

## Shifting Lines in Zionist Camp

# Butcher of Deir Yassin Takes Israeli Elections

Menachem Begin, Irgun terrorist Führer and the butcher of Deir Yassin, now head of the extreme right-wing Likud ("Unity") bloc will in all likelihood be Israel's next prime minister. The so-called "Labor" Party, the pillar of the Zionist establishment which has ruled Israel since its independence, has gone down to a humiliating defeat in the stench of corruption and scandal.

For 29 years, "Labor"-led governments brought the Israeli populace the burdens of exorbitant taxation, crushing inflation, a declining standard of living. Most of all they have brought a blood-soaked heritage of perennial war and perpetual militarism to deny the Palestinian people their homeland and evoke the bitter enmity of all Arab masses.

In the elections for the 120-member Israeli parliament, or Knesset, the Likud won 43 seats and "Labor" 33. The right-wing bloc won only six more seats than it carried in the last Knesset election in the aftermath of the October War. But the "Labor" alignment lost 18. Most of the "Labor" loss went to the newly formed Movement for Democratic Change which won 14 seats.

Headed by the archaeologist Yigael Yadin and featuring various "independent" intellectuals and personalities, the Movement purported to stand above the cronyism, bureaucratism and corruption characteristic of Zionist establishment parties. However, its program regarding foreign policy and the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War was indistinguishable from "Labor." On domestic issues the Movement stood to the right of "Labor," calling along with Likud for a ban on strikes and for compulsory arbitration. These demands currently have immense appeal to Israel's grasping capitalist class, which has just passed through the most militant strike wave in the history of the Zionist state.

Many Movement candidates are deserters from "Labor" who had hoped

by changing labels to escape the disgust in which Labor is held by the majority of the Israeli masses. But even this neophyte movement claiming to stand above the squabbling, squalid political heritage of the Yishud (Israeli Jewry) was brought into disrepute. The maverick journalist Uri Avneri ran a series of articles in his weekly magazine, *Ha'olam Hazeh*, claiming that as a professor of archaeology Yadin had engaged in the illicit traffic of antiquities.

While Likud's upset was engendered more by the massive loss of support for "Labor" than gains for this extreme-rightist bloc, nonetheless the victory represents a sinister shift to the right in Israeli politics. Likud's program is stridently anti-working-class and anti-Arab. "Labor" is, of course, integrated into a Zionist establishment which rests firmly on a capitalist economy (subsidized by U.S. imperialism and Jewish

Menachem Begin, winner in last week's election.



Alom Reininger/Contact

philanthropy) and is a "Labor Party" in name only. Yet it is, ideologically committed to a racially and religiously exclusionist welfare state and a corporatist "labor" movement, the Histadrut, which encompasses trade unions and social services for its members and controls 25 percent of the Israeli economy.

Likud calls for dismantling the institutions of "Labor" Zionism, cutting

back the social services, dismantling the state and Histadrut sector, banning strikes and curtailing other working-class rights. The electoral appeal of the program is based on the fact that in the Jewish state some Jews are more "equal" than others. Likud's base of support comes from opposite ends of the Yishud, including those sectors most alienated from the institutions of "Labor Zionism": Sephardic Jewry—immigrants of African or Near Eastern origins, who are relegated to the status of a slum proletariat of unskilled labor—and the *nouveaux riches* professionals and entrepreneurs.

### Occupied Territories or Eretz Israel

Likud is less well-known for its reactionary economic policies than for its virulently chauvinist position on the Palestinian question, especially as embodied in the fascist demagoguery of Irgun terrorist Begin. Likud's slogan for the Arab territories occupied by Israel during the 1967 war is "not an inch," whereas the "Labor" government under Rabin claimed to be willing to return some territory in exchange for a peace treaty with neighboring Arab states. U.S. president Carter pressured the Rabin government to accept a Pax Americana in which Israel would withdraw from almost all the occupied territory in return for a U.S.-imposed peace. Clearly the Likud victory is a setback for Carter's peace plan, and "Labor" politicians are blaming Carter's heavy-handed arm twisting for their defeat.

To demonstrate that his program has not changed since the days of the Likud, Begin's first major speech following his electoral victory was made at the dedication of a synagogue in the town of Kadim, inhabited by the Jewish fascist sect Gush Emunim ("Group of the Faithful"). Camp Kadim was declared "illegal" by the Rabin government because it is located in that densely populated portion of the Palestinian Arab West Bank which the "Labor

continued on page 10



Shamuel/Sygnma

Israeli police arrest Arab demonstrator in the West Bank occupied territory.

