

## Tweedledumb Defeats Tweedledee in "Great" Debate

# Ford/Carter: Dull and Dangerous

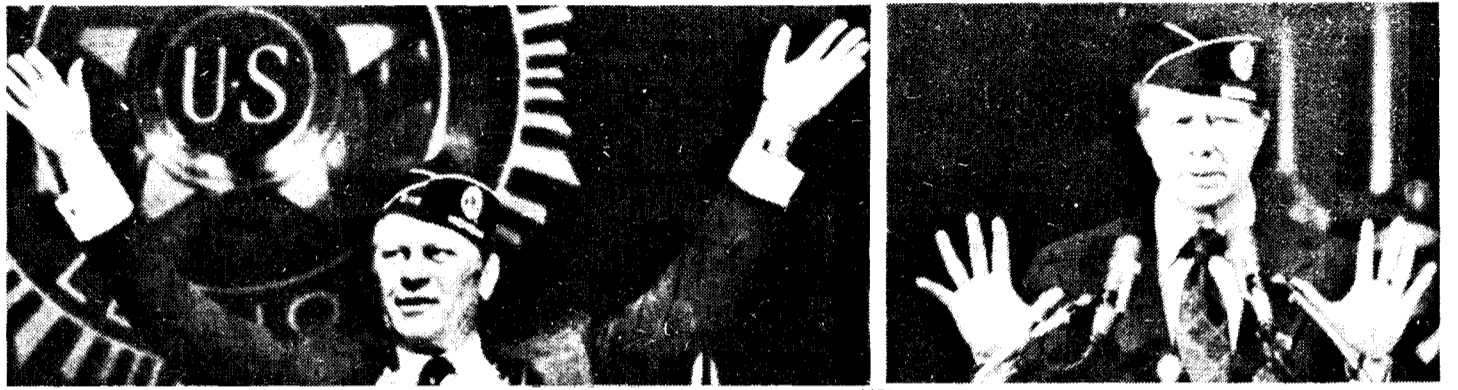
Disturbed by predictions that voter turnout for this year's presidential elections will be a record low, the bourgeois media tried to stir up a little interest in the contest between Tweedledumb and Tweedledee with a televised "great debate" on September 27. With all but the candidates of the twin parties of capital excluded, Ford and Carter squared off for the pointless talkathon before 90 million people. The *New York Times* busied its research staff with the historic Lincoln-Douglas debate of 1858. Public television replayed in their entirety the Kennedy-Nixon debates of 1960. And *Time* magazine set itself to explain "what makes the coming elections so gripping!"

But when Gerald Ford met Jimmy Carter jaw to jaw in Philadelphia the result was far from a great debate. It wasn't even a good debate. In fact, it wasn't much of a discussion. The losers were the millions of working people who will be stuck with one of these two super-cops of U.S. imperialism for the next four years. For the multi-million unemployed, the 170,000 striking auto workers, as for all working people, the "debaters" spoke in political chorus: more of the same.

The debate was a political insult, media hustle and bore for the most obvious reason: the candidates disagree about nearly nothing, certainly nothing of any importance. Even Jimmy Carter's brother Billy reportedly tuned out early, remarking, "I'm too busy with my peanut business." A recent *New York Times* editorial attributed the soaring statistics on anticipated non-voters to "poverty and ignorance" while confessing itself disturbed by the attitude that "it doesn't make any difference who wins."

But it doesn't make any difference who wins. While both capitalist parties always promote the general interests of the bourgeoisie, minor ruling-class squabbles (often over nothing more than timing and salesmanship) are usually discernible amidst the electioneering. But in this campaign there is an amazing symmetry even on particularities. From the budget to busing, these candidates can find barely an issue that even rhetorically divides them.

Both candidates recognize that the bourgeoisie's game plan for the present economic conjuncture is to slash social services and continue gouging the workers' wages. Both sum it up with the same formulae: "balancing the budget" and "providing incentives for the private sector." The "great debate" gave the electorate a chance to compare Ford's promise of "lower unemployment" with Carter's stated goal of reaching an "overall unemployment of 4 to 4 and a half percent." The much-touted Humphrey-Hawkins Bill calls for three percent unemployment. Big deal—there are presently almost eight percent jobless even though the Republicans are in the White House and the Democrats control Congress. It is the anarchy of the labor market which "decides" the unemployment rate as long as the bourgeoisie is the ruling class. Ford and



Candidates of capitalist reaction: Not a dime's worth of difference.

Carter have the same program for the prospect of an economic downturn: more layoffs.

With an eye on the reactionary mobilizations in Boston, Chicago and Louisville, both candidates have come out firmly against "forced busing." Keeping pace with Ford's well-known commitment to cop "justice," in Phoenix Carter said he favored "a shifting back toward the removal of technicalities which obviously prevent the convictions and punishment of those who are guilty" (*Village Voice*, 27 September). On the emotionally charged abortion issue, Carter said he "did not rule out the possibility that some anti-abortion amendment that he could accept might later be drafted" (*Time*, 13 September). Henry Kissinger finds Carter's foreign-policy views "fairly consistent" with his own, while the peanut king busily tries to show he would be more aggressive against the USSR.

The manifest lack of issues in this quintessential American bourgeois election campaign is what is behind the mushrooming of concern with the cosmetic theology of bourgeois electoral politics. Nixon's efforts to deal with his

five o'clock shadow before his televised Kennedy debate are now common myth. The presumably decisive "issues" of the Ford-Carter confrontation were anxiously debated: Would Ford and Carter sit or stand? Would they bring notes? Would Ford get his presidential seal? Would they have a "revealing" lectern?

The arguments presented were riddled with lies, distortions and stupidities. Carter claimed Ford had vetoed more bills than any other president since the Civil War; in fact, Ford trails at least Roosevelt and Truman in that department. Ford claimed that his tax proposal would save a family of four \$1,000 a year, a wild distortion of the \$140 quoted by the *New York Times* (25 September). Ford cited testimony of Carter's successor in Georgia, George Busby, as evidence that the state's medicare program was a shambles. Later Busby explained he had been speaking of the federal program. And so on.

### How Carter Lost to a Born Loser

The "great debate" had nothing to debate, but Jimmy Carter managed to

lose it nevertheless. The liberal press initially pronounced it a "standoff," but the Gallup poll showed Ford a clear winner. One might legitimately ask how one wins or loses a debate when the contestants have the same positions. And it certainly can't be easy to lose a debate to a candidate of a political party that has the loyalty of about a quarter of the electorate, a candidate who inherited the legacy of Watergate, who was never elected to the presidency, who is the leading spokesman for the policies of skyrocketing inflation and the highest unemployment in 40 years, whose name is synonymous with social reaction and who is in general regarded as a subliterary bumbling fool.

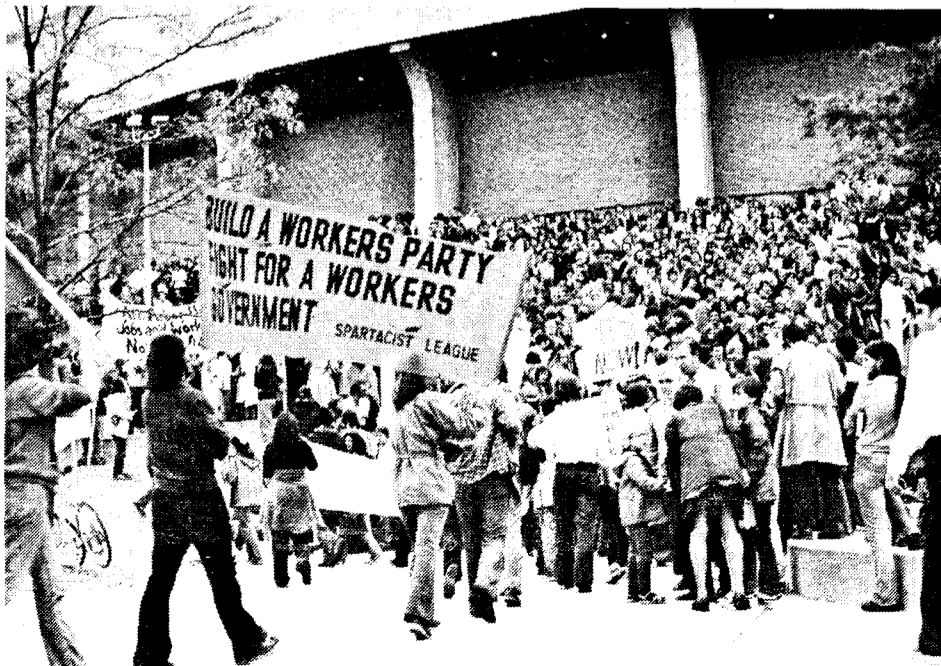
Ford's political edge is rooted in the phony appearances the capitalist parties like to project. In this insidious game the demagogues pretend that the voters can go to the polls and at least choose between "different philosophies"—between high unemployment represented by the Republicans or high inflation represented by the Democrats. In fact, both parties offer both high inflation and higher unemployment.

The battleground for the "image-fixing" that replaces political debate among bourgeois politicians is the traditional rhetoric of the two parties. Ford, presiding over the largest deficit budget in U.S. history, moans about how Carter is a "big spender," while the millionaire peanut boss charges that the Republicans represent the "special interests of big business."

With most of the audience now well aware that both parties represent the interests of big business, wearing the label more or less forthrightly confers a credibility advantage. And in an election between two liars, relative credibility is a big asset.

Carter's attempt to don a "New Deal" mantle isn't working. For one thing, Rooseveltian "progressivism" was a fraud then, and moreover it is obvious that today's Democrats have no such schemes in the hopper. So Carter simultaneously insists he will balance the budget: "I might say, too, that if we see these goals cannot be reached ... then I would cut back on the rate of implementation of new programs in order to accommodate a balanced budget by fiscal year '81." The net effect of the combination of classical Democratic verbiage and the attempt to out-Ford

## Break with the Bosses Parties! Build A Workers Party!



Protest demonstration against imperialist chief Gerald Ford, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, September 15.

WV Photo

continued on page 11

# Editorial Notes

## Leon Davis Gets What He Asks For

Last July, Leon Davis, head of District 1199 of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, called off the biggest hospital strike in U.S. history after 11 days on the picket lines. The union's 40,000 members were sent back to work in New York City's "voluntary" hospitals with an agreement to submit their contract demands for binding arbitration.

On September 16, the federal arbitrator, Margery Gootnick, produced her decision: to freeze the wages of the District 1199 hospital workers for six months (retroactive to the contract expiration date)! After that the members will receive a 4.5 percent bonus for another six months, but it will not be added to their base pay. Then the contract will be reopened for the second year, and if the issues are not resolved it will go back to arbitration.

As to the union's other key demands—for a cost-of-living increase, a one-year contract, larger pensions and vacations, and increased sick leave—the *New York Times* was unable to find out what had happened to them and the office of Moe Foner, executive secretary of 1199, refused to tell a *WV* reporter if these issues had simply been dropped. In addition, the hospitals will no longer have to pay pension benefits for new and part-time employees, while the probationary time for technical and professional employees was extended.

Leon Davis and the District 1199 bureaucracy are in no position to complain about this outrageous arbitration "award," which is a gift to management in every respect. The union leadership from the very beginning made arbitration its main demand. 1199 demonstrators in front of Governor Carey's office carried signs proclaiming, "The last thing we want is a hospital strike." And at a rally outside the Democratic convention at Madison Square Garden, the speakers podium was draped with a banner reading, "End the strike—Arbitrate now!" Leon Davis & Co. got what they asked for.

But the "progressive" labor fakers were not the only ones to shove arbitration down the throats of NYC hospital workers. The Communist Party's *Daily World* (14 July) hailed long-time Stalinist hack Davis' words to a strike rally, claiming that "the strike would continue until the issues are settled the only responsible way—through arbitration." Another union spokesman was quoted as bragging, "if we went into arbitration, we know we could win."

The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) went through a few more contortions to defend the betrayal perpetrated by



WV Photo  
1199 president Leon Davis addressing rally outside Democratic convention in July.

brothers Davis and Foner. The 30 July *Militant* came out with the line that while arbitration is risky "in general," in this case it signalled a "union victory" because it meant a "major retreat in the union busting offensive by the employers and Democratic politicians." The SWP cooed, "This stands as an example to the rest of New York labor."

We hope the union misleaders and their reformist tag-alongs enjoy their "victory," but the District 1199 ranks should be furious at this sellout and draw the lessons of this defeat. We recall the fact that our article "1199 Tops Call

Off Militant NYC Hospital Strike" (*WV* No. 119, 23 July) warned in the headline, "Binding Arbitration Equals Defeat," and clearly stated: "While the 1199 leadership claims a victory, the settlement guarantees that hospital workers will receive at most a minimal wage increase and probably nothing else."

