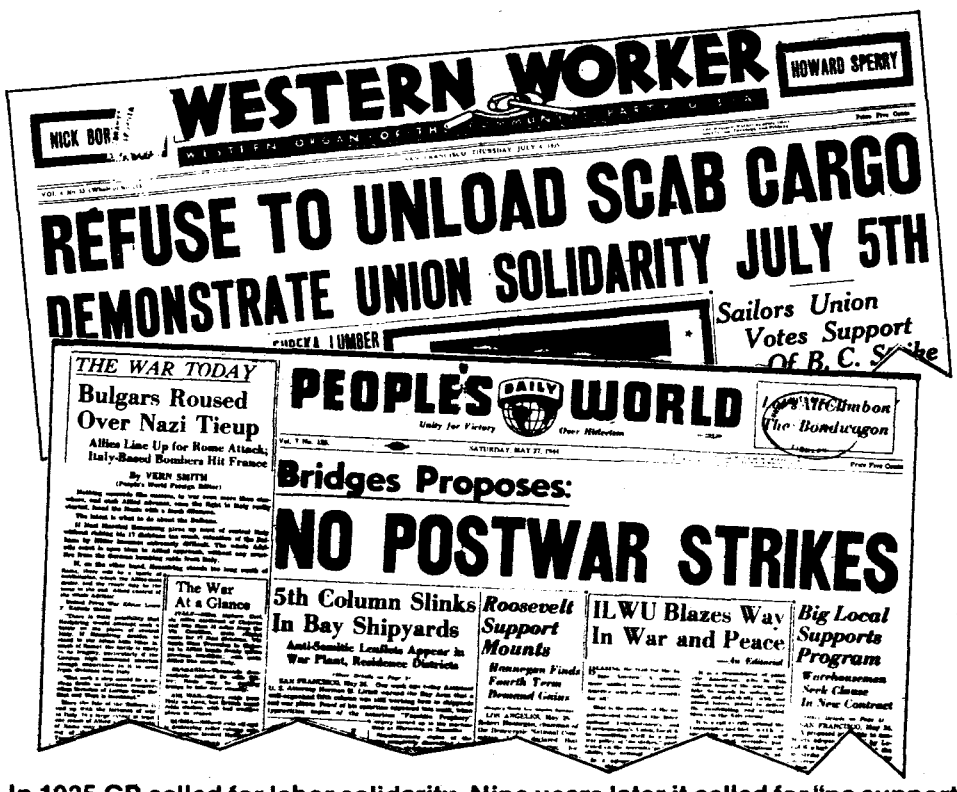
> "Very frankly, my knowledge of the Soviet Union is general. I have worked on ships where men have just come back from the Soviet Union; I have spoken to them...raised a lot of questions with regard to the dictatorship, the proletariat, and what not. I don't think the American form of government, as I read the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, can be bettered in any place in the world."

Bridges pointed out in the same hearing that he would oppose the seizure of power by the workers if this involved violence, and respected the protection of private property contained in the Bill of Rights. He explained his alliance with the Stalinists as one of expedience, defending the right of union members to hold CP views, but pointing out that if some party members in the union got "out of line," he would call up the CP and say "I don't like it" (quoted in Larrowe).



ILWU

National Guard mobilized to break 1934 West Coast longshore strike. San Francisco workers responded with general strike.



In 1935 CP called for labor solidarity. Nine years later it called for "no support" to strikes (i.e., scabbing).

CP, Bridges—Most Rabid Patriots

This was hardly the defense of a revolutionist on trial, but it was just what the Stalinists wanted on the part of their trade-union allies—not collaboration in the building of a revolutionary working-class movement preparing to overthrow capitalism, but a pipeline to collaboration with the capitalists preparing for war.

During the war itself, the Stalinists and their social-patriotic friends such as Bridges became the most rabid, pro-war patriots imaginable, ready to sell every gain of the workers in return for successful prosecution of the war. The fact that the U.S. fought for its own imperialist goals, totally counterposed to the world working class, was totally ignored by the CP and, of course, meant nothing to Bridges.

Only a brief interlude, the period of the temporary Hitler-Stalin pact (September 1939—June 1941), separated the social-patriotism and popular-frontism of the late 1930's from its culmination in total submission to the war. Not surprisingly, some of the CP's trade-union allies were more than a little uncomfortable with the sudden anti-FDR and anti-war about-face of the Hitler-Stalin pact period.

An ILWU resolution typified the handling of this problem by the CP. Instead of pushing for an immediate anti-fascist war, as previously, the resolution sought to reassure the bourgeoisie of the ILWU's *general* loyalty:

> "...this convention pledges its wholehearted support and loyalty to our government and the nation for REAL national defense and preparedness...and further that we go on record pledging full support to our country in case of national emergency, invasion or aggression against enemies from without or within." [emphasis in original]
>
> —*People's Daily World*, 14 April 1941

When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the headlines in CP papers flipped immediately from "The Yanks Are Not Coming!" to "Invade Europe Now!" Bridges, the CP and the entire trade-union bureaucracy made a "no-strike pledge" in support of the war. The bourgeoisie ignored the demand "Invade Europe Now," preferring to see Germany and the Soviet Union destroy each other, thereby paving the way for U.S. hegemony as well as the destruction of the world's first workers state. Stalin's class-collaborationist "defense" of the Soviet Union (both the pacts with the Axis powers and those with the "democratic" imperialists) was thus as futile as it was a betrayal.