### MOVIE REVIEW:

PAGE 6

Falsifying the Martyrdom of George Jackson

What "Brothers" Leaves Out



## RACE, CLASS AND "ROOTS"

March 23, 1977

To the Editors:

### BEHIND "BEHIND THE 'ROOTS' CRAZE"

The article "Behind the 'Roots' Craze" which appeared in the 4 March issue of *Workers Vanguard* is such a classical example of U.S. left institutionalized racism that even those of us who make it a matter of principle not to comment on your material must speak out. The bulk of the analysis is, as usual, "correct in the abstract." It is basically an ahistorical application of Marxist analysis and, moreover, is directed, as always, at the nincompoops who make up the vast majority of the U.S. left, and are easy game for anyone who has even an alienated and abstract understanding of world history.

What the article of course fails to explain (and what it supposedly sets itself to explain) is why the very strong reaction of black people across the country to this piece of bourgeois propaganda. The reason the Spartacist League analysis fails to do this is because it requires an understanding which goes beyond abstract Marxism and pays attention to actual circumstances. The talmudic application of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky (the Transitional Program) sometimes gives an organization a debating advantage (if they are applied consistently) over those who either do not apply them at all or apply them with haphazard inconsistency. But such talmudic application should never be confused with science and is thoroughly inappropriate to the task of successfully analyzing what in the hell is going on in the world.

The failure of the SL to understand the response of the black population of the country to this TV show is apparent in the final line of your studious social analysis. Here the SL stands up and unashamedly exposes their left sectarian racism for all to see. That final line reads: "With the economic integration of the blacks into capitalism's factories, their future is bound up decisively with their white class brothers. U.S. blacks, more than any other group in this country, have truly 'nothing to lose but their chains.'" Such bullshit has led the black population of this country to regard the U.S. left as but another racist institution. The fact is that the black population of this country has not been integrated into capitalism's factories and moreover current economic realities internationally and in this national sector make it absolutely plain that the bulk of the black population will never be integrated into capitalism's factories. The vast majority of the black population is unemployed, unorganized, unrecognized, on welfare, etc.—in a

word, thoroughly unintegrated economically and socially. The reaction by the black population to "Roots" derives to a large extent from their socio-economic location in U.S. society, i.e., they have not been and are not likely to ever be integrated into U.S. capitalism. But the SL, like other left sectarian groupings, needs to rewrite history to make it accord with their own empty petit bourgeois politics and strategic and tactical perspective. What the SL means by saying "With the economic integration of the blacks into capitalism's factories, their future is bound up decisively with their white class brothers." is that those blacks currently integrated into capitalism's factories are bound up with those white males who work in those factories. This observation is nothing but a racist and sexist tautology!

There is no need to carry this any further since I have grown wiser by years of watching the petit bourgeois sectarian U.S. left rewrite history and alienate the poor and working people of this country. I can think of no good reason for directing this note to you, but occasionally even the most scientific do something for no good reason at all.

Ed Thomas

*WV replies:* Ed Thomas' barrage of contemptuous race-baiting and contemptible anti-communism fails to conceal his political and factual disorientation. Because such errors are still maintained by a dwindling number of Marxoid nationalists, and because the political strategy implied is suicidally dangerous for the black masses, we will answer Thomas, despite the fact that his tone indicates he wishes we would not.

It is no wonder Thomas wants to reduce the discussion to the level of insult: he is dead wrong on his central point of fact with regard to the economic integration of blacks in the U.S. Thomas the self-styled "scientist" offers the following core observation about the source of the popularity of "Roots": "The reaction by the black population to 'Roots' derives to a large extent from their socio-economic location in U.S. society, i.e., they have not been and are not likely to ever be integrated into U.S. capitalism." Marxism is a science, and facts are stubborn:

In 1974, a depression year, 73 percent of all black males between 16 and 65 were either employed or looking for work; the comparable figure for white males was 79 percent (U.S. Department of Labor, *Handbook of Labor Statistics 1975*). The same year 49 percent of black women were in the active labor force, while only 45 percent of white women were (*ibid.*).

Far from being powerless, black workers are concentrated in strategic, unionized sections of the industrial proletariat. According to a 1973 study by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, blacks made up 19 percent of unskilled production workers in basic steel, 22 percent in auto and 27 percent in urban transit (*Equal Employment Opportunity Report, 1973*). These figures understate the strategic placement of black workers, who are concentrated in the main urban industrial centers. In case Thomas hasn't noticed, Detroit auto workers, south Chicago-Gary steel workers and New York transit workers are heavily black—and their power is directly bound up with their white class brothers in these key industries.

If blacks live in segregation, they work in an integrated setting, integrated into production at its base. What characterizes U.S. blacks is social segregation combined with economic integration at the bottom.