Our accurate prediction wasn't based on crystal-ball gazing but on the Marxist principle that the working class cannot rely on the bosses' government to defend their interests. The Spartacist League called for opposition to arbitration and a class-struggle program to spearhead a drive by all NYC labor to smash the capitalist austerity program. Among our demands were: city take-over of the "voluntary" hospitals and free medical care for all; a joint strike by 1199 and AFSCME hospital workers, for more jobs through a shorter work-week together with a substantial wage increase; and a democratically elected strike committee. A mobilization around this militant program could have secured victory for the 1199 strikers; instead, the "realistic" and "practical" bureaucrats and reformists produced a stinging defeat.

## Varga's Follies

"I would come only to denounce this regroupment," bellows Michel Varga in his 3 August letter refusing to appear before the international Commission of Inquiry investigating the "Varga affair." This bluster from the head of the

apocalyptic personality-cultist LIRQI ("International League Reconstructing the Fourth International," which has now renamed itself the "Fourth International") only reveals the total failure of Varga's hysterical two-year attempt to browbeat the Commission of Inquiry into aborting its undertaking.

The "Varga affair" grew out of charges levelled by the French OCI against its former co-thinker at the time that they politically parted company. The OCI claimed, without substantiating its charge with documentation, that Varga had been (or still was) an agent of the CIA and/or KGB from the time that he became an opponent of the Stalinist bureaucracy in Hungary.

From the outset, the international Spartacist tendency (iSt) urged the LIRQI to initiate an authoritative commission of inquiry to investigate the matter in the impartial fashion that characterized the Dewey Commission's investigation of Stalin's slanderous frame-up of Trotsky over the 1936-39 Moscow Trials. The Spartacist tendency alone responded to the OCI's public offer to give copies of the Varga archives to interested working-class organizations. For nearly a year the iSt struggled with the LIRQI and two French centrist groups, LO and the LCR, over the elementary principle that LIRQI (or OCI) members could not participate on an impartial commission.

The OCI never furnished more than a portion of the promised documentary "proof," although the materials it published enabled the Spartacist tendency to make a tentative assessment of

# Letters

## South Africa

New York  
25 September  
To the editor:

*Workers Vanguard* No. 126 quoted the Soweto student leader Tsietsi Mashinini as asserting that black nationalists in South Africa "want the tables to be turned so that the white man can get a taste of his own medicine and feel what it is like to be oppressed." The article goes on to criticize this "diffuse anti-white anger" because it cannot show the road to victory. However, this is not all that is wrong with "black consciousness" politics.

The courage and militancy of activists like Mashinini is unquestioned, and socialists must of course solidarize with a revolt by the oppressed non-white masses even where led by petty-bourgeois nationalists rather than proletarian communists. Nonetheless, Marxists are irrevocably opposed to the extermination or subjugation of any people, including oppressor peoples, such as South African whites.

It is true that the driving force of the South African proletarian revolution will be the oppressed non-white masses, in particular the black working class, and not the relatively well-off, largely petty-bourgeoisified and conservative white workers. However, unlike Rhodesia, the white South African minority is fairly substantial (20 percent) and the well-armed, well-equipped South African army is entirely white. To threaten racial extinction or expulsion would only cement the entire white population to the South African ruling class.

Apartheid is an elaborate structure of police state measures to enforce rigid segregation and white supremacy. This has resulted in an increasingly large percentage of white workers shifting into supervisory (foreman) and semi-supervisory (lead workman) positions, with much of the remainder in skilled

jobs. The limiting of the better and more skilled jobs to whites has produced an extremely favorable bargaining position for these workers. White workers enjoy a standard of living 15 times greater than black workers and three or four times as high as Asian and coloured workers. This plays a key role in fostering the enormous conservatism and bitter-end loyalty to apartheid displayed by white workers.

However, while it has its political assets, apartheid is also a major encumbrance on the drive by the South African capitalists to convert their country into an imperialist power. Apartheid ensures an acute shortage of skilled labor (consequently driving up wages), as well as an ill-trained and unstable non-white proletariat. This is why some of the top South African capitalists, such as mining magnate Harry Oppenheimer are opposed to strict apartheid, favoring partial reforms to pacify the masses and increase profits by lowering wages.

Even under Vorster's rigid Nationalist Party rule, the demands of a modern capitalist economy have forced the government to tolerate a substantial number of non-whites—mostly coloured and Asian workers—in occupations traditionally held by whites. Thus in 1973 there were 222,000 whites but also 50,000 "coloured" and Asian artisans and apprentices employed in the major industrial trades. Coloured and Asian workers have also succeeded in penetrating (though in still subordinate roles) one of the two legal trade union federations, TUSCA. Of the roughly 600,000 workers in South Africa organized into trade unions, coloureds and Asians make up one third of the total.

The government has also been forced to tolerate a trickle of blacks into skilled occupations. Interestingly, where the government negotiated the right to put skilled black building tradesmen on jobs

previously worked only by whites, the chauvinist whites-only Building Workers Union insisted that they receive the "full rate for the job," out of concern to defend their own standards. The development of a non-white skilled proletariat can be a significant occurrence in neutralizing the hostility of the skilled white workers to the aspirations of the oppressed non-white masses.

There are of course real limitations to the degree to which apartheid can be broken down in South African capitalism. Even the most liberal wing of the bourgeoisie could not support universal suffrage or the wholesale sweeping away of the industrial color bar. To do so would fundamentally undermine the continued existence of the white-supremacist regime. Thus, under South African capitalism the white working class will remain a privileged caste located within the labor aristocracy, whose contacts with the non-white proletariat will necessarily be limited.

Nonetheless, even a limited breakdown of the rigid racial and tribal barriers of apartheid will provide the South African communist vanguard the opportunity to demonstrate to the white worker that the oppressed non-white masses do not seek to deprive him of his life, political rights or job. As against the bourgeoisie, who will seek to use the reforms of apartheid to cut the wages of the now-sheltered skilled worker, Marxists raise as central demands the need for racially integrated trade unions that would fight for abolition of the color bar; the upgrading of black, coloured and Asian workers into more skilled positions; and equal pay for equal work at the highest level. To neglect such a program in favor of a nationalist solution is to invite the black proletariat into a bloody and suicidal racial conflict with a desperate, well-armed and technologically advanced people.

Comradely,  
J. Brule

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# For A Labor Boycott of South Africa Now!

Varga as a "highly dubious figure." The LIRQI never ceased to demand that a denunciation of the OCI's "slanders" be the precondition for participation on a commission to investigate the charges and insisted on its "right" to sit on its own jury. When the international Spartacist tendency won LO and the LCR over to a principled position for an impartial workers commission, foiling the LIRQI's attempts to create a stacked whitewash commission to use as a factional club against the OCI, the LIRQI constituted a rival "commission" of its own supporters.

Winning the vacillating centrists over to the proposition that they could only besmirch themselves by allowing the LIRQI to block an impartial investigation of the "Varga affair" was a real victory for the international Spartacist tendency and drove the livid LIRQI into an ever-increasing frenzy. The LIRQI walked out of the critical meeting, howling imprecations against LO, the LCR and the American SWP for "capitulating" to the Spartacists, who in turn were called the "lawyer" for the OCI's "apprentice Vishinskys."

Varga's 3 August letter, published along with a lengthy diatribe against the Commission of Inquiry in the 31 August issue of the LIRQI's *Quatrième Internationale*, dares to complain that the Commission never called him to testify! This follows repeated attempts to contact Varga through his French organization, as well as statements by two LIRQI members in testimony before the July 20 meeting of the Commission that Varga was prepared to appear. A meeting to hear Varga's testimony was scheduled for September 16 but the star witness failed to show up.

The article is nothing but an attempt to make the Commission of Inquiry into a political amalgam between its participants and the OCI, no doubt masterminded by the sinister Spartacists. The participating groups are labeled "OCI accomplices" and "Stalinist apprentices" while the representative of the Spartacist tendency, Comrade J. Lesueur, is termed the OCI's "lawyer." The Commission is queried: "What secret deals have you made with the OCI?"

At a previous meeting of the Commission early last spring, the two leading OCI members were grilled for several hours about the promised "proofs" which have never been furnished. The OCI's criminally irresponsible raising of the most serious charges and refusal to adequately substantiate them calls into question the integrity of the OCI in the "Varga affair." Comrade Lesueur insistently requested that the OCI provide an accounting of just how—and when—it "learned the truth" about its long-time collaborator, whom it exposed only when the factional parting of the ways

took place. The question raised by the LIRQI of the OCI's practice of violence within the workers movement has also been taken up by the Commission and depositions from responsible militants who witnessed OCI hooliganism at first hand have been solicited.

The LIRQI's hysterical attempts to paint the Commission of Inquiry as a political "regroupment" are nothing but a cover for the dismal failure of the LIRQI's own puppet "commission" to challenge the legitimacy of the impartial inquiry constituted at the insistence of the international Spartacist tendency. Increasingly, what holds the Vargaites together is their grandiose estimation of their own importance and their hatred for the Trotskyists of the Spartacist tendency.

The same issue of *Quatrième Internationale*, in an interview with the LIRQI's Spanish group, the PORE, provides an instructive illustration of the flagrant mendacity of the LIRQI. The interview is devoted in large part to the systematic misrepresentation of two short articles which appeared in *WV* No. 113 (11 June): a defense appeal on behalf of arrested militants in Spain and an article on the LIRQI's voluntaristic construction of a Potemkin village "international."

The interview tries to equate *WV*'s call for a workers republic in Spain with the OCI's reformist position that the current task of the Spanish proletariat is to overthrow the monarchy and return to the pre-1936 bourgeois republic! To make this amalgam, the LIRQI is reduced to outright lies, counting on the ignorance of its readers. The LIRQI spokesman asserts:

"I don't know what is the content they give to this 'workers republic' since they are careful to say nothing about the program of this 'republic.' But behind this silence surely lurks a 'republic' of the CP and SP, the same policy of the French OCI and USec in Spain. In other words, it's a question of opposing the fight for a workers and peasants government, for the united socialist states of Europe."

The LIRQI's temerity is beyond belief. *WV*'s defense appeal for the victimized Spanish militants prominently featured the slogan, "For a workers government and a socialist federation of the Iberian peninsula in a socialist united states of Europe!"

The interview also insinuates that the charge of LIRQI adventurism contained in *WV*'s article on the Vargaites' international pretensions was based on the LIRQI's "struggle for democratic rights" in Spain. Unfortunately for the LIRQI and its Spanish comrades, this group's "struggle" consists of acting as if democratic rights existed. As the *WV* article reported, LIRQI publications featured a photograph of a Barcelona demonstration, without taking the elementary precaution of blacking out the participants' faces; and just in case a negligent police official failed to notice, the caption obligingly pointed out, "in the first rows certain leaders of the PORE can be recognized." This mock-heroic play-acting can have only disastrous consequences.

The LIRQI's organizational megalomania typified by its assertion that it is second only to the CP as a left political force in Spain—and its blatant disregard for the security of its own supporters suffice to condemn its adventurist self-aggrandizement. Unless the militants of the LIRQI confront the political questions posed by the Spartacist tendency in the first place concerning its highly dubious chief, Michel Varga—it will be reduced to the parasitic existence of a grouping whose main motive for existence is its hatred for the authentic Trotskyism of the international Spartacist tendency. ■

The heroic revolt of the oppressed black and "coloured" (mulatto) masses in South Africa has shaken the apartheid system to its foundations. It is urgent and imperative that the maximum protest be marshalled through worldwide working-class support for the victims and opponents of white-supremacist rule in South Africa. A labor boycott of goods and transport to and from South Africa is an essential element of international solidarity with the current anti-apartheid rebellions.

Militant unionists and socialists must point out the importance of repeated, effective "stay-at-home" strikes in the black and coloured revolt. Suppressed by police-state apartheid measures and massive military force, South Africa's non-white working masses have done everything they can to organize a nationwide general strike. For dockers to load goods for Cape Town or pilots to fly to Johannesburg today amounts to out-and-out strikebreaking on behalf of Vorster's racist mass murderers!

As opposed to the petty-bourgeois moralists on the left, the Spartacist League does not favor permanent, "on principle" boycotts against reactionary regimes like South Africa, Spain, Chile or Iran. Unlike liberals, Marxists do not believe that such pressure/protest tactics will bring down repressive dictatorships. Under normal conditions, the contraction of trade and of the economy of such countries weakens and demoralizes the working class and further impoverishes the masses, who are the real source of revolutionary change. It is in periods of mass upheaval, where the workers themselves are seeking to disrupt the economy, that a total international labor boycott is a powerful demonstration of proletarian solidarity, for the duration of the crisis (see "International Labor Boycotts: When and How," *WV* No. 50, 2 August 1974). Thus class-struggle militants in the ILWU have supported and called for implementation of a motion by the San Francisco longshore local to boycott cargo to and from Rhodesia and South Africa.