The No-Strike Pledge

The no-strike pledge, however, was more to the capitalists' liking. And Bridges and the Communist Party were the *most vehement* of all in its application:

> "The Communist Party pledges its loyalty, its devoted labor and last drop of its blood in support of our country....
> "In all factories and workshops of America the voice of freedom must be heard in the quickened pace of machines....
> "*Everything for national unity!*
> "Everything for victory over worldwide fascist slavery!
> "Signed, National Committee, Communist Party, Wm. Z. Foster, National Chairman..." [emphasis in original]
>
> —*People's Daily World*, 9 December 1941

Working conditions on the docks rapidly deteriorated. The CP's one request was that it and its allies be allowed to participate with management in this enslavement of the workers for the war. The ILWU leader came up with the "Bridges Plan" in order to combine this request with the capitalist's desire for a tightly controlled, disciplined maritime industry. Essentially, the Bridges Plan involved the setting up of a joint labor-management-government board which would have complete direction and control over the maritime industry. The plan was accepted and a Pacific Maritime Industry Board set up, with its members (including Bridges) appointed and approved by the ship owners' War Shipping Administration.

Slanders and Racism

Supposedly undertaken in "defense" of the USSR, the CP's war hysteria stooped to the most vile, anti-working-class slanders against opponents and to the lowest forms of racism and national chauvinism. Not only were strikes banned, but strikers were denounced as "fascists" and "traitors," thereby inviting government

continued on next page

Harry Bridges...

(continued from page 7)

attack to smash the unions. When the coal miners struck, Bridges said, "John L. Lewis hasn't been battling for anybody but Hitler in a long time" (*People's Daily World*, 27 May 1943). When Montgomery Ward workers went on strike in 1944, the Bridges leadership openly broke the strike by keeping its Montgomery Ward warehouse locals in St. Paul and Baltimore working. Any opposition, even slackness, in the ranks was denounced in the strongest terms, liberally sprinkled with racist slurs on Germans and Japanese:

> "If we all took this attitude [avoiding "sacrifices"] it wouldn't be long until we'd be eating sauerkraut with chopsticks and our work week would be from then on with no pay whatsoever."
> *Longshoremen's Bulletin*, 16 September 1942 (quoted in *Fourth International*, December 1942)

It is little wonder that the CP cheered the fire-bombing of Dresden and unflinchingly applauded the atom-bombing of Hiroshima.

The then-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party denounced the Bridges Plan in a pamphlet to longshoremen in 1943, "West Coast Longshoremen and the 'Bridges Plan'" by C. Thomas. The SWP correctly combined a policy of revolutionary defeatism at home with unconditional military defense of the Soviet Union (which despite the usurpation of political power by a bureaucratic caste under Stalin still preserved the economic conquests of the October Revolution, and therefore was a degenerated workers state). This policy recognized that supporting the predatory imperialist war of U.S./British capitalism against its German/Japanese competitors had nothing in common with either defense of the Soviet Union or defeating fascism. The war was fundamentally a war of competing imperialisms, with each side seeking to redivide the world in favor of its own bourgeoisie. Only a proletarian, internationalist policy, opposed to the war aims of both capitalist camps, could really defend the Soviet Union or fight fascism. Thus, in contrast to the class-collaborationist Bridges Plan, the SWP pamphlet demanded independence of the unions from the government control represented by the joint boards pushed by the Stalinists, a sliding scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living, a labor party based on the trade unions and a workers and farmers government.

ILWU

May 1934: S.F. dockers burn "blue books" of company unions. Two years later U.S. government tried to introduce "fink books" for seamen. Although Bridges, CP said "take the book," sailors refused.

"No Postwar Strikes!"

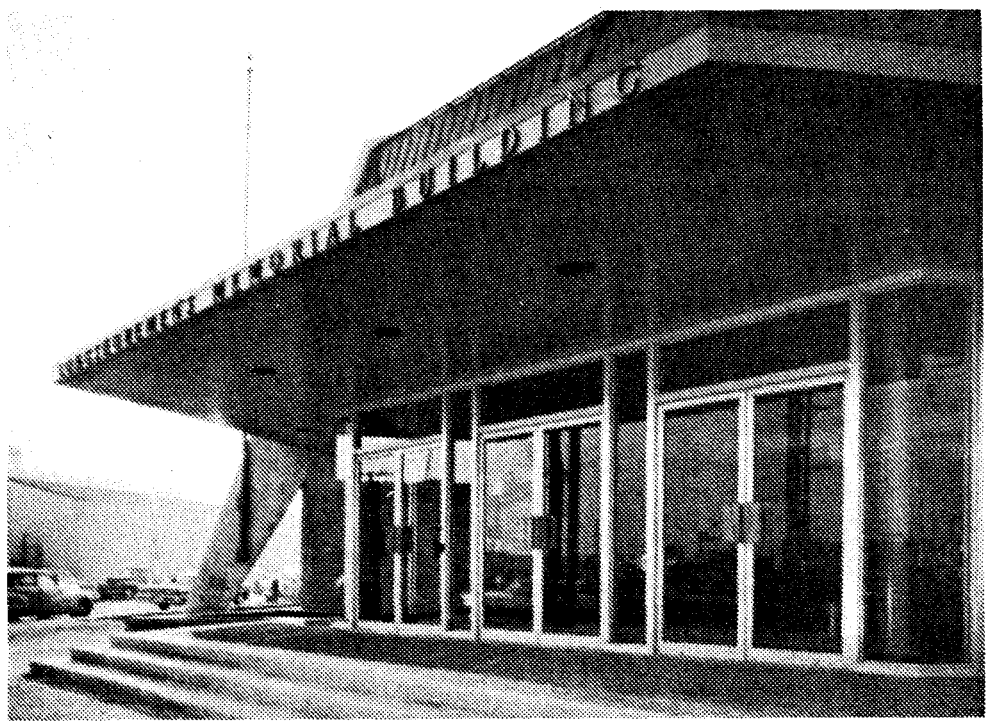
The Communist Party not only sought to erase the class struggle during the war, it also sought to extend this period of class collaboration indefinitely. CP propaganda promulgated the naive notion that the war had rendered the class struggle outmoded, and that cooperation between worker and boss to rebuild the world was now a historic possibility. (In order to be consistent, Earl Browder went so far as to dissolve the CP itself in 1944, a move that was reversed two years later.)