So the truth is concrete. It is Thomas and not *WV* who "needs to rewrite history to make it accord with...empty petty-bourgeois politics and tactical

perspective." The danger of his nationalist perspective is obvious as soon as one considers what it would mean for U.S. blacks if Thomas was factually and sociologically correct. If blacks as a race were in fact not integrated into the economy, the consequences would ultimately be genocidal.

Then Thomas and the other nationalists would have their "internal colony" of blacks in the U.S. as fact and not just reactionary/utopian reflex. Then they would at last have a material basis for their black nationalism. But this "internal colony" would resemble a concentration camp. In this fiercely racist country, it is not hard to imagine what genocidal fate would lie in store for a black race which was in its totality economically useless to the ruling class. Fortunately, this condition does not exist.

And as for the short-lived "Roots" craze, the enthusiastic response among black people to "Roots" does not make the work an attack on the racist status quo nor an inspiration for struggle against black oppression. American blacks, like any other oppressed social group, are prey to escapist-utopian cultural influences. To take a rather more important cultural phenomenon than "Roots," a majority of blacks believe, to one degree or another, in the Christian Bible. We trust that Thomas does not believe therefore that the Baptist church is a progressive institution which fosters black pride.

The popularity of "Roots" was not due simply to its portrayal of black slaves as other than dumb, helpless victims. "Roots" is a capitalist success story of a family which goes from a mutilated, rebellious slave to the prosperous owner of a lumber company in four generations. Its message is a more modern version of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery*: that blacks can overcome the condition and heritage of brutal racial oppression through individual adherence to the capitalist work ethic.

It is revealing that a number of "black power" advocates have taken "Roots" as good nationalist coin as eagerly as Jimmy Carter-era black Democrats have claimed it as their own. This is another indication of how black nationalism—from Marcus Garvey to Elijah Muhammad—can peacefully coexist with the racist status quo in capitalist America.

"Roots" is the American dream in blackface. Whatever its conscious purpose, its main effect would be to help keep the black workers and poor tied to racist imperialists like Kennedy, Johnson and Carter. Ed Thomas' anti-communist nationalism masquerading as "science" in its own way also perpetuates the racist status quo. Liberation from racial oppression requires the unity of the black workers and poor with the white workers in proletarian struggle around a program representing the interests of all the working people and oppressed. That is not "bullshit" nor tautology but scientific Marxism rooted in decisive fact. ■

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## Thugs for Eco-Faddism

# German Stalinists Assault TLD

BERLIN—On April 30 the "critical" Maoists of the Kommunistischer Bund (KB) showed their true Stalinist face by launching a brutal and unprovoked assault on comrades of the Troztkistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD), German section of the international Spartacist tendency. The TLD had been manning a literature table at a Maoist-sponsored "May Day Initiative" at West Berlin's Technical University when two KB supporters (including a member of the KB's Berlin leadership) jumped a TLD member from the front and back simultaneously. As he defended himself against this cowardly onslaught, TLD comrades rushing to his aid were attacked by more KBers. Only the TLD comrades' alertness enabled them to ward off this assault, but one TLDer suffered an eye injury.

The KB's violence is the Stalinists' response to the TLD's refusal to conciliate the petty-bourgeois anti-nuclear movement, which has dragged along the entire ostensible left in opposing all construction of atomic power plants. So far has this ecological hysteria progressed that in West Berlin fake-leftists even marched to oppose a proposed coal-powered electricity generating plant! The TLD has insisted that Marxists do not oppose technological advances and that the real "nuclear disaster" against which revolutionaries must struggle is a nuclear conflagration arising out of the willingness of the imperialist powers to set off a holocaust in their drive for world domination.

The anti-nuclear movement of priests and peasants, ex-student ecofreaks and disgruntled dairy farmers constitutes the only thing even remotely resembling a mass "protest movement" in West Germany today. Predictably, the fake-left has clamored for support to the "revolutionary dynamic" and "anti-capitalist thrust" of this petty-bourgeois movement. All the pseudo-Marxists—from ostensible Trotskyists to the Greater China revanchists of the KPD (who call for atomic weapons to the West German bourgeoisie, in order to defend capitalist West Germany against the "social imperialism" of the East!)—leap on the anti-nuclear bandwagon, which is simply a diversion from the task of constructing a revolutionary party in West Germany to resolve the crisis of proletarian leadership and liberate the working class from the reformist stranglehold of the Social Democracy.