By way of contrast, in the summer and fall of 1974, the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) demanded a boycott of South African coal, ostensibly on the grounds that it was mined by "slave labor." We opposed this action because it could serve no other purpose than increasing unemployment among South Africa's black miners. Furthermore, the Miller bureaucracy of the UMW was simply using the super-exploitation of black labor in South Africa as a pretext for chauvinist economic protectionism. This was demonstrated when shortly thereafter the UMW also called for boycotting Australian coal, which is mined by unionized "free" labor.

The same tactical principles governing labor boycotts against South Africa also apply to Chile. If effective a general trade boycott of Pinochet's regime would actually weaken internal resistance by the working masses.

Rather than counterproductive

permanent boycotts as a question of principle, labor boycotts can be effective as part of directed international protest campaigns: for example, a boycott of military goods around demands to free imprisoned unionists and other victims of junta terror in Chile. In the NMU, class-struggle seamen have campaigned for "hot-cargoing" military goods to Pinochet, and on several occasions (such as immediately after the 1973 coup) for a total labor boycott of Chilean cargo and ports.

It is interesting to note that in the ILWU the class-struggle oppositionists who call for boycotting military goods to Chile, South Africa and Rhodesia have been in the forefront in demanding that various dead-letter resolutions for



WV Photo

New York, September 22.

"total boycotts" be implemented. They were the ones, for example, who put into effect on Bay Area docks the two-day boycott of Chilean goods called by the International Transport Workers Federation in September 1974. But the Stalinists, who favor permanent, total boycotts as a moralistic gesture aimed at winning liberal support, are afraid of annoying the bureaucrats, employers and government, and so have actively sabotaged implementation of their own resolutions (see "Stalinists Scuttle ILWU South Africa Boycott," *WV* No. 123, 3 September 1976).

The assassination last week in Washington, D.C. of Orlando Letelier, a former minister in Allende's Popular Unity government, undoubtedly at the hands of Pinochet's death squads, produced a wave of outrage extending even to liberal bourgeois circles. To give the protests over Letelier's assassination a militant, proletarian character, we called for a boycott of goods to and from Chile. If, when the news came out that a junta bomb had killed Letelier, dockers in California or London had dumped shipments of Chilean copper in the San Francisco Bay or the Thames, such a protest would go far in staying the hand of the butchers in Santiago. ■

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# Orlando Letelier Victim of Junta Death Squad

SEPTEMBER 27—The assassination of Orlando Letelier, former Chilean ambassador to the U.S. under Allende, has stirred up indignation among the many opponents of the vicious Pinochet junta. In New York City (see article in this issue) and at a Washington rally addressed by Allende's widow, thousands gathered to mourn Letelier and to

accuse the notorious Chilean secret police, the DINA, of responsibility for the wanton murder.

The bomb which exploded in Letelier's automobile on Embassy Row in Washington also touched off a shock wave among liberals. The unprecedented murder of a foreign dignitary on

American soil prompted 131 members of Congress to sponsor a resolution denouncing the assassination.

The sadistic Pinochet junta, which in 1973 imprisoned and tortured Letelier on the antarctic Dawson Island and only two weeks ago revoked his citizenship, sanctimoniously claimed it "lamented" the killing and pointed the finger at the "far left." The *New York Times* immediately echoed this slander in a nauseating editorial on 22 September which expressed disbelief that "even as ham handed a regime as Chile's junta" would carry out anything so unpleasant as an assassination on U.S. territory and suggested the real culprits could well be "left extremists unwilling to stop at anything."

But throughout the week mounting evidence pointed straight to Pinochet as the engineer behind the savage murder. Letelier, one of the last high officials of the Allende government remaining alive, had told a *New York Times* reporter during a brief stay in Venezuela in 1974, "they're [the DINA] going to kill me." On September 22 it was revealed that William Wipfler of the National Council of Churches had reported to Congressman Donald Fraser (who passed it on to the FBI) that a high-ranking DINA official had been seen disembarking an airliner which arrived in New York from Santiago last August 25. Recent rumors in Chilean exile circles in Venezuela indicate that as of September 24 the FBI had in its possession a letter from a Chilean

military officer advising Letelier of talk in the armed forces of a plot to eliminate him. The liberal Mexican paper *Excelsior* (23 September) quoted Sra. Allende's press conference statement that Jack Anderson knew of the existence of a list of Chilean residents in the U.S. "who were to be eliminated."

The affront of a messy murder on American soil is making it difficult to sweep the evidence implicating the DINA under the rug. Congressman Larry McDonald was roundly booed on the floor of the House of Representatives when he pulled his usual act of trying to link the murdered man to leftist terrorists (see "Birchite Congressman Witchhunts Muñoz Campaign," *WV* No. 126, 24 September). Congressman Donald Fraser called a press conference to denounce the FBI's failure to come up with a single suspect.

Orlando Letelier began his political career in 1960 as a senior economist for the Inter-American Development Bank. A long-time member of the Chilean Socialist Party and a close collaborator of Allende, he was made ambassador to the U.S. in 1970.

In the later months of 1973, Letelier became minister of defense. Following the abortive June 27 coup, there occurred massive popular mobilizations in defense of the government, characterized by demonstrations of thousands of workers and protests in the armed forces against rightist generals. The popular-front government, in its last-ditch efforts to appease the Christian



Letelier being led out of the Moneda Palace in Santiago September 11, 1973, the day of Pinochet coup.

## Stalinist Exclusion at Letelier Assassination Protest

NEW YORK—Before a crowd of well over 1,000 demonstrators, many of whom looked on in amazement, Stalinist hacks called on the cops to expel a Spartacist League Spartacus Youth League (SL/SYL) contingent from a picket line thrown up outside the Chilean consulate here September 22 in protest against the assassination of Orlando Letelier.

Letelier, former ambassador to the U.S. under the popular-front government of Salvador Allende, was killed the day before when a bomb exploded inside his car, approximately six blocks from the Chilean embassy in Washington, D.C. Also murdered in the blast was Ronnie Karpen Moffitt, a colleague of Letelier's at the Institute for Policy Studies. Mrs. Moffitt's husband was seriously injured in the blast.

The SL was expelled from the picket because it refused to submit to bureaucratic political censorship by the Communist Party (CP)-led National Chile Center (NCC), and instead raised signs with such slogans as "AVENGE ORLANDO LETELIER!" and "Smash the Bloody Junta, Workers to Power!" The NCC decreed that there be no signs or banners at the demonstration... except its own liberal nationalist "CHILE WILL BE FREE!"

The Stalinists' ban on (everybody else's) politics was aimed at enforcing an atmosphere of passive mourning so as not to offend liberals. However, the protest drew many militants of the NYC left, expressing militant outrage against the Pinochet junta's heinous crime. When the SL raised its banner and signs, the CP hacks could not count on popular support for its censorship, and went instead to the police.

The cops obligingly cordoned off the area and forced the SL/SYL contingent out of the line and across the street where a counterdemonstration was held. The offending banner was set up and the 70 militants, including class-struggle unionists and the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) as well as

supporters of Communist Cadre, chanted militant slogans such as "Chilean Workers Will Rise Again to Avenge Their Martyred Dead." The Socialist Workers Party and Youth Against War and Fascism remained with the Stalinists in cowed anonymity.

As usual, the Stalinists called for reliance on the "democratic" U.S. imperialist bourgeoisie to put pressure on the "fascist" Chilean junta. Spokesmen for the CP's liberal mouthpiece, the NCC, called on the government to expel the present Chilean ambassador to the U.S., Manuel Trucco. A leaflet by NICH (Non-Intervention in Chile) demanded in addition recall of the American ambassador of Chile and for Henry Kissinger to break diplomatic and economic relations with the Pinochet regime! In contrast, an SL leaflet handed out at the demonstration, while demanding the arrest and prosecution of Letelier's assassins, expressed no confidence in the capitalist government to do so. SL signs at the demonstration demanded, "Protest the Murder of Letelier—Hot-Cargo Goods to Chile!"

The most ludicrous aspect of the Stalinists' exclusion of revolutionary politics was their sanctimonious attempt to pass this off as an extraordinary measure "out of respect to Mr. Letelier." Not only did the martyred Socialist leader not request an "apolitical" protest, but the CP's endless procession of Chile committees have *always* resorted to exclusionism, goon attacks and calling on the cops to keep Trotskyists out of anti-junta demonstrations. They have repeatedly sought to exclude or rip up SL signs and banners which warn against popular-front illusions and call for workers revolution to smash the Pinochet dictatorship. On this occasion, NICH, a group which claims to have split from the CP-dominated Chile Solidarity Committee due to the latter's gangster tactics, did not raise a finger against the SL's exclusion by the NCC.

Across the street from the main

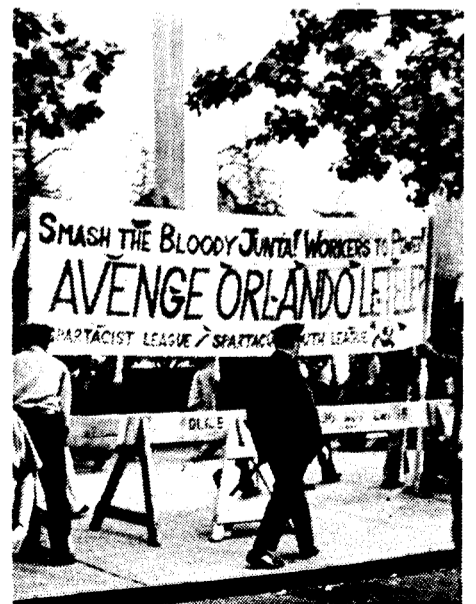


WV Photo

Stalinists called on the cops to exclude SL/SYL contingent from 22 September demonstration at UN.

demonstration, the SL/SYL chanted "Avenge Orlando Letelier, Smash the DINA [Chilean secret police] and the AAA [Argentine anti-communist death squads]," and "Chilean workers will not forget, Popular front made Pinochet!" Signs of militant seamen called for a labor boycott of goods to and from Chile, and other signs protested the plight of tens of thousands of Latin American left-wing refugees threatened by the Videla junta in Argentina. A Partisan Defense Committee sign highlighted the danger facing comrades of Chilean miners' leader Mario Muñoz who are still trapped in Argentina.

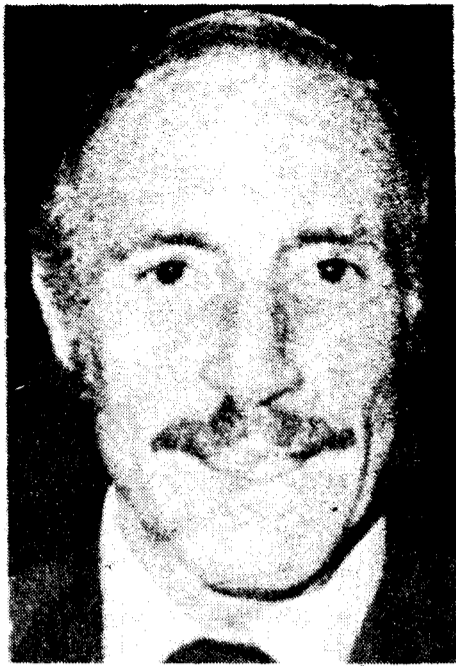
At the conclusion of the demonstrations, the SL/SYL-led protesters sang the workers anthem, "The Internationale," with raised fists. As if to underline the contrast, the Stalinists on the other side of the plaza ended up by intoning the Chilean national anthem. ■



WV Photo

Excluded demonstrators picketed across the street.

WORKERS VANGUARD



Daily World

**Orlando Letelier**

Democrats and head off the coup, allowed the armed forces to round up leftists and disarm the workers.

But Letelier was not assassinated because of his participation in the criminal popular-front betrayal of the Chilean working class. It was his painstaking work against the junta following the coup which goaded Pinochet's butchers to eliminate him. At the time of his murder, Letelier, as head of the Transnational Institute of the Washington-based left-liberal Institute for Policy Studies, was involved in documenting the collusion of American corporations with the coup. In a recent article in the *Nation* (28 August) he had documented the disastrous economic policies of Milton Friedman and Arnold Harberger, Pinochet's University of Chicago braintrusters. He was also

*continued on page 9*

**Brother of Mario Muñoz Arrested in Argentina**

On September 21, military authorities in the Argentine province of San Juan arrested Carlos Damián Muñoz Salas, intending to deport him to the torture chambers of the blood-thirsty Pinochet regime.