When the ILWU's warehouse Local 6 came up with a promise to extend the no-strike pledge into the post-war period, it wasn't only the bosses who cheered. "No Postwar Strikes!" screamed the *People's Daily World* (27 May 1944). Local 6 pledged not to strike and also to give "no sympathy or support to any union" which did strike and to "support the President, his Administration and all federal agencies in any actions necessary to prevent strikes." The *People's World* purred in agreement:

> "...we shall find a better and happier way of life based on cooperation of all classes.... The ILWU declaration is a signpost toward America's destiny."

However, the U.S. bourgeoisie refused to accept Stalin's offer of worldwide class peace. The U.S. had won the war and it wanted the spoils of victory: world hegemony. Thus the CP and Bridges entered the post-war period schooled in class collaborationism and lies, completely unprepared for new capitalist attacks.

The huge post-war strike upsurge, the biggest ever in the U.S., caught the CP by surprise. When the bourgeoisie under Truman imposed the anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act (passed by Democrats), the CP was already feeling the first stinging blows of the anti-communist purge which was to wipe it out of the unions—largely because its role in the war had so discredited it that militant workers were repelled and refused to defend it.



ILWU

ILWU Local 10 hall in S.F. Repeated employer attacks on hiring hall are attempt to break union.

The Strike of 1948 and Beyond

As in 1936, Bridges was forced into a strike in 1948 only because the employers refused his peace overtures. The employers were just as anxious as ever to smash the hiring hall and get the "Communist" Bridges. Bridges accepted the "cooling-off period" required by the new anti-labor law, and agreed to move Army cargo during the strike (this time there was no "anti-fascist" war on—only imperialist preparations to make the "cold war" hot)!

The U.S. government, in a pre-planned move, refused Bridges' acceptance of its demand to move military cargo, calling it a "Communist trick." The Army tried to recruit scabs without much success, and protests from around the world indicated that ships loaded by troops or scabs would have a hard time finding a place to unload. This defiance was undermined by Bridges, who ordered longshoremen to work Army cargo handled through independent contractors at pre-strike terms. (About 5 percent of the ILWU longshore membership worked during the strike.)

Since the employers were eventually forced to negotiate with the "Communist" Bridges, with whom they had earlier refused to talk, the strike scored a blow against the anti-communist purge, but only because the employers had been more rigid than Bridges was compromising. The end of the 1948 strike ushered in a 23-year period of longshore labor peace.

Bridges sought accomodation with capitalism despite the government's continued attempts to deport him from 1945 to 1955. In 1949, for instance, he presaged his later "M&M" "solution" to unemployment by proposing "temporary layoffs of men at the bottom of the seniority list" (*People's Daily World*, 11 February 1949).

Bridges did, however, refuse to launch a red purge and accepted expulsion from the CIO. Far from being a "revolutionary" impulse, this was merely a practical recognition on Bridges' part that the ILWU had emerged from gigantic class upheaval which gave its ranks a deep-going class consciousness and hatred of red-baiting, which had been used continually by employers against the union. Bridges knew he could live with the CP, since both were firmly committed to class collaboration. His only problem was to convince the bourgeoisie of his intentions.

Through continually undermining every gain won by West Coast longshoremen in the 1934 and 1936-37 strikes, to the point where he is today attempting to dismember the ILWU itself (in the guise of "merger" negotiations), Bridges appears to have achieved his aim. The ILWU chief is now a $50,000-a-year San Francisco port commissioner and close political crony of S.F. Mayor Joseph Alioto.

The Communist Party, despite encouraging and covering up Bridges' sellouts for 40 years, must be more circumspect. But if today the CP hypocritically criticizes the "M&M" contracts (which it supported at the time they were negotiated), militants must connect this with the Stalinists' whole record of betrayal of the working class and support for the imperialist bourgeoisie.

The same Archie Brown who today criticizes Bridges' proposed 1975 contract supported the 1960 sellout and failed to oppose the 1966 contract. During World War II he was enthusiastically pushing the no-strike pledge with the argument "I'm for winning the war and winning it quick" (*People's Daily World*, 24 October 1942). At a December 1970 "Northern California Rank and File Action Conference" this "militant" boasted of killing Trotskyists in Spain during the 1936-39 civil war...and beat back a resolution criticizing the ILWU leadership for victimizing 80 "B-men."