The KB explicitly called for physical violence against the TLD. Next to the TLD's table it set up a provocative banner reading: "Are these people who directly oppose the most significant progressive movement in the BRD [German Federal Republic] and WB [West Berlin] to be allowed to set up a literature table at a May Day celebration? No, that's going too far!" The Stalinist frenzy of the KB was also revealed in a sorry attempt to polemicize against the TLD a few weeks previously. An article, "TLD: Atomic Power?—Yes, Go Right Ahead," in the April issue of the KB's West Berlin organ, *Rotfrontstadt*, showed its anti-Leninist prejudices in ridiculing the "International Spartakus Tendency" for naming its U.S. paper *Workers Vanguard*. In the same article these Maoists indulged in further unintentional self-exposure by terming the TLD simply an "offshoot" ["Ableger"] of the iSt—a graphic

continued on page 9

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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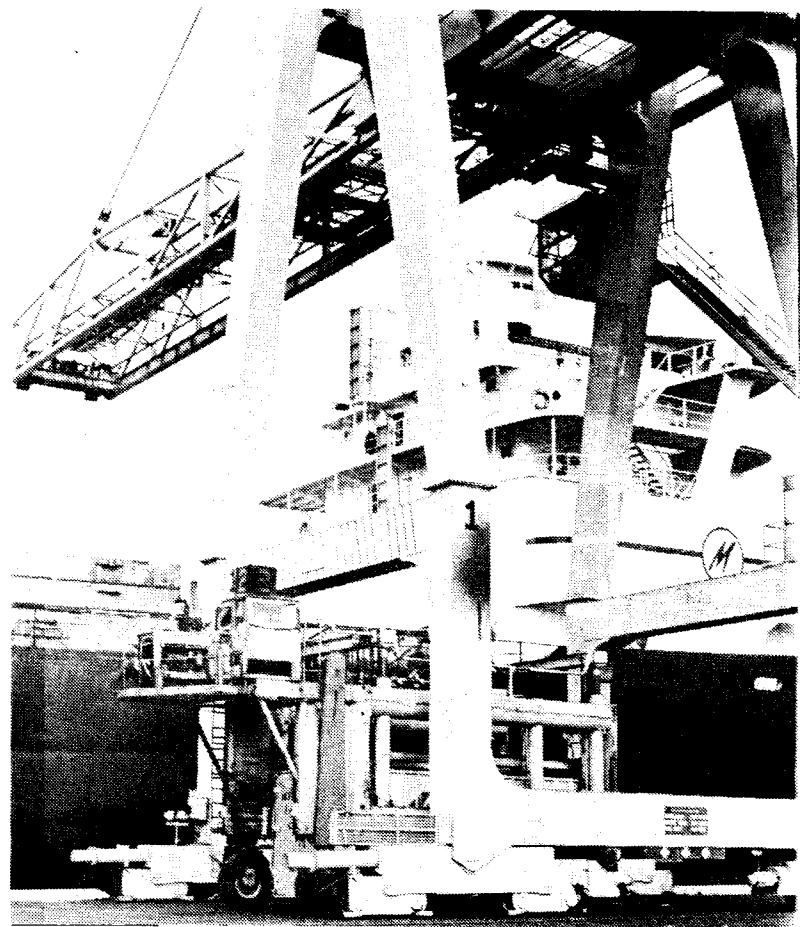
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# Strike for Jobs! Stop Bureaucrats' Scheme to Gut S.F. Longshore!



Containerization has drastically cut jobs.

WV Photo

SAN FRANCISCO, May 21—Gearing up for forced transfers as their "solution" to the jobs crisis, bureaucrats of International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) Local 10 are going all out to intimidate the membership. At a meeting this evening, Local president Cleophus Williams took the unprecedented step of denying admission to non-Local 10 ILWU members, summarily fined a member \$25 for demanding the right to question candidates for International office who were present giving campaign speeches, and high-handedly placed the issue of declaring the Bay Area a "low work opportunity port" (LWOP) on a June referendum without even obtaining the approval of the executive board beforehand.

The San Francisco area has borne the main brunt of the decline in available longshore work on the coast. Man-hours have dropped by over a third in the last four years. Unemployment, however, has not reached the level where the employers can contractually institute LWOP, which would mandate forced transfers of longshoremen to other ports. Therefore, the employers' Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) wants the union to "voluntarily" declare San Francisco a low work opportunity port. But it has made it clear that it will not stop there, and is seeking to eliminate 1,000 longshoremen from the Bay Area—through forced early retirement and deregistration if necessary—thus gutting the historic center of longshore militancy.

While the Local 10 leadership has backed the PMA proposals to slash S.F. longshoremen's jobs, it has been unsuccessful in ramming this down the throats of the membership. The March membership meeting refused to endorse a "voluntary" declaration of LWOP, voting instead to postpone the matter until after the Coast Caucus, which met in April at the time of the International convention. At the Caucus meeting, the delegates explicitly refused to endorse

LWOP for San Francisco, despite the demagogic tactics of Local 10 president Williams, who made threats to the other locals of enforcing transfers through Affirmative Action suits, claiming that the reason for opposing transfers was racism.