A 25-year-old Chilean trade unionist, Carlos Damián Muñoz is the brother of Mario Muñoz, the persecuted Chilean miners' leader who last month secured safe exit from Argentina as a result of an international campaign of militant protest. Now his brother has fallen into the hands of Videla's butchers. Already in October 1975, an expulsion decree was issued for Carlos, branding him as "very dangerous for the internal security" of Argentina.

The life of Carlos Damián Muñoz is in grave peril—the international proletarian solidarity which saved his brother must once more be raised: **FREE CARLOS DAMIAN MUÑOZ! STOP HIS DEPORTATION TO CHILE—RELEASE HIM FROM THE PRISONS OF THE ARGENTINE BUTCHERS!**

The Partisan Defense Committee urges readers of *WV* to send telegrams of protest to: General Jorge Videla, Casa Rosada, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

**Catholic Church Backs Stalinist Austerity Program**

**Free the Imprisoned Worker Militants in Poland!**

The strikes and demonstrations of Polish workers against the sharp food price increases decreed last June temporarily stymied the Gierek regime. Little more than 24 hours after the workers had mobilized, the government's edict had become a simple "proposal for discussion." Later, Premier Piotr Jaroszewicz tried to push through scaled-down increases for meat products only, but by mid-September the regime had abandoned all plans for price rises before 1978.

However, the government's vicious reprisals against workers who participated in the demonstrations indicate the tentative character of the Polish workers' victory. On July 20 seven workers from the Ursus tractor plant near Warsaw were convicted of damaging state property and blocking rail traffic. They were sentenced to prison terms ranging from three to six years for the action in which railroad tracks were torn up and barricaded, stopping the international Paris-Warsaw Express, and a locomotive was overturned by determined workers.

At the same time even harsher prison terms were handed six participants in the demonstrations at Radom, 60 miles south of Warsaw. This, the largest protest among many throughout the country on June 25, ended in a battle with police in which two workers were killed and 75 policemen injured. The local Communist Party headquarters was set on fire and stores were looted. At least one protester got a sentence of 10 years.

The international workers movement must come to the defense of these workers as well as others awaiting trial! The repression must be stopped and a general amnesty declared! Those demonstrators fired from their jobs must be immediately reinstated, and the workers and students drafted into the army as a reprisal must be released! The responsibility for the violence that broke out in response to Gierek's "modest proposal" of 30-100 percent food price increases lies squarely on the shoulders of the Stalinist bureaucracy that leaves the Polish proletariat no choice but direct industrial action.

**Down with the Repression—Free the Militants!**

Appeals for release of the jailed Polish strikers have come from all sides. Italian Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer made a widely publicized intervention, calling on Polish United Workers Party head Gierek to treat the demonstrators with "moderation and clemency."

Recently an open letter from 13 Polish intellectuals and professionals was published by the *New York Review of Books* (30 September) detailing how the regime has not made the slightest pretense of fair trials or respect for the democratic rights of the defendants.

"The trial was conducted under conditions which violated the principle of openness of judicial proceedings. Only the close relatives of the accused were permitted to be present; entry to the courtroom was totally prohibited to the foreign journalists, numerous intellectuals, and students who wished to attend. The accused workers were charged with 'active participation in acts of hooliganism.' There were only officially nominated defense counsel...."

Denouncing the government's destruction of even "elementary forms of

workers' democracy" such as the workers councils created in 1956, and the fact that the unions had been turned into "a fictitious, dead organization completely subordinated to the ruling apparatus," the letter ended:

"We appeal to all who feel solidarity with the struggle of the workers the world over for the liberation of labor. Demand the release of imprisoned Polish workers!"

Even as it was backing down from its ill-considered and socially regressive price rises, the embarrassed bureaucracy attempted to regain the initiative with a campaign of vilification against the demonstrators. Official reports of the events grossly underplayed their magnitude and gave the impression that the workers were simply vandals drunk on looted alcohol. Obligatory rallies were held around the country in support of Gierek; resolutions were passed expressing "profound indignation" at the acts of "irresponsible elements." But the rallies and resolutions did not explain why the government capitulated to "social parasites," nor how such a powerful mass of "hooligans" had come to exist.

**Economic Crisis of Polish Stalinism**

The government of former Silesian miner Edward Gierek came to power in the wake of the powerful 1970 strikes which closed down the ports of Gdansk, Gdiny and Szczecin. As a "reformer," Gierek prided himself on opening lines of communication with the sullen population through barnstorming "consultations." But following the June outbreaks, it became clear, as one party official put it, that "we had been talking to ourselves" (*New York Times*, 22 September). Out of 50 first secretaries of provincial party committees consulted beforehand, it is reported that only one predicted popular unrest.

The origins of the government's dilemma is the sharp economic crisis in Poland. As one observer aptly put it, "the party decided to stuff the people's mouth with sausage so they would not talk back, and now there is no sausage." Responding to the 1970 workers revolt, the Gierek regime had frozen consumer prices and undertook an ambitious industrial development program. However, the plan relied heavily on Western credits for the importation of modern technology, leading to a foreign debt with the capitalist countries of some \$7-9 billion.

The world capitalist depression of 1974-75 severely cut into Poland's export market, causing the country to become a net importer of food for the first time. To freeze consumer food prices in the face of rampant inflation in the capitalist world has required massive subsidies to Poland's overwhelmingly private farms. The price structure is now so distorted that it reportedly would be cheaper to feed livestock bread rather than fodder! Faced with rising costs, Poland's farmers are demanding greater subsidies and/or higher prices for their produce.

A political revolution leading to a soviet government of workers democracy is essential to break out of this economic impasse. Only such a workers government, responsible to the proletariat and recognized by the workers as their own, can liberate the creative energy of the proletariat and utilize the

capacities of the technical intelligentsia in the cause of socialist development. Capital investment alone will not maximize productivity when applied to an indifferent or hostile labor force.

A revolutionary workers government would also spur the collectivization of agriculture, not only increasing productivity in that key sector, but also strengthening the social basis of proletarian class rule. Of course, encouragement of agricultural collectivization should be through political persuasion and economic incentives, and not state coercion of smallholding farmers.

The profound problems of the Polish economy cannot be resolved within the framework of this deformed workers state. The disastrous impact that the world capitalist depression has had on the Polish economy points to the need for the economic integration of East Europe and the USSR, a policy which the nationally centered Stalinist bureaucracies now in power will not implement, and the overthrow of capitalism in the West. The key to solving Poland's economic crisis is a Socialist United States of Europe, through political revolution in the East and social revolution in the West.

**Catholic Reaction Raises Its Head**

Retraction of the price increases was a victory for the Polish proletariat. However, the government's economic crisis can also be exploited in the interests of pro-capitalist reaction. The main organizational focus of such counterrevolutionary forces in Poland (and some other East European Stalinist-ruled states) is the Roman Catholic Church, whose considerable social base centers on peasant smallholders, some quite wealthy by East European standards.

While raising the popular demand for clemency for the imprisoned Radom and Ursus workers, Poland's church hierarchy has also endorsed Gierek's austerity measures and called on the masses to make "sacrifices." Gierek's program is to try to resolve the economic crisis at the expense of urban wage-earners, centrally the proletariat, for the benefit of the agricultural petty bourgeoisie. Thus Polish Stalinism fosters the very conditions which strengthen capitalist-restorationist forces.

The present campaign to free the jailed worker militants can be of great importance in developing a revolutionary Trotskyist party in Stalinist-ruled Poland. The dissident intelligentsia has reacted strongly on behalf of the imprisoned workers, and support for the victims of the bureaucracy's austerity program is widespread in the West European labor movement. The Gierek regime is on the defensive in Poland and internationally. If the Stalinist rulers are forced to free these workers, the effect in raising the morale and combativity of the proletariat throughout East Europe will be enormous. **Free the imprisoned Polish worker militants!**

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## As Convention Meets

# Wall Regime Threatens to Shipwreck NMU

The 17th convention of the National Maritime Union (NMU) convenes in New York on October 4. The NMU, once one of the most powerful maritime unions, has suffered a considerable decline in recent years. Today it is a relatively small and weak union whose convention this year meets under the shadow of a federal grand jury investigation into notoriously corrupt practices by NMU officials.

For years the shipowners have been registering their ships abroad in order to take advantage of cheaper labor and non-union conditions. Today only five percent of U.S. ocean-borne commerce is carried aboard U.S. flag ships; this has been by far the greatest factor in the decline of NMU jobs. In 1971 the union lost thousands more jobs when the passenger fleet was laid up, with barely a protest from the union officials. The

the NMU leaders. Charges included taking kickbacks, embezzling and accepting money from the companies to quash any union opposition to the lay-up of the passenger ships.

### The Roots of Class-Collaboration

The NMU was founded in 1937 as a split-off from the ISU, the AFL union, as part of the mass labor organizing drive of that period. It affiliated with the CIO and was the first sea-going industrial union with a racially integrated membership. At that time, the SIU was formed out of the remnants of the ISU which adhered to the policy of excluding blacks. The more militant NMU was then several times larger than the SIU and had markedly superior contracts.

For its first 10 years the NMU leadership was in the hands of the

State Department mounted a cold war drive in the international labor movement. Curran grasped the opportunity for a mutual backscratching deal with the government and the bosses. Going from CP ally to anti-Communist demagogue in less than one year, this consummate opportunist was soon collaborating with right-wing dictatorships around the world. Yet the workers of these countries—poor and without unions to defend them—ultimately provided the cheap labor source which generated the massive emigration of U.S.-flag companies abroad! The NMU has never made any determined attempt to organize these workers. Curran also worked hand in glove with the AFL-CIO in sponsoring company and government-controlled “sweetheart” unions in foreign countries. If today the NMU leadership complains about the “runaway shipping practices” of the companies, it is only the grossest hypocrisy!

Curran's hand-picked successor, Shannon Wall, has continued this reactionary and self-defeating policy of economic nationalism. Having frittered away the bulk of its sea-going jobs, the NMU is a mere shell of its former self. The union is reduced to futilely begging the government to pass various trade quota bills that would provide a guaranteed share of trade for U.S.-flag shipping. AFL-CIO maritime unions, including the NMU, recently co-sponsored a demonstration with American-flag companies demanding that the Soviet Union pay higher freight rates to import grain. The union bureaucrats hope that by combining anti-communism with demands for more money to the bosses, they might

win the ear of the government. With higher rates the corporations might find it profitable to increase their grain trade—and perhaps throw a few crumbs to seamen.

The NMU was one of the first unions to endorse Jimmy Carter. Partly, this comes out of a desire to back a winner in bourgeois electoral politics—and perhaps have some of the heat taken off the grand jury investigation in return. It is also based on a desperate hope that Carter will fulfill his campaign promise to “build up the American merchant marine” (as Nixon also promised before him!). However, the American government has made it clear that at present it will not subsidize additional maritime jobs until the unions make even more concessions in wages, manning scales and other standards than they have already.

There is a grouping in the union that has presented a class-struggle opposition to the Curran/Wall regime, namely the Militant-Solidarity Caucus, which publishes the *Beacon* and has been actively campaigning for convention delegate posts. A spokesman for the



NMU president Shannon Wall (right) with Jimmy Carter in Baltimore. Announcing NMU endorsement, Wall hailed Navy man Carter as the candidate who would “carry out concept of total seapower.”

bureaucrats have also given their approval to unlimited cutbacks in manning scales, so that newer, automated ships frequently crew up with as few as 16 seamen.

The loss of jobs has greatly weakened other aspects of the contract. Given the nature of the industry, a good pension plan is extremely important. At one time the NMU had a fairly strong plan, which provided a pension at any age to seamen with 20 years of service. Today, however, there is an age requirement of 55 years, and 25 years' service in order to get a minimal (\$300 per month) pension.

The NMU and a rival seamen's union, the Seafarers International Union (SIU), have historically competed against each other, offering successively worse sweetheart deals to the companies in an attempt to attract new contracts and new jobs. Under pressure from George Meany, the NMU and the SIU announced in 1974 that they intended to cease their squabbling and would seek a merger of the two unions. However, this maneuver exploded in an orgy of raiding a year later. The NMU eagerly grabbed ships traditionally crewed by SIU-affiliated unions on the West Coast; the SIU retaliated by raiding NMU ships on the East Coast. While providing no net jobs for seamen of either union, this only heated up once again the traditional and harmful rivalries on the waterfront.