Support for imperialism and national chauvinism, collaboration with bourgeois politicians, breaking labor solidarity by moving "hot" cargo, open scabbing and threatening not only the union gains but the very existence of the union—these are the legacy of the class collaborationism of Harry Bridges and the Communist Party. Only a class-struggle leadership to replace the entire Bridges regime, a leadership committed to a program of proletarian internationalism and militant working-class unity against the bourgeoisie, can reverse this tide. ■

Setback for Women's Rights in Canada

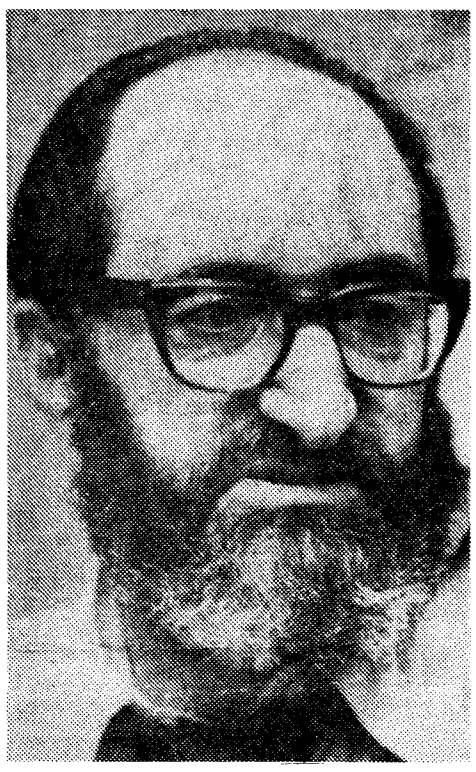
Morgentaler Jailed for Abortion

Reactionary "right-to-life" forces scored an important victory when the Canadian Supreme Court on March 26 upheld the conviction of Dr. Henry Morgentaler, a Montreal physician, for performing an abortion in August 1973. He will serve 18 months in jail followed by a three-year probation period. Morgentaler was acquitted of the charges by a lower court in November 1973, but the following April the Quebec Court of Appeal reversed the decision. The Supreme Court action exhausts his legal remedies.

Canada's abortion law, which carries a penalty of up to life imprisonment, permits a doctor to perform an abortion only after a hospital committee determines that the pregnancy endangers the woman's "life or health." While the law itself is conservative, its actual application is even more so.

In a survey last year of Canadian hospitals which purportedly have abortion committees (only a third of the total), some reported having no such committees at all; others have them, but they have never met. A number of hospitals refuse under any circumstances to give abortions after 12 weeks of pregnancy, and five hospitals reporting performed less than five abortions in an entire year.

Moreover, the federal minister of justice, Otto Lang, a Roman Catholic father of seven, has reportedly sent memos to hospitals in the northern territories (where he has the power of attorney general) implying there would be prosecution of any abortion committee that applied the law loosely (*Globe and Mail* [Toronto], 18 October 1974). Lang and other ministers of the Liberal government in Ottawa have also intervened to prevent or discourage government grants to women's groups which do any abortion counseling.



Globe & Mail [Toronto]/Jack Dobson

Dr. Henry Morgentaler

The jailing of Dr. Morgentaler is a blow against the democratic rights of women and a service to the most obscurantist forces in society. Socialists must protest this abomination in the course of struggling against the special oppression of women. But the *program* around which to organize is crucial.

The League for Socialist Action (LSA), Canadian co-thinkers of the reformist American Socialist Workers Party, has consistently refused to include even the minimal demand for repeal of the anti-abortion laws in its actions supporting Dr. Morgentaler, insisting on the single demand "drop the charges." In *Labor Challenge* (8 October 1974) the LSA attacks *any* additional demands as divisive. This is ironic since Dr. Morgentaler never denied performing abortions and based his legal defense rather on the need to repeal the neanderthal anti-abortion laws.

The LSA, faithful to its strategy of appealing to alien petty-bourgeois forces, tells us that struggles for democratic reforms lead women directly into confrontation with the capitalist state. Thus it calls, in *Labor Challenge* (18 February 1974), for "building a mass, independent feminist movement." Trotskyists, while they intervene in different kinds of "women's liberation" groups in order to fight for the revolutionary program, always call for building a *communist* women's movement, as a section of the Leninist party. The LSA seeks instead to liquidate the party into an "independent" multi-class women's organization, which necessarily holds a distinct political perspective hostile to that of proletarian revolution.

WV Photo

SL contingent in October 1973 march in defense of Dr. Morgentaler.

The issue of "autonomous" women's organizations is a real dividing line in the socialist movement, separating opportunist reformists and centrists from the consistent Bolsheviks, since it poses the fundamental question of how to organize the oppressed sectors of capitalist society: "independently" or under the banner of the proletarian party?

The Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) originally opposed, although in a confused manner, the reformism of the LSA's position on the woman question, in particular the latter's refusal to raise the demand for free abortion on demand. The LSA fears that such slogans—not to mention the slightest hint of socialism!—would frighten away less "enlightened" elements of the women's movement. In the "mass," "independent" movement it opposes all anti-capitalist demands, involving them only on safe occasions, such as from time to time in LSA election campaigns.

However, at a forum on the woman question in Vancouver on March 11, RMG spokesman Judy Rebick presented the identical reformist claptrap that the LSA and SWP have been spouting for years. The RMG apparently now calls for building and supporting an "autonomous" women's movement. Rebick also said that the struggle for women's liberation is *not* subordinate to the overall class struggle, but on an equal plane with it.

This reflects the current position of the RMG's co-thinkers in Europe, the French Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), which wrote last year in *Rouge* (14 June) that "...after numerous hesitations and errors we have come to understand the absolute necessity of an independent women's movement." As these renegades from Trotskyism have said earlier about Fidel Castro, the Algerian nationalists, Vietnamese Stalinists and the "broad mass vanguard," this "independent" movement supposedly has "an anti-capitalist dynamic and an enormous power for undermining the system." Therefore, you see, there is no need to struggle for revolutionary proletarian leadership.

Similarly, the recent "Tasks and Perspectives" document of the RMG Political Committee majority alludes to a "complex of questions raised by socialist women around the 'independence' of women's movements" and, after a vague reference to the revolutionary party as "the agency of strategic unification of all social struggles," gets to the heart of the matter:

> "This position must be advanced in an appropriate form with more politicised elements, not as a 'call' for the Leninist party which has in the past distorted our intervention into broad women's gatherings."