Bureaucrats from other locals want no transfers primarily because they are under pressure to fill existing job openings from their own lower-seniority members. While opposing the San Francisco LWOP scheme, they have nothing to offer the beleaguered Local 10 members. At the ILWU convention a motion presented by the Seattle local for a 30-hour workweek at no cut in pay, which would provide more jobs throughout all the ports, was heavily defeated. Since then compromises have reportedly been worked out, under which the other locals have agreed to accept "voluntary transfers" from San Francisco in return for the right to upgrade a certain number of their lower-seniority workers.

Williams, however, is well aware that "voluntary transfers" will not rid him of the troublesome problem of high unemployment in Bay Area longshore. Despite the "agreements" with other locals, he is pushing ahead with his plan to implement LWOP in San Francisco. This he hopes to achieve by wearing down the membership and excluding a democratic debate of the issue. This is clearly the intent of the referendum, which would prevent the membership from hearing both sides before voting.

The escalation of bureaucratic pressure tactics at the May meeting reflects the desperation of Williams & Co. to ram through the job-slashing scheme. The LWOP issue, which involves the fate of Local 10, was placed late on the agenda, while the ranks were subjected to boring speeches by candidates for the International elections in June (none of whom were barred from the meeting even though many were non-members of Local 10!). Furthermore, when it came time to discuss LWOP, the floor mike was mysteriously out of order and only three speakers got to speak.

The strongarm policy was made clear at the very outset of the meeting with Williams' ruling that—except for those invited by the Local leadership—non-Local 10 members could not attend. According to veteran longshoreman Howard Keylor, a publisher of the "Longshore Militant," and a member of the Local 10 executive board, such an exclusion is unprecedented. Williams made it clear that this was a political exclusion when he motivated it by asserting the need to keep out people who are "slandering" officers—the standard bureaucratic response to class-struggle opposition.

Waving a copy of the "Longshore Militant" in the air, he specifically denounced Bob Mandel, a member of the Local 6 (warehouse) executive board and of the Militant Caucus of that Local, demanding his expulsion from the meeting. At the recent ILWU convention, Mandel was the primary spokesman against the policies of Bridges, Williams & Co., in particular denouncing the attempt to impose LWOP on San Francisco longshore. Later in the meeting, Williams explicitly attacked the "Longshore Militant" for making "destructive criticisms," a charge echoed by International vice president Bill Chester.

It is not accidental that Williams singled out the "Longshore Militant" for his bureaucratic attack. This class-struggle newsletter has been the only forthright opposition within Local 10 to the forced transfers/LWOP scheme. Clearly Williams is running scared on the issue, which has temporarily divided the union leadership. While the Coast Caucus adopted no militant program to fight for jobs, it did refuse to invoke LWOP, if only in fear of swamping other ports with transfers.

Williams' attempts to ram through the forced transfers scheme appears to be a direct doublecross of his bureau-

continued on page 10

## Over \$10,000 Raised by PDC

# Marcos Campaign Success

Fernando Marcos may have a chance to see again! The Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) this week announced the successful completion of its campaign to raise funds for an urgent eye operation for this exiled Chilean militant. Collections reached and surpassed the \$10,000 goal set by the PDC. Indicative of the PDC's growing reputation for anti-sectarian solidarity and integrity, more than \$2,500 was also received to support the work of the Partisan Defense Committee itself.

Marcos, a trade-union leader in Chile and an opponent of the Chilean popular front, lost his eyesight in a 1972 explosion of industrial supplies at a copper foundry. Prior attempts to perform a corneal transplant had failed; doctors advise that this is probably Marcos' last chance remaining to restore his sight. The PDC committed itself to making available the best medical treatment.

During the two-month campaign, PDC supporters presented the case to a wide spectrum of groups and individuals around the country. In Chicago, for example, the National Lawyers Guild, Socialist Party, Hispanic Labor Council, Industrial Workers of the World and Student Union Workers granted PDC supporters agenda time to present the campaign. Trade unionists—particularly in the maritime, longshore and auto industries—were generous in aiding their class brother. Mailings on behalf of Marcos were sent out by diverse supporters, including a Chicago surrealist art collective and several



Hubert Schatzl

Fernando Marcos (center)

university professors. Some church groups also assisted, with a denomination in New York City making an important contribution and a church council member in Cleveland sending campaign materials to 100 people. But the vast majority of the funds came in small contributions from individuals who have followed the work of the PDC and were impressed with its record of anti-sectarian class-struggle defense work.