While seamen have fared poorly, the NMU bureaucracy—one of the more corrupt and venal in the American labor movement—has certainly managed to feather its own nest. Although the NMU is a small union, its officials receive some of the top salaries in the AFL-CIO. A year ago a federal grand jury launched a major investigation—still pending—into corrupt practices by

Stalinist Communist Party (CP). The CP gradually frittered away the authority it had gained as leaders of the organizing drive. Its bureaucratic maneuverings won it the enmity of many seamen. Once Germany invaded the Soviet Union, the NMU leadership vigorously supported the imperialist World War II, embracing the no-strike pledge and accepting a retractable “war bonus” instead of a genuine wage increase. It eagerly clamped down on all rank-and-file rebellions against the profit-gouging shipowners and even tried to extend the no-strike pledge after the war.

Following the demise of the wartime Stalin-Roosevelt alliance, the NMU's demagogue president Joe Curran broke from his former CP allies. Curran's ability to win over disgruntled seamen was certainly facilitated by the Stalinists' history of class collaboration and their manipulative practices within the union. At first the CP leadership tried to maneuver, and it even voted for a red-baiting resolution against outside political interference by the Communist Party at the 1946 CIO convention. This groveling availed nothing. After an extended power struggle, with the assistance of the cops, the Coast Guard and the Waterfront Commission, Curran managed to purge all leftists from the union, getting rid of socialists, Trotskyists and other militants as well as supporters of the CP. Thereafter he successively eliminated other would-be rivals from the bureaucracy, revised the relatively democratic NMU constitution and inundated the union with shoreside workers to establish virtual one-man rule.

From the time of the purge, the NMU has lined up with the most right-wing elements in the labor movement. As the

## RESOLUTION

The following resolution was presented by a member of the Militant-Solidarity Caucus of the National Maritime Union at the September 27 New York Port meeting where it was ruled out of order by the chair.

*Whereas*, it is in the interests of the labor movement to smash all forms of racism and racial oppression; and

*Whereas*, the vicious apartheid regime in South Africa has been responsible for the subjugation and butchery of millions of non-whites; and

*Whereas*, hundreds of thousands of workers and students are now striking and demonstrating in a struggle to overthrow the hated apartheid regime,

*Therefore be it resolved* by the NMU members at this meeting that:

- 1) The NMU initiate a total boycott to “hot cargo” all goods destined for or originating from South Africa, in support of the current struggle there against apartheid;
- 2) The NMU call on all other unions, particularly the longshoremen's and seamen's unions in the U.S. and around the world to join this job action;
- 3) A committee of five NMU members be elected at this meeting to coordinate the implementation of this call.



Protectionist, anti-Soviet NMU demonstration in NYC in August for higher profits to maritime bosses.

Caucus underscored to *WV* the policies that set the Caucus apart from other would-be oppositionists. In particular, unlike other opponents of the Curran/Wall regime such as liberal-backed Jim Morrissey, the Caucus opposes any government intervention into the union's internal affairs and demands that the membership itself clean up the NMU. The spokesman emphasized that the demand of full trade union independence from the capitalist state has a particular relevance to the NMU. In the past the government has attempted to intervene in the maritime unions to purge militants and break the union hiring hall in the interests of a “disciplined merchant marine.” And when, in the early 1960's, the NMU leaders made a short-lived attempt to organize Honduran seamen, a U.S. court handed down an injunction against international organizing (to which Curran obediently knuckled under).

The Militant-Solidarity Caucus opposes raiding and calls for joint seamen-longshoremen unity against the bosses. It demands that the hiring hall be strengthened and calls for “integrated labor defense squads against racist

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## Union "Lefts" Knuckle Under to Wage Restraints

# Labour Government Shaken by Seamen's Strike Threat in Britain

LONDON, September 23—The British ruling class and the Labour Party government breathed a sigh of relief yesterday as the executive of the National Union of Seamen (NUS) voted by nine to seven to accept a compromise settlement with the employers, negotiated under tremendous pressure from the Trades Union Congress (TUC). When the NUS leadership had issued a strike call two weeks earlier, it threw the annual TUC conference into a panic and sent shivers through the City financial district where the pound crashed to a new low of \$1.71.

The strike threat arose over the NUS demand for a £6 pay raise backdated to July. A year previously the NUS had won a 37-percent increase, to be paid in three installments. However, under the terms of the government's voluntary wage restraint ("social contract") negotiated subsequently with TUC leaders, the seamen will not be eligible for another wage hike until next January. When it became clear that the seamen would not receive their raise due this July, a ballot of the NUS membership showed a narrow majority in favour of "industrial action."

A seamen's strike would have been the first direct challenge to the social contract. This program of stringent wage restraints is the heart of the Labour government's social-democratic program for propping up sagging British capitalism. With inflation during the last 12 months of over 14 percent, discontent is rife in the working class and a seamen's strike could have unleashed massive union struggles against the TUC/Labour policy of "solving" the economic crisis at the cost of the workers.

### "We'll Cripple You!"

The fear of just such an explosion sent waves of alarm through the British bourgeoisie, the Labour government and the TUC bureaucrats. The deputy chairman of the British Steel Corporation wailed, "Our first concern is that any breach of the Government's pay code arrangements might well unleash demands in our own industry" (*Guardian* [London], 10 September). The General Council of British Shipping warned of the "catastrophic effect on sterling and Britain's trading position," and the *Financial Times* index for shares on the London Stock Exchange dropped to its lowest point this year. Meanwhile, the Labour government began laying plans for declaring a state of emergency. Prime Minister James Callaghan immediately called a meeting of senior cabinet ministers, then postponed his visit to Canada until after the initial crisis had passed.

The job of dealing with the seamen was left to the bureaucrats of the Trades Union Congress. At the TUC conference at Brighton the vote in favour of the social contract was so overwhelming that it was not even felt necessary to count the ballots. However, with the seamen's strike call threatening to undo the best-laid plans of these "labour statesmen," the TUC leaders began to apply massive pressure to the NUS executive. Bill Sirs, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trade Confederation, complained that his union had a better



Newsline

Although seamen were eager to strike, union tops postponed the strike for two weeks.



Newsline

Jim Slater, general secretary of the National Union of Seamen. "There will be a strike. Nothing will stop it."

case for special treatment, and that "If the seamen were to break it [the wage pact], our own members would be clamouring for the same treatment."

The TUC warned the seamen that they could expect no official support. They threatened to suspend the NUS, meaning that no other union could help and that dockers and railwaymen would be told by their leaders to cross seamen's picket lines. At one point in the negotiations, TUC general secretary Len Murray vowed, "By God, we'll make sure no union supports you. We'll cripple you." And AUEW (metal workers) leader Hugh Scanlon, who had formerly claimed to oppose the £6 limit imposed on his own union, chimed in, "You might kid yourself you support the social contract, but you don't kid us" (*Observer* [London], 12 September). Under pressure, the NUS executive caved in and postponed the strike two weeks in order to allow for further negotiations with the TUC and employers.

### Solidarity From the Ranks

Feeding the bureaucrats' anxiety to get the strike called off quickly were clear indications that their hostility to the seamen's claim was definitely not shared by the union rank and file.

Within the NUS itself, it is clear that the most militant sections did not see their claim as just a "special case," but the beginning of an attack on the whole "social contract"/wage freeze. Seamen based in the port of Felixstowe had taken strike action already several days in advance of the September 11 deadline. The NUS also claimed it had assurances of support from the Indian Seamen's Union representing the 22,000 Asian seamen who work British flag ships and who continued to work during the 1966 seamen's strike.

Significantly, there were statements of support from dock workers' leaders. In 1966 the effectiveness of the maritime strike had been limited by the dockers' allowing ships to be moved from one berth to another. This time Jack Lydon, chairman of the Merseyside docks and waterways of the Transport and General Workers Union and a member of the national docks shop stewards committee, stated: "You can rest assured that if the seamen go on strike, Merseyside dockers will give them every support and will certainly not scab."

From a delegate conference of the Scottish miners came a statement of support with a condemnation of the TUC for pressuring a postponement of the strike, along with an offer of



Economist

Prime Minister Callaghan

financial support. Michael McGahey, Communist Party (CP) leader of the Scottish area National Union of Miners, said that this was "in order to repay the debt we owe to them for supporting us during our disputes in 1972 and 1974." And at the TUC conference, 324 delegates and visitors signed a petition supporting the seamen's stand.

### "Left" Bureaucrats Cave In

Throughout this whole affair the NUS executive, which is fairly evenly divided between "moderates" and "lefts" (including CP supporters), acted with timidity. In polling the membership, the executive did not call forthrightly for a strike but only for some form of "industrial action," not even specifying that it affect all ports, or else acceptance of the TUC/Labour government wage restraints. This effectively discouraged many union militants, who assumed that such industrial action would be limited to impotent gestures like a ban on overtime.

Even after the membership voted down the TUC pay policy and a strike was scheduled, the NUS executive strenuously argued that it did not oppose the wage restraints and that its demands were within the confines of the social contract. NUS general secretary Jim Slater has consistently supported the social contract. Last May when the NUS conference narrowly rejected a call to scrap wage restraints, Slater opposed this motion strongly, saying that "if you carry this motion it is the biggest kidology you have ever perpetrated on your members" (*Times* [London], 8 May). Left-wing members of the executive like Gordon Norris were also reluctant to mount a political challenge to the Callaghan government: "We do not want to find ourselves being the whipping boys for the downfall of the Labour Government" (*Times*, 11 September).

Although the chances of a seamen's strike now appear negligible, the TUC tops have by no means demonstrated an ability to ram the social contract down the throats of British workers. The prospect of solidarity actions in support of the seamen by other sections of the working class was quite real. Well aware of this, the union leaders were forced to agree to more fringe benefits in lieu of a pay increase. Even though thankful for the avoidance of a strike, influential news media voiced concern that the effect of this award could well be to trigger renewed working-class struggle on a broad front.

Following announcement of the settlement, NUS officials, shipowners, government and TUC all insisted that the pact adheres to the social contract guidelines. The agreement indeed provides for *no wage increase whatever*, until January when seamen will receive from £2.50 to £4 per week. Certain fringe benefits—centering on subsistence payments for food, lodging and travel expenses and compensation for periods when seamen are unemployed—will be increased. However, another key item in dispute, extending the "overseas currency allowance" (presently limited to the North American and Central American dollar zone) to other high-

*continued on page 11*

# Cops, Mayor Push "Anti-Crime" Hysteria in Detroit

DETROIT, September 20 Led by "liberal" black mayor Coleman Young, 2,000 demonstrators marched down Woodward Avenue Sunday to show support for the city's recent "law-and-order" campaign against street gangs. The main theme of the march was to promote unity with Detroit's overwhelmingly white and notoriously racist police force.

The demonstrators were largely drawn from among cops and city government employees, who were no doubt encouraged to attend by their boss, the mayor. Also prominent were the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). A few small trade-union contingents, notably from the Teamsters and transit workers, participated.

## Black Liberals Endorse Cop Rampage

This pro-cop demonstration comes after a month of a widely publicized crackdown on street gangs, which was triggered when several hundred black youth assaulted the audience at a rock concert at Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit. The main aim of the campaign is, of course, to beef up the police. Some 450 cops were recalled from layoff, their salaries paid by using nearly all of a recent allotment of \$15 million in federal aid.

The size of the Tactical and Gang Squad has been tripled and the number of patrol cars greatly increased. There is also widespread talk of re-establishing the hated STRESS squads, notorious for their racist assaults which resulted in



Teamsters march in September 19 Detroit "law and order" demonstration.

detention pens. The curfew is so manifestly oppressive, unjust and unpopular that in the past few weeks it has not been systematically enforced. However, the curfew ordinance remains on the books as a weapon to harass and victimize black youth. And at the September 19 demonstration, Young reaffirmed that he would maintain the curfew "as long as necessary." Repeal the curfew ordinance!

Prominent among those local leaders whipping up the anti-crime frenzy in Detroit have been NAACP officials headed by Joe Madison. (Madison, it should be noted, has in the recent past worked closely with the National Student Coalition Against Racism led by the reformist Socialist Workers Party.) The NAACP's particular contribution to the "anti-crime" campaign has been a drive to get prostitutes off the streets, if necessary by jailing them.

While it is an extreme and degrading form of social pathology, prostitution is not a crime. It is not an act of violence or theft against innocent persons. The real victims of prostitution are the women themselves. Prostitution should be decriminalized.