Thus, whatever the "appropriate form" turns out to be, we are assured that it will *not* be a "distorting" call for the revolutionary party to lead the struggles of the working class and oppressed masses!

The Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency, a Trotskyist opposition recently expelled from the RMG, attacked this anti-Bolshevik drivel for the reformist nonsense that it is. The BLT statement on the woman question ([RMG]*Internal Discussion Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 20, 14 March 1975) correctly notes that a women's movement not based explicitly on the program of proletarian revolution, i.e., Trotskyism, must advocate reforming capitalism, some variant of Stalinism or utopian socialism. It goes on to ask:

> "Should women be organized independent of political parties? From capitalist parties? Yes! From the Social Democracy? Yes! From the opponents of Trotskyism within the left and workers movement? Of course. From the revolutionary party? No."

This position coincides with that of the Third Congress of the Communist International, which opposed "autonomous" feminist groups in noting that the interests of women workers must be fought for by the working class as a whole, under the leadership of its vanguard party. However, it also insisted on the need for special party commissions and sections for work among women.

In October 1973 the Spartacist League participated in a Toronto march to defend Dr. Morgentaler, with signs demanding: "Drop the Charges! Repeal the Abortion Laws!" Unlike the LSA and others, the SL contingent did not limit itself to democratic reforms. We also called for free abortion on demand, a workers government and "Women's Liberation through Socialist Revolution." Through our journal *Women and Revolution* and work to rediscover the Leninist position on the woman question, the Spartacist tendency has shown the way forward to those who seek a revolutionary program to fight women's oppression. Forward to the constitution of a Canadian section of the international Spartacist tendency and the rebirth of the Fourth International!■

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Buffalo, NY 14214

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Chicago, IL 60680

CLEVELAND ..... (216) 621-3379
Box 6765,
Cleveland, OH 44101

DETROIT ..... (313) 921-4626
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Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Detroit Unemployed Conference Ends in Confusion

DETROIT, March 29—A two-day "Conference Towards Building a Nationwide Unemployed League" ended here today with minimal results. Despite energetic, non-sectarian building by the International Workers Party (IWP), its main sponsor, the conference failed to attract large numbers of unaffiliated or non-socialist workers. The less than 100 participants were largely from the IWP and the Spartacist League (SL), together with a number of trade unionists from class-struggle caucuses. The latter included UAW militants from New Jersey (Militant Solidarity Caucus), International Harvester (Labor Struggle Caucus) and members of unemployed committees of Local 600, Detroit.

Also attending were the tiny Revolutionary Communist League (Internationalist), part of the phantom remains of the California Peace and Freedom Party and the floundering Class Struggle League. Representatives from two so-called "independent unions," supposedly main conference sponsors, failed to appear.

The Spartacist League presented a program for unemployed work for discussion at the conference but did not put it up for a vote, recognizing that a paper organization which concealed important differences would do the unemployed no good. The IWP program was adopted, but its supporters dropped their earlier insistence on a "finalized program," presenting it instead as a draft, subject to change. While several amendments were made during the conference in the direction of the SL position, this did not appear to represent solid political agreement. The only organizational result was the election of a National Interim Committee (in which the SL is not participating) to oversee organizing work prior to projected regional conferences this summer. It was unclear, however, what tasks would be carried out.

The IWP program contained a number of specific demands with which the SL and other conference participants agreed—full productive employment for all, no war production, increased unemployment compensation and cost-of-living protection for all, defense of trade unions and the right to organize, and opposition to the deportations of non-citizen workers. Controversy centered around demands raised by the SL that would provide *direction* to the working class in its struggle to implement these demands, a direction that can only be toward the conquering of power by the workers if the struggle is not to end in defeat.

Controversy Centers on SL Program

The IWP objected to SL demands for workers control of industry through elected factory committees, expropriation of industry with no compensation, and for a workers party based on the trade unions to fight for a workers government. The IWP arguments were contradictory: some argued that full employment and no war production—i.e., what the IWP incorrectly terms "expanded reproduction"—were impossible for the capitalist system to grant and therefore revolutionary; others argued that the inclusion of too many demands hindered the immediate building of a mass organization. In other words, either the SL-proposed program was unnecessary for revolutionary struggle, or it was "too advanced" for minimum-level organizing now.

The IWP repeats a classic error in arguing that since a demand cannot be granted by the capitalists it is therefore sufficient as a revolutionary program. "Full productive employment" is advanced by labor fakers, Stalinists and even capitalist politicians in their efforts to mislead and deceive the working class. A genuine revolutionary program must arm the workers with revolutionary *consciousness*, and provide guideposts for the class-struggle road to power.

The more prominent line of reasoning, that SL slogans would "alienate" many workers, represents the danger of capitulation to political backwardness in the working class and to the reformism which lies within IWP views. In general, the IWP reveals a preoccupation with organizational forms, expressed as "class-wide organizing," over considerations of program and real activity. The SL on the other hand sees the struggle for revolutionary program within the mass organizations of the working class—such as the trade unions—as central. Without revolutionary leadership and program, any mass organization will necessarily be dominated by reformist and petty-bourgeois elements, just as the trade unions are dominated by a reformist bureaucracy.

IWP Program Amended

The contradictory arguments of the IWP were capped late in the conference by the hasty adoption of important amendments to its program, roughly in the direction desired by the SL. These included "no confidence in capitalist parties or politicians," advocating instead "independent working-class activity and organization," and the "right" of the working class to expropriate industry without compensation to the capitalists. (In addition, the IWP approved amendments to its anti-war resolution that included support for colonial wars against imperialism and for revolutionary defeatism toward capitalist countries in the event of war with any of the deformed workers states.) But the IWP still does not clearly see its contradiction: while grudgingly adopting transitional slogans considered a few hours before to be "too advanced," it continues to cling to peculiar utopian demands (such as opposition to coal gasification and strip mining, and "declassification of nuclear fusion power research") which are incapable of mobilizing workers to struggle in their *class* interests.