In the U.S., New York City led the way by raising \$3,000 for the campaign; both Chicago and the San Francisco Bay Area went over the \$1,000 mark. The Bay Area PDC raised more than \$150 just by discussing the case with

people waiting on line to see a movie on Chile.

The cause of Fernando Marcos also evoked a response of solidarity internationally, with contributions from supporters in Canada, Australia, Germany, Italy and England. The small Bolshevik-Leninist Group of Italy made a contribution, while Canadian PDC supporters raised over \$1,000 toward the goal.

Marcos has already had the first of two operations at the world-renowned Barraquer Ophthalmological Institute in Barcelona, Spain. Doctors there report that the operation went without complication and was a technical success. But the final success or failure awaits the second operation, scheduled for June; campaign supporters will be kept informed of Marcos' medical progress.

Indicative of the gratifying response to the campaign was a letter from a supporter in Oregon:

"It was so good to learn in the April 22 WV of the progress being made towards providing comrade Marcos with the opportunity to see again. Truly it is a measure of this comrade's devotion to the working class that he refused to leave Chile and his socialist work there to seek medical attention abroad. "Congratulations to each of you for your work in this class-struggle anti-sectarian effort."

The Partisan Defense Committee wishes to thank all those who devoted their time, energy and money to this important cause. Without their support, Marcos would not have had this crucial chance to regain the capacity to devote himself fully to the struggles of the exploited and oppressed. ■

# PSU on Eve of Split, Mutinies in LCR

## French "Far Left" Reshuffles

On April 6 the 17th arrondissement (ward) Paris section of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR), French section of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat of the Fourth International" (USec), went "on strike" against the LCR leadership. The "strikers" sent a mock "strike poster" to *Libération*, a Maoist New Leftist paper which revels in the LCR's difficulties. Other LCR groupings—while attempting to keep a certain distance from the "strikers"—solidarized with them against the leadership's declaration that by going "on strike" (and announcing it publicly in the paper of an opponent organization) the "strikers"



WV Photo

Ernest Mandel

had broken with the LCR.

Politically, the "striking" cells were but an extreme manifestation of a rightist tendency which for several years has existed in a quasi-organized fashion within the LCR. Organizationally, the "strike" phenomenon hilariously demonstrated the current disarray of the LCR.

The LCR leadership at first tried to stonewall the situation, denying the significance both of the two cells themselves and even more so of the political phenomenon represented by the "strike." But even in the chaotic USec, such an unprecedented and spectacular public declaration of disaffection could not simply be brushed off. It held the Ligue's threadbare pretensions to Leninist democratic centralism up to ridicule and encouraged all other sorts of discontented elements (of which there are always plenty in the LCR) to reduce the organization to a shambles. With the leadership around Alain Krivine receiving barely 54 percent of the delegates' votes at the last LCR congress (see "Three-Ring Circus at French LCR Congress," *WV* No. 146, 25 February 1977), the threat represented by such antics could not be ignored.

Nor did it take long to materialize. At an unusually poorly attended LCR public meeting in Paris on April 27, a group of 20 LCR members distributed a leaflet announcing their resignation and their intention of joining a tendency headed by Michel Pablo, itself in the process of splitting from another organization—the left social-democratic Parti Socialiste Unifié (PSU)—to form the "Union of Communists for Self-Management." The leaflet protested the LCR leadership's bureaucratism and noted the "hemorrhaging membership" following the

Reprinted below is the mock "strike bulletin" sent to the press by a local Paris section of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire.

For the 17th arrondissement local of the French section of the Fourth International, this is neither a leave of absence, nor a resignation, but a strike.

A strike on pledges, on cell meetings, on area meetings, on internal bulletins and circulars from sectoral, regional and national commissions, on selling daily *Rouge*.

An active strike with occupation, election of a strike committee, administering the tools of the job (mimeo...) by the strike meetings with the local support committee open to all inhabitants of the neighborhood, independent intervention in the arrondissement.

An unlimited strike until our demands are satisfied: democratic discussion procedures, rearranging time schedules for members, calling into question the programmatic mode of production and orientation.

We call on the minority of non-strikers in the local to join us and not to behave like scabs.

Strike committee, support committee

—reprinted in *Rouge*, 7 April 1977

LCR's "useless" January congress. In the weeks that followed, nearly 200 LCR members quit to join the new Pablo-led organization.