## Against Union Vigilantes!

From the standpoint of the workers movement, the most ominous aspect of the city's "anti-crime" mobilization is the support given to it by the local United Auto Workers (UAW) bureaucracy. Region I-A director and long-time union black spokesman Buddy Battle has sponsored several city-wide UAW leadership meetings with the police and Mayor Young. Echoing Young's "civilian police reserve" scheme, Battle has called for UAW-backed "community crime patrols...walking or driving through neighborhoods to keep an eye open for trouble and to report trouble to police" (*Detroit Free Press*, 21 August).

The Woodcock bureaucracy of the UAW has refused to organize flying squads to protect picket lines against scab attacks; it has refused to take action against the anti-busing activities of its own Louisville local. And it now

offers the union's services to Detroit's racist cops in policing the black ghettos!

The several hundred thousand assembly line workers in the Detroit metropolitan area who slave 50 to 60 hours a week to maintain a modest standard of living are understandably incensed at the city's high level of violent crime. There is a certain sympathy in the (largely black) auto plants for a "smash the street gangs" campaign. But anti-crime vigilante groups, whether organized through trade unions or in some other manner, will result in indiscriminate racist terror. Class-conscious workers must oppose any and all efforts to involve the unions in policing the ghettos.

It is probably no coincidence that Battle's proposal to set up UAW vigilante squads comes during the contract period. What a convenient way to deflect the ranks' attention from militant struggle against the auto bosses. Detroit's campaign against street gangs, like the "law-and-order" issue in general, is used to divert workers from attacking their real enemies—the source of mass unemployment, wage-slashing inflation and health-destroying working conditions—the capitalist corporations and their political henchmen.

A revolutionary workers party and a class-struggle labor movement would be able to mobilize black youth around such demands as a shorter workweek with no loss in pay, to open up more jobs; a massive public works program at union wages; and free, quality education and recreation facilities. Mass communist organization and agitation within the ghetto would tend to isolate the hard core of criminals from the broader layer of restless, alienated youth now drawn to the gangs.

Violent crime will exist so long as the capitalist system continues to produce (because it requires it) an impoverished and desperate lumpen population. The only real means of eliminating "crime in the streets" is by eliminating the economic base of lumpenism, through socialist planning under a workers government. ■



WV Photo

Pickets outside forum in Detroit protest sectarian exclusion by the International Socialists.

## I.S. Excludes Ford Workers from Strike Forum

DETROIT—The social-democratic International Socialists (I.S.) provoked an angry demonstration of militant Ford workers and Spartacist League (SL) supporters Sunday when it refused to allow them to attend its widely-advertised "public meeting" entitled "Showdown in Auto." The I.S.' refusal to admit striking auto workers to its forum on the auto strike is only the most outrageous example of its policy of sectarian exclusion, however. This is the fourth such instance in the last year.

This time, however, the excluded militants responded with a picket line and placards denouncing both the I.S.' undemocratic practices and its uncritical support for such reformist trade-union formations as the Coalition for a Good Contract (CDC) and the United National Caucus (UNC), which have a history of dragging the unions into the bosses' courts. It is to avoid answering for these betrayals that the I.S. is forced to resort to the exclusion of class-struggle militants from its "public" forums.

Inside, those few who managed to pass I.S. inspection were treated to an attack on the SL by I.S. national secretary Glenn Wolfe, a series of unserious and apolitical speeches and a list of "demands" which did not include even the minimal call for an industry-wide auto strike.

Following a brief "discussion period," during which all questions regarded as critical or embarrassing were shouted down, Wolfe took the floor to attack the SL a second time and to clarify I.S. trade-union "strategy": a policy of dealing with people where they are at politically (i.e., capitulating to the bureaucrats) and later casting off those who no longer serve the I.S.' maneuvers. When asked if the United Mine Workers strike-breaking president Arnold Miller, whom the I.S. supported, fits into this category, Wolfe replied: "That's a hit below the belt" and refused to answer.

In fact, the I.S. has no answers to any of the crucial questions facing the working class. The only class-struggle politics raised at the "Showdown in Auto" forum were raised outside on the street by communists and the excluded strikers. ■



WV Photo

Detroit mayor Coleman Young at "anti-crime" march.

the deaths of scores of black youth. Eliminating STRESS was one of the important issues in Young's 1973 mayoral campaign.

This former Communist Party sympathizer has now adopted the "law-and-order" rhetoric of George Wallace and Spiro Agnew. Young is currently calling for emergency detention centers, a new county jail, tougher juvenile laws and "a civilian police reserve" (vigilantes) of "strong men and women" who are ready to "support the police" (*Detroit Free Press*, 25 August).

The most vicious and anti-democratic action of Young's campaign against "crime in the streets" is a 10 p.m. curfew on all youth under 18. Hundreds of innocent teenagers, overwhelmingly black, have been rounded up and put in

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# Ford Strikers Demonstrate Against Union-Authorized Scabbing

DETROIT In the second week of a nationwide contract strike by the United Auto Workers (UAW) against Ford Motor Company, the outrageous, officially approved scabbing by Local 245 at the Dearborn Engineering Center was finally ended after striking skilled tradesmen picketed the facility. A week later the skilled workers again demonstrated, this time at the UAW's Solidarity House headquarters. However, in both cases, rather than presenting a class-struggle opposition against the pro-company bureaucracy, the militants' leaders sought to act as a pressure group on the Woodcock gang.

When 200 picketers from striking River Rouge Local 600 arrived at the gates of the Dearborn facility September 21 to confront the scabs, they found an equal number of local police and private Ford guards waiting for them. The Engineering Center's 1,600 union tradesmen had been previously ordered by the International to keep the facility open on the grounds that "essential" emissions work was being done. Faced both with this virtual army of cops, and with leaflets from Local 245's acting president Virgil Dare warning that because "these pickets are illegal," no strike benefits would be forthcoming, most of the union members drove straight through the lines.

Unable to stop the scabs, the angry pickets then marched over to the Local 245 hall to confront the officials. The strikers entered the hall but were quickly pushed out. One militant yelled out, "Are we in the right place? Is this a scab local?" When a Local 245 official asked, "Don't you know what our situation is?" the militant responded, "I know what a scab is!" The confrontation was abruptly ended, however, with the arrival of former Local 600 skilled trades unit president Al Gardner who entered the hall and arranged for a local meeting, only to be told a few moments later by the International representative that there would be no such meeting.

The strikers then left, promising to return for the following shift and for the ones to follow. By the end of the day, however, the Local 245 executive board in consultation with the International decided to pull out the Local, which had already voted weeks ago by a 76 percent margin to honor the strike.

While pulling out the scabbing local was a partial victory, Dearborn Engineering Center continues to operate with salaried workers. At the planning meeting for the action—called by the Independent Skilled Trades Council (ISTC)—Gardner (who is also an ISTC spokesman) told the assembled militants to let the salaried employees through the lines, saying also that if Local 245 members wanted to work, they should be allowed through the lines! At the gates, the sight of the pickets politely waving to Ford's salaried employees through the lines, often with a "good morning," or "have a nice day," turned the demonstration into a mockery, amounting to an open invitation to scab! Faced with the army of cops and the need to effectively close the Dearborn Center's 18 gates, a mass mobilization of the entire Local 600 was needed, not just a few hundred men.

A real fight against Ford depends upon the forging of unity between the skilled tradesmen and the production workers based on a program of class struggle which meets the needs of both. Yet the ISTC, always narrowly focused on the skilled trades, has now boiled down its minimal and parochial program even further. In its leaflet to the Local 245 members, the only demands

were for wage parity with the building trades (\$10 hour) and an end to subcontracting.

When massive subcontracting is used by the capitalists to break the militancy of certain union locals, for instance, it must be strongly fought. But in this case the ISTC cynically opposes all subcontracting in order to "end unemployment" by snatching for itself the jobs of other workers, replacing the fight for jobs for all with backstabbing by one group of workers against another. In the past Woodcock himself has protested against subcontracting as an excuse to rail against foreign capitalist competition in the U.S. auto market.

The September 27 demonstration at Solidarity House again underscored the ISTC's bankruptcy as an opposition to Woodcock. As the group of 125, mostly skilled tradesmen, marched in front of the UAW International headquarters the ISTC could only chant "We want more dough," and similar slogans. When militants marched past the gate on Jefferson Avenue, and up to the main door, the role of ISTC secretary Charles Dewey was to direct them back onto the street while calling on Woodcock, Bannon and Fraser to "Come on out and lead your army."

This pressuring is one side of the ISTC's strategy. Al Gardner admitted the other side to *WV*: "If the International denies our skilled tradesmen the right to reject the contract, then there's a possibility of legal action." In fact, when the International threatened to with-

**Striking UAW skilled tradesmen confront Local 245 (Ford Research and Engineering Center) officials demanding that they stop scabbing on national UAW strike.**



WV Photo

from a furious striker. The fight was broken up with ISTC leaders Gardner and Pete Kelly again leading the demonstrators back to Jefferson Avenue. As the workers began to drift away one yelled, "What do we do now?" There was no answer from the ISTC.

Reformist oppositions like the ISTC can do no more than try to cajole Woodcock into greater militancy. What is needed is a complete break with the Woodcock bureaucracy and the formation of a class-struggle leadership to fight for the real needs of auto workers. Such a program must include the demand for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, for the unlimited local right to strike without International authorization and for a steward for every foreman. There must be a fight for full

dian operations are still working without a contract. Also at work are the more than half a million UAW members at GM, Chrysler and American Motors! A victory for the auto workers requires shutting down all of Ford and all of auto (and agricultural implements) throughout the U.S. and Canada!

Woodcock's ties to racist "right-to-work" Democrat Jimmy Carter and his hopes for a cabinet post in a new Democratic administration are behind his present conservative one-company, one-country sellout strike strategy. Class-struggle militants can defeat the bureaucracy and its defeatist policies only by providing a political answer to its support for strikebreaking capitalist politicians. Labor must break these criminal ties to the Democratic Party and struggle for a workers party to be formed based on the trade unions, to fight for a workers government. ■

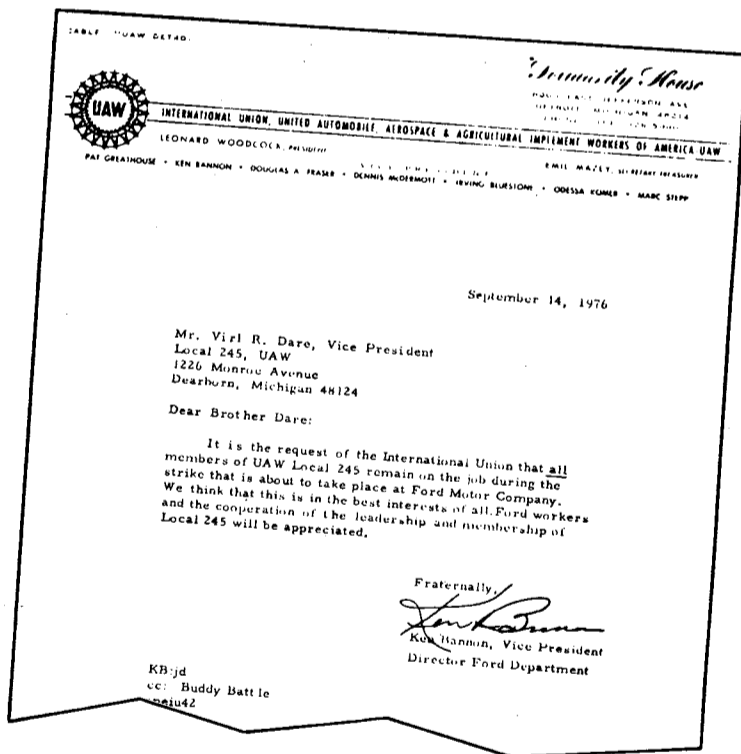
## Letelier...

(continued from page 5)

influential in the investigations by liberal Congressmen such as Edward Kennedy, Frank Church and James Abourezk, who want the junta replaced because its arbitrary totalitarian excesses and irrational economic schemes are an embarrassment to the U.S. Letelier had also helped instigate a boycott of Chilean products by Dutch dockworkers and a campaign against a \$63 million Dutch mining investment in Chile. It was for this that he was assassinated.

The wanton murder of Orlando Letelier is a crime against all foes of the junta. The attempted whitewash of the DINA must be exposed. The blood-thirsty Pinochet regime will stop at nothing to maintain its grip. But the Chilean proletariat will rise again to avenge its martyred dead. ■

**Letter from UAW vice president (Ford Department) Ken Bannon "requesting" Local 245 members to scab on national Ford strike.**



hold Local 245's strike benefits should the members honor picket lines, Gardner's first response at the planning meeting was again to hint at legal action. Thus, as they unsuccessfully tried in 1973 ISTC leaders are again preparing to substitute "struggle" in the bosses' courts for militant mass action.