The IWP is a young organization. After several years as a self-described "revolutionary health service collective" inclined toward Maoism, its core membership joined the crackpot National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) of Lyn Marcus & Co. in 1974, only to emerge three months later as the IWP—a little wiser, perhaps, but burdened with much of Marcus' moldy economic baggage. The IWP views the present historical epoch as a new stage of capitalism characterized by imminent "liberal fascist" takeover. To what it sees as the immediate danger of fascist economic measures, implemented "from above" by Rockefeller and other liberals, the IWP counterposes immediate, "class-wide" mass organization around minimal demands, to promote the immediate beginnings of "expanded reproduction."

An early IWP statement ("Liberal Politics Plus Fascist Economics Equal Human Annihilation"), now repudiated, insisted that fascism arrived in 1914. While having drawn back from this fanciful imagining, the IWP still runs into difficulty exploring just what constitutes fascism or the present epoch, since it confuses fascism with the general characteristics of capitalism in the epoch of imperialist decay. Fascism is a particular form of class rule resorted to by a desperate ruling class. It mobilizes a mass movement of enraged petty-bourgeois elements to crush powerful working-class organizations which are combative but unable to take power because of misleadership.

IWP Opposes Busing

The IWP's identification of fascism as the presently preferred method of bourgeois rule is enormously misleading to its members and has immediate programmatic significance. At the conference the IWP argued against busing on the grounds that, given the fascist crisis promoted by the liberals, demands for busing (or integration in any form!) were simply divisive and should be opposed!

While not accepting the choices offered by capitalism, socialists must nevertheless support democratic demands—opposing racial discrimination, for integrated schools, etc.—with the aim of broadening them into class demands and showing how they can be secured only through a working-class struggle for power. The IWP, however, fails to grasp the question of democratic demands in general, and also opposed raising the right of oppressed nations to self-determination as being "divisive."

The dispute over busing which raged, heatedly at times, in the workshops showed the differences that remained despite the formal agreement of all conference participants to such general slogans as "opposition to racial and sexual discrimination." Thus the SL considered the vote on program and founding of an organization to be premature. Instead the SL proposed continued discussion and united-front actions whenever possible around issues where there is agreement. A number of the militants from class-struggle caucuses in the UAW suggested actions against deportation of non-citizen workers, layoffs and compulsory overtime (which is currently being foisted on Detroit auto workers despite massive unemployment in the industry).

The Spartacist League sees the trade-union bureaucracy as the main obstacle to the immediate mass organization of the unemployed, since this bureaucracy prevents the power of the organized, employed working class from being brought to bear. The unions must organize the unemployed; to accomplish this, revolutionary leadership must be built to challenge and remove the treacherous bureaucracy. Left and labor groups interested in the trade-union organization of the unemployed must unite immediately, however, in concrete, specific actions aimed at furthering this goal. Such actions can greatly aid in forging unity between employed and unemployed workers and exposing the treacherous union misleaders who do nothing in the face of mounting unemployment.■

...RMG Expels Trotskyists

(continued from page 12)

liquidating into the LSA's mentor, the SWP. As the IMT pushes with all its might for liquidation, the IT is being demoralized and destroyed. But now both the IT and RMG remain silent about Mandel's conciliation of Hansen/Moreno reformism.

Why this suicidal surrender to the IMT's destructive maneuvers? Because the RCT/RMG critique of the IMT for "subordination of the political differences to the maintenance of formal organizational unity" with "the SWP/LSA [which] have already been lost from Trotskyism" leads logically to the conclusion that the USec is a rotten bloc with reformists. Moreover, it means that the conciliationist policies of the IMT are characteristically *centrist*.

The conclusion that the USec is a rotten bloc between a centrist IMT and reformist LTF raises the question of the historical origins of this conglomeration in the unprincipled "reunification" of 1963, when the SWP and its Canadian mimics joined the Mandel-Maitan-Frank-led International Secretariat on the basis of support for guerrilla warfare and opportunist papering over of past differences.

There was, however, a tendency within the SWP which opposed the degeneration into Pabloist revisionism: the Revolutionary Tendency (RT) which later became the Spartacist League (SL). And it is precisely the RMG/IT leaders' inability to deal with the Spartacist tendency—especially with its struggle for the rebirth of the Fourth International as a fighting, genuinely democratic-centralist revolutionary world party based on a firm programmatic foundation—that makes these centrist capitulators *cling to the presumed* authority of Mandel and "The Fourth International" no matter what atrocities they are forced to endure.

IT members have been ordered by their cowardly leadership to have no discussions with SLers, and instead are instructed to crawl back into the protective reformist womb of the SWP where they can once again be the "left," if ever so loyal, critics. After losing several members and supporters to the Spartacist tendency last year, the RMG rapidly imposed a similar Stalinist ban on attending CCIST functions. No clearer admission of the inability of the RMG and IT to openly and honestly confront the Trotskyist politics of the international Spartacist tendency is needed.

Where Is the "Broad Vanguard"?

Prospecting in Canada for the "broad vanguard," which according to IMT documents is the way to bypass existing misleaders of the working class (making unnecessary the difficult task of struggling to defeat them politically), has not produced the promised riches for the RMG. It is stagnating at well under 100 members, its Red Circles (sympathizer groups) are in shambles, the work of its supporters in the post office is badly discredited and its press literally a dirty joke. (The March 1975 *Old Mole* called for "A Sliding Scale of Orgasms"!) Its second national convention was hardly a jubilant occasion for the RMG.