The "hemorrhaging" of some 200 members is significant not only as testimony to the LCR's continuing decomposition. Under Mandel's tutelage the LCR leadership had staked its prestige on the call for a "recomposition" of the far-left forces to form a "credible alternative" to the mass reformist parties. Key to this liquidationist perspective was the expectation of pulling in the PSU's Tendency B, led by followers of Pablo, which garnered 22 percent of the votes (representing roughly 1,000 members) at last January's PSU congress.

In line with a demand made by Pablo in a private letter to the USec, Mandel had offered to abandon the "label" of the "Fourth International" and all reference to "a bearded man named Trotsky" in order to reassure the PSU lefts (see "Mandel Offers to Renounce Trotsky, Fourth International," *WV* No. 117, 9 July 1976). This is exactly what the splitters have just done. The split document rejects "outdated Leninism" and insists that "membership in the Fourth International cannot be a precondition for such a regroupment." Moreover, they denounce the LCR's recent rotten electoral bloc with the semi-syndicalist Lutte Ouvrière (LO) group and the "critical-Maoist" Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs (OCT) for supposedly "placing greater emphasis on abstract references to Trotskyism and to the Fourth International than on unity based on common practice."

The LCR leadership is faced with an impossible dilemma: either trail after its own splitters into the new organization or stand on the sidelines as its ranks put into practice its own advice by abandoning ship and going where "the action" is. The "new mass vanguard" is finally taking organizational shape, and the LCR will not be able to ignore it. Small wonder that the splitters, chortling over having stolen a march on the accomplished maneuverer Krivine by "recomposing" with the PSU lefts, titled their leaflet, "So Long... See You Later, Maybe..."

### Rightist Wobbles Codified

The leaflet's earliest signers were drawn from a group whose document, "Civilization at the Crossroads, the Ligue at a Red Light," had received 4 percent of the delegate vote at the LCR Congress. The document represented the continuation of positions presented by "Tendency 3" at the LCR's 1974

Congress. This wing has heretofore claimed not to have principled differences with the USec majority, to which it always rallied at the last minute. However, it embodies the most rightist wobbles of the USec's impressionistic zigzags.

The "Red Light" document extends Mandel's line on the "third age of capitalism" (which he subsequently abandoned) to the point where it becomes a barely disguised version of the "new working class" theories propounded in France in the mid-1960's by Serge Mallet and André Gorz. Thus, there exist "new layers of technicians and engineers whose objective situation is that of proletarians, who have only their labor power to sell." These layers are allegedly more "open to revolutionary perspectives" than the industrial proletariat due partly to their "lack of a 'past' and not being tied to the framework of the traditional workers movement." This line is merely the logical extension of the LCR's famous slogan: perspective of yesteryear, "from the periphery to the center"—a "strategy" for somehow building a mass working-class base without confronting industrial workers' predominant allegiance to the Stalinists as expressed through the hegemonic CGT union federation.

In the "Red Light" document, the "working class" is anything that moves, including the nationalists who look toward a utopian, reactionary return to the days of yore prior to the consolidation of bourgeois nation-states; thus, the USec should "unify" with groups representing the "aspirations of women, of the youth, of the ecological and regionalist movements." These "mass layers," it is claimed, "tend to express the sharpest contradictions of the 'third age of capitalism,' the basis for their advancing toward revolutionary self-management more rapidly than the 'heavy battalions' of the working class." The new group also calls for an "autonomous" youth organization and for a return to the slogans associated with the USec's 1968 campaign for the "Red University."

The key to the whole rhetorical code is the call for "revolutionary self-management," an anti-Leninist corruption of the Bolshevik demand for workers control. The political fact which is impelling virtually the entire French far left in the direction of open reformism is the electoral successes of the popular-front Union of the Left bloc of the Socialists (PS) and Communists (PCF) with the bourgeois Left Radicals. In these circles, terms like "seizure of power," "dictatorship of the proletariat" and "Leninism" are anathema. The

slogan of "self-management" is the term of choice for more than the PSU; the substantial CERES grouping which comprises the left wing of the PS also takes this slogan as its catchword.

Even Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand, who is currently trying to whip CERES into line with expulsion threats, declares his "self-management" credentials are as good as anyone's. In fact, with "socialism under French colors" and "Eurocommunism" having become the characteristic slogans of the "new" PCF, "self-management" is the current catchword bringing together all currents of French social democracy, reaching into the ostensibly Trotskyist movement.

The ex-LCR advocates of "revolutionary self-management" project the fulfillment of their "program" through gradual infiltration of bourgeois institutions. The "See You Later" leaflet explains:

"Through their partial experience of power within the very heart of the system, workers will come to demand all power. And this is the dynamic that revolutionaries must do everything to further; therefore, and because this



WV Photo

Alain Krivine

fundamental tendency is already present today in the workers' struggles, the women's movement, the youth movement, the essential axis of the revolutionary program is: SOCIALIST SELF-MANAGEMENT."