As the bureaucrats and staff began leaving Solidarity House at 5 p.m., they had to drive through a gauntlet of angry workers. Cops appeared to "direct traffic" and one, Officer Carr, told a nervous driver, "Roll your windows up and run over them if they get in your way." One demonstrator was hit and seriously injured.

As the agonized brother lay on the ground waiting for an ambulance, a black bureaucrat told the demonstrators that they were all wrong in their attitude. He got his job by being an Uncle Tom, he confessed, and urged the militants to do the same. He paid for this insulting advice with a few punches

SUB benefits for every worker from the date of hire, a big pay boost for both skilled trades and production workers, a full cost-of-living escalator and union control of hiring, upgrading and training programs to end racial discrimination in the skilled trades.

The skilled tradesmen's efforts to stop the scabbing at Dearborn Engineering Center were an important act of labor solidarity. But unfortunately, the bureaucrats' attempts to sabotage the strike are far more numerous (thousands of workers around the country are still scabbing with union permission, for example). Union militants must call for the formation of an elected strike committee to keep the ranks informed day by day on the bargaining and to enforce solid picket lines through mass picketing.

As the Dearborn situation indicates, even the Ford facilities in the U.S. are not totally shut down. In addition the 34,000 UAW members of Ford's Cana-

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**CHICAGO**

(continued from page 12)

Party's *Militant*, and they also were forced to leave the press area. Outside the convention center, the *Call* reporters and a salesman were physically assaulted (the salesman suffered a broken nose) and chased down the street. Subsequently, the press credentials of reporters from *WV* and the Workers League's *Bulletin* were also revoked.

Delegates demanded (and Miller consented) that the Credentials Committee investigate several union members whom they charged were "card-carrying Communists." A 15-minute recess was voted "to clean house." As a band played polka tunes, delegates brought their charges to the committee. A particular target was a delegate from West Virginia who belongs to the Right to Strike Committee, a group involved in the 1975 wildcat.

Miller and his staff responded to the red-baiting by first attempting to ignore it and then capitulating to it. A letter dated 31 January 1975 was circulated denouncing IEB member Patterson for "shooting off his mouth" about "communists" on the union staff. Rather than defending the democratic rights of union members, the letter merely bemoaned the fact that a union official would "smear the good name of innocent people." Distribution of the letter was also intended to discredit red-baiter Trbovich, who had signed it before he switched loyalties from the MFD to ex-Boyle supporter Patterson.

Although the Credentials Committee did not take any action against the accused delegates, this is no credit to Miller, who has never challenged the union constitution's anti-Communist clause. Miller has also worked hand in glove with his opponents on the IEB to discipline rank-and-file militants who challenge the bureaucracy's collaboration with the coal bosses. Following the four-week wildcat in the summer of 1975, the national leadership voted itself the right to "try charges against members who, by their actions, in willful and deliberate defiance of International directives, seriously jeopardize the integrity of the union." Subsequently, Bruce Miller, a Right to Strike Committee member, was suspended from the union for a year.

*Workers Vanguard* reporters who protested the anti-communist press exclusions were given a runaround by Miller's staff members, ranging from apologetic evasions to unsubtle red-baiting. Press secretary Bernie Aronson told a *WV* reporter who had covered the meeting on Thursday and Friday: "For your own protection and safety, I just don't think you should try to come back.... We're just not going to be able to let you in." Another staff member, Ralph Burgess, was asked on what basis press credentials would be distributed for the remainder of the convention. He bluntly responded: "It depends on what kind of articles you people produce."

In an article in today's *New York Times* reporting on the exclusion of *WV* and the *Bulletin*, Jack Landau, executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, is quoted

as saying, "This appears to violate the protections of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.... This is a classic example of prior restraint, forbidden by the Constitution." Also, *Miners Report*, a pro-Miller but non-union periodical whose reporter was also thrown out of the convention press area, obtained a warrant against one of the delegates involved in the exclusion. A dangerous climate is being stirred up which could serve to launch a court attack on the UMW.

Communists and all militant unionists must denounce this bureaucratic expulsion of the left press from a normal business meeting. However, we hold the independence of the workers movement a higher principle than bourgeois-democratic rights. (Don't forget, moreover, that unions themselves were once considered unconstitutional as a restraint of trade.) Thus we recognize the right of unions to exclude the bourgeois press (though this is generally uncalled-for) and to hold closed meetings, and we sharply condemn any attempt at court action against the UMW. Violations of workers democracy must be fought out within the labor movement, not in the bosses' courts!

The hypocrisy of Miller (not to mention his demagogic opponents) is revealed by this exclusion of working-class newspapers while the bourgeoisie's press is allowed to remain. Moreover, while left-wing groups are undemocratically barred from disseminating their literature at UMW (and other union) conventions the union-busting Labor Department and Bureau of Mines are allowed to set up information tables and generally are treated as honored guests.

At this convention, for example, Robert Barrett, head of the Federal Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration, was invited to address the delegates. Barrett praised the union leadership for its "strong and effective safety programs to safeguard the life and health of American miners." The hollowness of such praise from an agent of the ruling class was underscored by

an earlier announcement that a 21-year-old apprentice miner had been electrocuted on the job in West Virginia, the 391st death in the mines since the 1973 convention. Many of these deaths are directly attributable to the bureaucracy's refusal to fight for an unrestricted right to strike over safety hazards.

It is no accident that Trbovich has attempted to capitalize on the issue of "outsiders" in union affairs. The MFD, led by Miller and braintrustered by liberal lawyers and politicians, took office in 1972 after a successful court suit overturning the 1969 elections and ordering a Labor Department-supervised rerun. Having provided that opening wedge, the Miller regime has repeatedly invited the government into union affairs. Consequently, Miller is blamed by much of the membership, not without cause, for the estimated \$400 million in lawsuits brought by coal companies against the UMW.

The courts and coal bosses took careful note of the bureaucracy's craven refusal to struggle for a contractual right to strike and to sanction and back up the wildcats as well as Miller's wretched record of using organs of the bourgeois state against fellow union members. Emboldened by this prostrate "leadership," the miners' enemies have slapped fine after fine on UMW locals in an attempt to crack rank-and-file unrest.

Having abandoned Miller's largely discredited regime, Trbovich seeks to pin the entire blame for court interference on Miller and his "outsiders." He told *WV* reporters that he would not personally take Miller to court (!) and that the MFD had lost votes to the blatantly corrupt Boyle because of miners' resentment at the court suit.

Trbovich brazenly tries to ignore his own role as a plaintiff in the Miners for Democracy court case and even pretends that his recent instigation of a Labor Department financial investigation was a service to the union membership. His caterwauling about "outsiders" is an attempt to tap legitimate hostility at Miller's reliance on the

government while descending to the cheapest mudslinging at a few young liberals on the union staff and sponsoring a purge attempt in the union ranks. Like Patterson, whom he now calls the "staunchest" member of the IEB, Trbovich hopes to play on both the defensive union consciousness of the ranks and their social and political backwardness.

The real bone of contention between Miller and the Trbovich/Patterson bloc, of course, is not "outsiders." Both factions serve outside interests, namely those of the ruling class. The real issue between the bureaucratic cliques is which can better control the ranks, stifle the reds and stop the wildcats. Miller has fought against all the same strikes which Trbovich railed against—"the shift rotation strike, the textbook strike, the gas strike, the right-to-strike strike and the injunction strike" (all but the second being important instances of class struggle impulses in the union).

Patterson's record, from the bureaucrats' point of view, is unblemished. According to Trbovich, the only wildcat in his district occurred when Patterson was not there.

That Trbovich could joint with Patterson without abandoning the MFD platform testifies to the unprincipled nature of the original group. Miller's opposition has now turned the cut-rate rhetoric of "rank-and-fileism" against him. But on the right to strike, on government intervention in the labor movement and on independent working-class political action all wings of the bureaucracy line up against the interests of the union ranks.

Almost alone on the left, the Spartacist League did not support Miller in the 1972 election, pointing out that the MFD had brought the bosses' government into the union. We said then, as now, that only a class-struggle program and leadership that consistently counterposes the interests of the workers to those of the class enemy can defend labor's past gains and prepare for the coming battles. ■

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# Carter/Ford...

(continued from page 1)

Ford skewered Carter in the debate. Carter's ceaseless invocation of Georgia, where the union shop is illegal, as an example of paradise on earth does not go over big with urban workers. Meanwhile, his attempt to offset his image as a born-again puritanical witch-burner with a titillating interview in *Playboy* is a further blow to his credibility. Trying to fill its pages with news about a campaign without issues, the bourgeois press had a field day badgering Carter's wife about her husband's admission of sublimated lust, while Carter's use of words like "screw" and "shackup" started a flurry questioning his "presidential taste."

If most people are far from sold on Carter, there has been one bizarre conversion to the Georgia messiah's personality cult: writer Norman Mailer. In a feature article in the *New York Times* Sunday magazine, Mailer—clearly the only intelligent man on earth who takes seriously the political pretensions of Norman Mailer—intones, in terms befitting a second-rate born-again toady:

"His aura was hardly the same as other people's. Happiness came off him. It was as if God had given him intelligence and good work that would make sense, and so he could give his strength to the world... That helped to explain his smile."

Not since Sammy Davis, Jr., hugged and kissed Richard Nixon has there been a similarly repulsive display of debased talent in the service of murderous reaction. But neither Mailer's dime-store existentialist flattery nor *Playboy's* titillation can generate confidence among working people in Jimmy Carter and his ominous smile.

## Labor, the Left and the Elections

Jimmy Carter arouses no enthusiasm from the ranks of labor. But the bureaucratic tops have pledged the power of the union movement to the electoral victory of this virulently anti-labor candidate. AFL-CIO head Meany promises Carter the best "political

# British Seamen...

(continued from page 7)

cost regions (Scandinavia and Australasia) was rejected by the TUC and shipowners. Increased monetary compensation for "captive time" (unpaid time in which seamen must remain aboard ship in port) was delayed until "pay policy permits."

There is still considerable unease in British ruling-class circles that the settlement will spur renewed trade-union struggles that would jeopardize the social contract. An editorial in the influential *Financial Times* (23 September) entitled "A Dangerous Agreement" asserted that the settlement was a "mixed blessing" and that "the danger of a rush to break through the wage-restraint policy is clear."

While no major defeat was inflicted on the seamen, it is nonetheless evident that the NUS leadership surrendered a major opportunity to deliver a sharp blow against the class-collaborationist social contract. The anxiety of the British ruling class and their labour lieutenants shows that they surely saw the danger. Without the construction of a revolutionary leadership in the unions—a leadership resolutely opposed, not only to the TUC/Labour Party bureaucracy, but also to the pervasive illusions in Labourism and the belief that this capitalist government somehow represents the workers who must make sacrifices to maintain its electoral following—British workers will continue to see their living standards and welfare decline along with the fortunes of moribund British imperialism. ■

machine in the country," while UAW chief Woodcock—angling for a Carter cabinet post—is not too busy selling out the Ford strikers to sell out the elementary interests of all working people by lining up the auto union behind Carter's candidacy.

It has never been more obvious that the working class needs a political party that expresses its historic interests. If rampant discontent among the ranks were all that were necessary for such a movement, it would already exist. But a powerful class-struggle trade-union opposition committed to breaking the ranks from the stranglehold of the pro-capitalist bureaucrats, has not been built.

From Gompers to Meany, the labor bureaucracy has fought against every impulse toward independent working-class politics. To begin with, "politics," they counsel, "should be kept out of the unions": no political resolutions and demonstrations, no political strikes. Then when the time for the bourgeois electoral shell game rolls around, the bureaucrats call on the workers to support "lesser evil" candidates of the bourgeoisie since, thanks to the very same union tops, these Tweedledee-Tweedledum contests are, like the proverbial crooked crap game, "the only game in town."

Some self-proclaimed defenders of the working class are also mounting electoral campaigns. But far from being vehicles to expose parliamentary cretinism and counterpose a class-struggle program to the pro-capitalist program of the labor bureaucracy, the campaigns of the Communist Party (CP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) are thoroughly reformist bids for the eventual status of power-broker to the class-collaborationist labor tops. At bottom, therefore, they constitute back-handed support to the Democratic Party.

The CP—goaded by the nomination of downhome reactionary Carter as well as his hints that Kissinger-Ford are "too soft" on the Russians—is running its noisiest election campaign in years. Old time CPers, accustomed to running frankly token "independent" campaigns while beating the drums for a "lesser evil" Democrat to "fight the right"—may find themselves a bit uncomfortable with the banner headlines heralding the Gus Hall/Jarvis Tyner campaign. The CP's shift reflects the virtual impossibility of passing off Carter as a "progressive" and "friend of labor," but also some problems the Stalinist leadership experienced among its ranks over the transparency of the CP's facade of "independence" from McGovern in 1972, when (according to the CP Central Committee in a hypocritical post-election self-criticism) "30 percent, maybe 40 percent [of the party]... did not vote for the Communist Presidential ticket."