The convention brought to a close an eight-month discussion period within the organization. The RMG is led by two tendencies, a "majority" and "minority," which spend a good deal of their time trying to find or invent sufficient differences to justify their separate existences. Both claim to support the IMT and to believe in the "broad vanguard." At the convention they were divided over whether to "penetrate" and "politicize" this as yet undiscovered stratum through economist organizing in the trade unions (as the "minority" argues), or in the "political arena" through throwing together opportunist propaganda blocs around everything from fascism to the repression of adolescent sexuality (the "majority" view).

The "majority" and "minority" were able to muster a sufficient basis for "unity" around at least one question, however: avoiding a discussion of burning international questions. No time was set aside at the convention for discussion of the "Tenth World Congress" or the various issues that are tearing apart the USec (Vietnamese/Chinese Stalinism, the popular front, guerrillaism in Latin America, etc.).

Purge of the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency

The most important event of the convention—and another occasion for "unity" between majority and minority—was the purge of the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency. The B-LT was formed in August 1974 by three comrades who had gone through the formative struggles of the RCT/RMG and began to draw the clear conclusion that the USec was not the Fourth International but an unprincipled rotten bloc. The initial "Declaration" of the B-LT attacked the IMT's adaptation to guerrillaism, Stalinism (especially in Vietnam and China) and the popular front, and its refusal to adopt a communist orientation to the union movement.

Meanwhile, two comrades in the IT underwent an independent evolution that brought them into political solidarity with the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency. In particular they objected to the politically suicidal course of conciliating the SWP which was imposed by the IMT and IT leadership. For this they were summarily expelled at the IT plenum in October 1974 (see "'The SWP Is Finished As a Revolutionary Force'," *WV* No. 65, 28 March 1975). Ironically, while the purge of its left wing was intended in part to make the IT appear more respectable in the eyes of Hansen & Co. (thereby facilitating its "reintegration"), cynical SWP hatchet men are now using the case of the expelled IT leftists to label the IMT as bureaucratic maneuverers, thereby presumably excusing the SWP's equally bureaucratic expulsion of the IT!

A Lesson in Stalinism

The purge in the IT was the prelude to the RMG's bureaucratic expulsion of the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency last weekend. RMG leader Bret Smiley announced that the leadership had decided to open up this session of the convention to contacts and sympathizers, in order that they could benefit from this "lesson in Leninism"! But the very act of admitting non-party members to a debate on the expulsion of party members is itself a Stalinist-style attack on Leninist norms of democratic centralism.

No attempt was made to adduce any evidence of a single breach of discipline by the comrades of the B-LT, although this is required by the draft constitution (section X, subsection 6) submitted to the convention for adoption (after the expulsion of the B-LT, of course). Subsection 7 of the draft constitution requires that "Charges against any member be made in writing" and that "They will be considered no less than two weeks after the receipt by the comrade charged." In this case, however, there were no charges at all, only a "political" statement by the RMG leadership, and the expulsion took place on the same day the comrades received this statement!

The operational portion of the expulsion motion was:

> "The convention declares that the position expressed by the BLT—that the Fourth International is a pseudo-revolutionary obstacle to the building of some new international organization—is programmatically incompatible with membership in the RMG. This position is in reality a political declaration of split with the F.I. The convention therefore expels those members of the BLT who adhere to this position."

In the process of expelling these comrades solely for their political views, the RMG leadership naturally distorted the stated positions of the B-LT. What the latter actually put forward was the following:

> "The position of the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency is that the *politics* of *none* of the major tendencies within the United Secretariat can lay the basis for the construction of a democratic-centralist Trotskyist International. We believe that many of the cadres of the United Secretariat will play a significant role in the construction of such an International (which we do not believe exists at this time) to the extent that they are won to an authentic Trotskyist program. As regards the international Spartacist tendency, we have not yet made a *definitive* assessment of this current. This was quite clear in the report that we gave to the convention. Nonetheless we believe that the international Spartacist tendency may play a significant role in the construction of such a revolutionary International."

Toward the Rebirth of the Fourth International!

The recourse to such Stalinist methods of bureaucratic suppression of political tendencies is not infrequent in the Pabloist "United" Secretariat. The IT was expelled from the SWP on a similar pretext that its views already constituted a split. And the utter lack of real democratic centralism in the USec was underlined by the presence at the convention of representatives of the LSA. According to a decision of the Tenth World Congress, the Potsdam of pseudo-Trotskyism, the LSA is the "official section" of the USec in Canada despite the fact that it has continually flaunted the political decisions and breached the discipline of this fake International. The RMG, which attempted to carry out the policies and abide by the discipline of the USec, was relegated to mere "sympathizing group" status.

Following its expulsion the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency issued a statement dated 2 April 1975 which concludes:

> "But the continued crystallization of left oppositionist currents in the USec, such as the BLT in Canada (and supporters of the BLT expelled last October from the Internationalist Tendency [pro-IMT] in the U.S.) and the Revolutionary Internationalist Tendency in the U.S. and Australia—currents which rapidly find themselves waging the same fight waged by the RT in the 1962-63 prelude to the unprincipled 'reunification'—means that no bureaucratic ban or expulsion is going to resolve the crisis within the United Secretariat. Only an honest and open confrontation with the politics and history of the Spartacist tendency can lay the basis for the rebirth of Trotsky's Fourth International. We continue to call on the RMG to rescind our bureaucratic expulsion and lift the ban on politically confronting the Spartacist League. Moreover, we declare our readiness to engage in political discussion and common action with the SL towards these ends."