The CP is crusading against the "lesser evilism" of the vote for the Democratic Party that has been their electoral stock in trade in recent years. It is rare indeed to see Gus Hall on TV demanding 30 for 40: "a six hour day with no cut in pay." Of course the usual program which promises to "step on the

toes of the big corporations and the Pentagon" are included in their phony "left" flirtation with electoral "independence." In fact, their support to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party remains as part of their well known projection for the "anti-monopoly coalition."

The splashier Communist campaign has produced long television ads and has surfaced the CP at a number of college campuses, but is generally off-limits (or at best, soft-pedalled) in the trade unions, where CP-supported opportunists are as usual backing the Democrats. Despite the hoopla, the Stalinists' program is still the same reformist claptrap aimed at refurbishing the Democratic Party. The *Daily World* tries to separate out the "ethnic purity" candidate from the Democratic Party platform of empty promises, focusing on its pet project: the phony-baloney Humphrey-Hawkins "full employment" bill.

As usual, the CP platform adds to the Democratic platform in a minimally incremental way. Do the Democrats call for reduced military spending while maintaining "national security"? Then "we Communists say in our program, 'slash the military budget 80%,' we mean that this can be accomplished in the course of international agreement which protects the security of the United States" (Gus Hall, *Daily World*, 14 August). Do the Democrats call for laws to end racial discrimination? Then the CP demands "stiff laws to end racial discrimination." To the Democrats' proposal of tax reform, the CP adds the catchy slogan, "Make the rich pay!"

The campaign of the ex-Trotskyist SWP is no better. In fact, whereas the CPers see their campaign as a vehicle for classless "anti-monopoly" propaganda, one wonders if some of the less experienced reformists of the SWP might not be running simply to get elected. Ever more enamored of reliance on civil-libertarian court suits, the SWP seems to expect that the bourgeois state (which it calls upon to protect black schoolchildren with federal troops) will be forced by the "consistent democrats" of the SWP to implement the "socialism" which will come to town when Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid are elected.

The centerpiece of the SWP cam-

paign is its "Bill of Rights for Working People"—a scheme to make the SWP's Sunday "socialism" a constitutional amendment. The document is nothing but an assertion of the ultimate reformability of the capitalist state. While some "transitional demands" are merely watered down and explained away until they seem to dissolve into the white spaces of the page, the "Bill of Rights for Working People" explicitly abandons elementary principles, such as the demand for the expropriation of the monopolies without compensation. Instead, Camejo motivates a more benevolent administration of the private ownership of the means of production:

"Of course the owners of industry and big stockholders would have their profits reduced because they would be paying out more in wages."

—*Militant*, 7 February 1975

Camejo was quoted in an interview (*New York Times*, 21 April) as calling for "cutting the war budget."

Revolutionists should assist any organization in the workers movement to get on the ballot in the face of restrictive election laws, and should oppose all governmental funding of parties and the monopolization of free media time by the capitalist parties. But revolutionists cannot give even the most critical electoral support to the 1976 presidential campaign of the CP and SWP.

Critical electoral support to a reformist working-class formation may be indicated when such a party has a significant proletarian base, as a tactic to drive a wedge between the working-class ranks and the pro-capitalist leadership. The tactic may also be applicable toward organizations which are not mass working-class reformist parties when some central programmatic aspect provides a vehicle for clear revolutionary propaganda. In 1940, for instance, Trotsky urged the then-revolutionary SWP to consider critically supporting the Stalinists when, under the influence of the Hitler-Stalin pact, they temporarily counterposed themselves to Roosevelt over the crucial question of imperialist war. But the CP and SWP of today are merely the largest of a number of left propaganda groups, and their programs lack even a hint of the program for working-class independence through the class struggle.

Election years are supposed to be times of heightened political interest. But the impact of the present Ford-Carter contest is heightened apathy and cynicism. Ford vs. Carter is no choice for workers. The fake-lefts are no alternative. The only real choice is the struggle to build a workers party to fight for a workers government. This fight must be waged above all in the labor movement, the mass organizations of the working class, and entails a clear programmatic counterposition to the "labor lieutenants of capital" who work to tie the proletariat to the Democrats and Republicans. ■

# NMU...

(continued from page 6)

attacks." It also calls for a struggle for jobs for all through a shorter work period with no cut in pay (four-watch system) and increased vacation time. To protectionist schemes it counterposes a militant campaign of international organizing.

It demands equal rights for all union members, opposing the group system (which provides second-class shipping rights for lesser seniority seamen) and the exclusionary anti-red clause. And against Wall's support to Carter, the *Beacon* program urges that, "Seamen and the rest of labor must build a genuinely independent political party of our own, based on the trade unions, counterposed to the capitalists, and based on a class struggle program." ■

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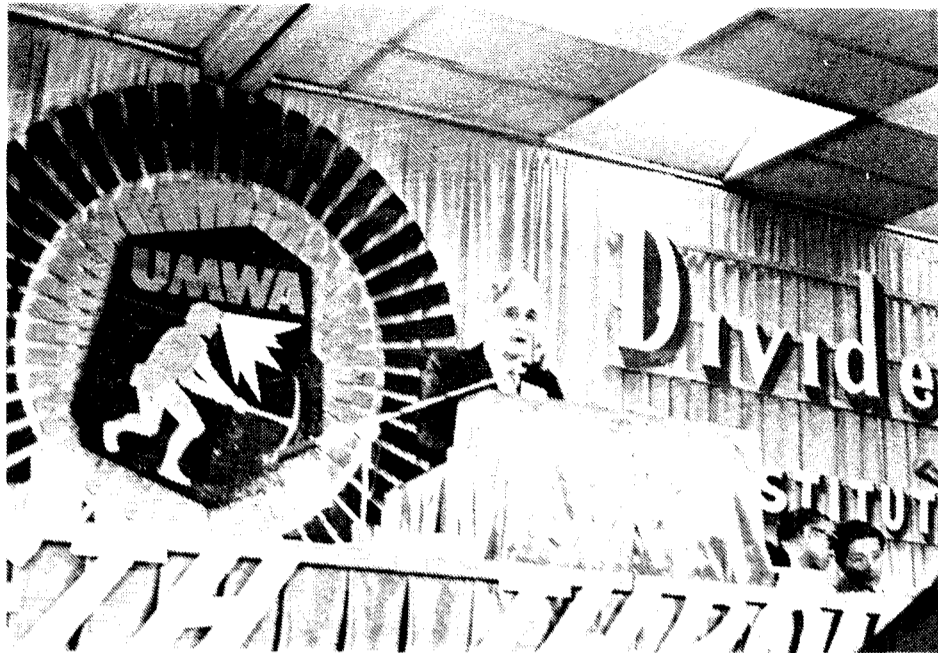
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**BOSTON**

# WORKERS VANGUARD



UMW vice president Mike Trbovich launches anti-communist tirade at UMW convention.



Miners delegates at Cincinnati convention.

## Bureaucratic Power Struggle in Wake of Mass Wildcats

# UMW Convention Explodes in Red-Baiting Fury

### Left Press Thrown Out

CINCINNATI, September 27—Coming after a series of mammoth wildcat strikes in the coalfields during the last two years and with a union leadership split down the middle, everyone expected fireworks when a special convention of the United Mine Workers of America (UMW) opened here last week. But few were prepared for the explosion of anti-communist witchhunting, chaos and thug violence that began with the opening gavel rap and has continued unabated ever since.

In the maelstrom of frenzied red-baiting and bureaucratic squabbling, top officials traded scurrilous charges. Heated exchanges among delegates erupted into fist fights. A McCarthy-style purge of so-called "card-carrying Communist" union members was attempted, and to top it off reporters from a half-dozen left-wing newspapers were physically menaced and excluded.

For over a year, a majority of the UMW International Executive Board (IEB) has been maneuvering to dump phony reformer Arnold Miller from the union's top post. Nearly four years of empty rhetoric and unsuccessful attempts to discipline the ranks have landed Miller in the unenviable position akin to his corrupt and murderous predecessor, Tony Boyle—a liability to the bourgeoisie and a ripe target for opponent bureaucrats on the make.

The convention is taking place against a background of growing militancy in the ranks and almost total alienation from the Miller regime. The membership is far younger than in years past: due to a long decline of the industry and then a huge expansion in the last few years, half of all UMW members are under 35 and a third in their twenties. This makes coal miners one of the youngest labor forces in the country and has produced a tremendous

generation gap in the union.

The past two years have seen three major coalfield revolts—practically the only examples of real labor militancy during the current depression conditions. In December 1974 district after district refused to accept Miller's miserable sellout contract, which gave up the demand for the right to strike over local grievances. The next September, some 120,000 miners wildcatted over demands for the right to strike. Again this past summer half the entire industry was shut down to protest anti-labor injunctions and fines by a West Virginia court.

An amalgam of one-time Boyle flunkies and former Miller supporters has now latched onto the discontent of an embittered UMW membership in an attempt to dump the president. The convention itself was scheduled by the dissident IEB majority nearly a year earlier than Miller had planned. They intend in particular to move up the date of next year's union elections in order to depose the incumbent before the opening of national negotiations with the bituminous coal operators. Some delegates wore "Lee Roy Patterson for President" tags, boosting the declared candidacy of this former Boyle loyalist and outspoken Miller opponent on the IEB.

In contrast with the lockstep convention run by Miller in 1973, when he controlled the IEB, this year's meeting is a zoo. From credentials and rules reports to the parliamentarian's rulings, delegates have bucked the president at every turn. Although Miller at first seemed to be weathering much of the tumult, Saturday's anti-communist eruption paralyzed the session for hours, indicating that he is losing control of the convention.

More than one chicken has come home to roost in Miller's coop during the course of the battle. Mike Trbovich, UMW vice-president and former co-

**SEPTEMBER 28—As we go to press, the UMW convention has voted to amend the constitution to push the elections for union president forward more than five months to June 7. This was a defeat for the Miller faction in the stormy clique fight among the union tops. The amendment provides that the newly elected president will head up the bargaining, and eliminates the possibility that Miller, if he is a lame duck, will be chief negotiator.**

leader of Miller's Miners for Democracy (MFD), rubbed the president's nose in unfulfilled campaign promises—greater autonomy at district level and moving the national office into the coalfields. Trbovich also aimed at his former associate the weapon which the MFD used to gain power in 1972—government intervention into the union. In a prepared speech distributed Friday morning, Trbovich told delegates:

"After being repeatedly ignored, I did what I felt had to be done and with the cooperation of a sizable majority of the IEB filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor.... My representatives were told that there was lax bookkeeping, inadequate documentation of records and statutory violations involved with the distribution of strike benefit checks in several Western states."

In no position to denounce on principle such an outrageous attack on trade-union independence from the state, Miller's staff countered by distributing a lame statement showing that, after an intensive four-month investigation of "nearly every check, financial ledger and record," the federal snoopers declared the union's accounts "in compliance with the law."

Trbovich, however, shelved his prepared remarks in favor of a table-

thumping tirade on what has been the most volatile issue thus far in the convention—"outsiders" and "socialistic elements." Trbovich began with a scatter-shot attack on Miller and his supporters. He charged the bumbling betrayer with "weak and indecisive leadership," a judgment acknowledged by government officials, coal bosses, scheming bureaucrats and union militants alike. The vice-president also accused members of Miller's staff of being "socialistic, revolutionary and Communistic." According to Trbovich, this "elite group," some of them former VISTA volunteers, "runs the president like a puppet."

This blatant appeal to the most backward elements in the union created an uproar. Miller's opponents shouted "lay it on them, Mike," while the president's supporters screamed, "out of order" and "stop campaigning" at Trbovich. One angry delegate even moved that the remarks be stricken from the record. Others called for expulsion of reporters, who were labeled "outsiders... taking part in miners' business."

Although Miller ignored demands to exclude all the press on Friday, the following day he capitulated to the purge atmosphere created by Trbovich, acquiescing in the expulsion of left-wing newspapers and an ominous attempt to launch an internal witchhunt.

At the start of Saturday's morning session, a group of delegates moved a resolution to expel two reporters from the *Call*, newspaper of the Maoist October League. They were charged with "distributing Communist literature," a standing ban which Miller like his predecessor, Boyle, has enforced. The resolution was passed, and the two reporters were removed by union goons. Other delegates began shouting at reporters from the Communist Party's *Daily World* and the Socialist Workers

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