The expulsion of the B-LT from the RMG may be the most important political event of its kind in the history of the Canadian left since Maurice Spector's expulsion from the Stalinized Communist Party in 1928. The Tendency included six members at the time of its expulsion and at the convention received the votes of 10 percent of the RMG. The comrades involved, three of whom were founding members of the RMG and one a member of its Central Committee represent in the context of the very young Trotskyist movement in Canada an important repository of political experience and capacity.

We look forward to a period of joint work and discussion with these comrades with the confidence that given our close political parallelism we can find the way to unity, a unity that would represent a significant step forward toward the rebirth of the Fourth International and the construction of its Canadian section. ■

WORKERS VANGUARD

Canadian RMG Expels Trotskyists

TORONTO, April 3 Over the weekend of March 28-30 the Canadian Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) held its second national convention here and promptly proceeded to expel its Trotskyist left wing, the Bolshevik-Leninist Tendency (B-LT). The RMG is a sympathizing goup of the so-called United Secretariat (USec) which pretends to be the organizational continuity of Leon Trotsky's Fourth International. But as was amply demonstrated by this convention, in particular by the bureaucratic expulsion of the B-LT solely on the basis of its political views, neither RMG nor USec has anything to do with Trotskyism.

Far from being an International, the Usec is actually a rotten bloc between the petty-bourgeois radical International Majority Tendency (IMT) and the social-democratic reformists of the misnamed Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF). The IMT is itself a putrescent centrist swamp inhabited by a wide variety of creatures ranging from South American semi-Guevarists to Bala Tampoe (the Leonard Woodcock of Ceylon), gathered around the patriarchs of Pabloist revisionism, Ernest Mandel, Pierre Frank and Livio Maitan. The more notorious spokesmen for the LTF include Joseph Hansen of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP), that Karl Kautsky of the second mobilization, and Nahuel Moreno of the Argentine PST, a political chameleon who in the last quarter century has capitulated to just about every conceivable political tendency...except Marxism.

RMG vs. the IMT

The RMG originated, at least in part, from a left oppositional current the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT) within the reformist League for Socialist Action (LSA), the official Canadian section of the USec. While the LSA follows the lead of the SWP LTF in USec factional battles, the RCT launched its struggle against the reformism of the LSA in solidarity with the international majority of the USec.

However, the RCT and the assorted left-wing social democrats and new leftists who were to come together to form the RMG soon received a bitter lesson in centrist *Realpolitik* from Mandel Maitan Frank. Not even two years ago the present leadership of the RMG made the following assessment of the IMT's orientation:

> "Its content may be summed up in a few phrases: to subordinate all political initiatives and ideological struggle to the maintenance of the formal organization [*sic*] unity of the International....
>
> "The tendency was virtually crushed in its early period by the LSA: over forty comrades were suspended. The International gave no support other than a mild and equivocal letter to the PC [Political Committee] of the LSA....The International was similarly opposed to the external work in Toronto they told the RCT comrades it was lunacy. If that work had not been done, the regroupment would not exist today, and many of the gains inside the LSA YS would not have been made....
>
> "What I want to stress is that these weren't just tactical mistakes or organizational fuckups. They flowed quite logically from the orientation I have described and which has yet to be fully abandoned....
>
> "Again let me emphasize that the SWP LSA have already been politically lost from Trotskyism...."
>
> "Report Given at Regroupment Meeting Toronto on behalf of the PC-CC," Sands, undated [delivered summer 1973]

The Sands document condemned as "most serious" the fact that "the International completely abstained from any work within the SWP itself...," as well as protesting the shabby treatment given the group that was eventually to crystallize within the SWP as a pro-IMT wing, the Internationalist Tendency (IT). The document concludes with a call for the "reconstruction of the Fourth International in North America itself and most especially of course in the United States."

Centrism or Trotskyism?

Today the very same question which the RCT/RMG faced earlier is imposing itself on the IT: independent political existence or capitulation to reformism by

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"Implement the Accords" Means Defeat for NLF

Maoists and Cops Exclude Communist Banners at Anti-Thieu Demonstration

At a March 29 demonstration against U.S. aid to the Saigon and Phnom Penh puppet regimes, the Maoist Revolutionary Union (RU) again showed that the main target of Stalinist apologists is not the class enemy, but rather the revolutionaries. The RU and its allies of the Revolutionary Student Brigade (RSB) and Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) sought to exclude the Spartacist League, whose banner demanded "All Indochina Must Go Communist!"

The RU/RSB, whose slavish tailing of the Hanoi and Peking bureaucracies neatly complements their own domestic reformism, call for "implementing the peace agreement." While NLF forces are at Saigon's doorstep, Stalinists of all stripes unite in calling for a coalition (i.e., *capitalist*) government! This is a program for the *defeat* of the Indochinese revolution.

The Spartacist contingent refused to take down its banner, so the RU/RSB/VVAW rounded up a goon squad to prevent it from marching with the rest of the demonstration. Not content with this blatant violation of the right of marchers to carry their own slogans at a publicly advertised event, the goons told the New York City *police* they wanted to exclude these marchers, which the police then enforced.

It is not surprising that those who oppose our resolute stand for the victory of the Indochinese revolution should also use the bourgeoisie's cops to suppress our slogans. The continuation of capitalist rule and the denial of workers democracy—this is the meaning of Stalinism.■

WV Photo

Union militants and SL supporters march in March 31 demonstration.

WV Photo

Cops, goons exclude SL from anti-Thieu march.

WV Photo

RU/RSB/VVAW coalition demand SL take down communist banner.