Thus, through class collaboration and open integration into the organisms of the bourgeois state ("experience of power within the very heart of the system"), power will fall into the "modern" working class' lap like an overripe apple. This is simply a restatement of Bernstein's revisionist view of the gradual transition from capitalism to socialism.

The splitters' analysis is virtually identical to Pablo's present line—to the point that one may legitimately ask whether some members of Pablo's AMR haven't been running an entrism operation in the LCR. Manifestly, however, the cells "on strike" and the recent resignations are only the tip of the iceberg. Some of the main leaders of the "Red Light" grouping, as well as of the

erstwhile "Tendency 3" some two to three years ago, remain in the LCR. Obviously they can act there as a lightning rod to attract further discontented elements should the LCR vacillate or turn a cold shoulder to the catch-all left-of-the-popular-front conglomeration which now looms in its path.

As for the leadership itself, Krivine & Co. find themselves without a lot of cards. So the LCR's *Rouge* positively groveled before these avowedly anti-Leninist splitters and "strikers," going to great lengths to protest that these "comrades" were welcome to remain in the Ligue and that the leadership did not consider them to be "renegades" from Trotskyism.

### "Pabloism": Just an Epithet?

Michel Pablo, who emerged as the leading figure of European-based Trotskyism following the movement's decimation during World War II, was the main spokesman for the openly revisionist current which, ten years after a belated and partial split in 1953, gave birth to the USec. In the 1960's he entered into increasingly hostile cliquish opposition to Mandel/Frank/Maitan; by 1965 his enthusiasm for Algerian "self-management" as a socialist model became too much of an embarrassment even for the opportunist USec, and Pablo stalked out. By 1971 his Alliance Marxiste Révolutionnaire (AMR) had rejected even formal reference to Trotskyism and in 1974-75 joined the PSU, while continuing to publish an independent journal. Pablo's "entrism" into the PSU has clearly been a success, for after beginning with a tiny clot of supporters he has now become a "credible alternative" to the LCR leadership.

Especially since the split to the Socialist Party of a section of the PSU led by Michel Rocard the LCR had hitched its wagon to the prospect of a marriage with the PSU lefts. Its numerous "unity" proclamations have in fact been aimed at Pablo and his Tendency B, which had previously been standoffish because of hopes of building a following in the amorphous, left-social-democratic PSU.

However, in the March municipal elections the PSU national leadership attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to gain token candidates on Union of the Left slates or even presented no candidates (so as not to cut the popular front's vote totals). With the PSU right wing well on its way into the popular front, Tendency B evidently decided to take the initiative and push to form a loose organization of all those forces who

want to pressure the Union of the Left from the outside.

Pablo's tendency has since then been holding a series of regional meetings to prepare a split. *Rouge* (14 April) quoted a communiqué issued by the Ile-de-France (Paris) regional assembly:

"The PSU comes out of the elections as a satellite to the parties of the Common Program [of the Union of the Left]... Thus militants claiming allegiance to a revolutionary conception of self-management can in essence no longer continue to defend and put into practice their orientation in the framework of the PSU alone."

The PSU's rapprochement with the Union of the Left put the ex-AMR wing in an impossible position, since it would no doubt be forced to liquidate its role as faithful left opposition as one of the conditions of the PSU's entry into the popular front. When the PSU national leadership expelled an unspecified portion of the Pablo tendency, 15 of the 19 Tendency B supporters who had been elected to the PSU executive refused to vote. The others, led by Yvan Craipeau (once a leader of the French Trotskyist movement), settled for bureaucratic sinecures. Craipeau was himself the author of the expulsion motion.

On the weekend of May 7-8 Pablo's grouping along with ex-members of the LCR and OCT met to begin the process of forming a new organization, "Communistes Pour l'Autogestion" ("Communists for Self-Management"). Tendency B leader Maurice Najman, one of Pablo's lieutenants, estimated in an interview with *Rouge* that the new group would have between 1,000 and 1,500 members. It plans to begin publication of a newspaper in September and will hold a founding conference later in the fall.

The central resolution presented to this meeting could well have been written by rightist currents in the LCR. It defines its task as "above all aiding the development of the self-management current which is expressed in the trade union left, and the movements of worker-peasants, women, youth, homosexuals, national minorities, ecologists." One of the new group's main emphases is on the formation of an "autonomous revolutionary youth organization"—an area in which it stands to make real inroads against the LCR.

The new grouping explicitly rejects Leninist concepts (which it sees as "relativized," whatever that means) in favor of:

"...a leading body which exists and simultaneously ensures increasing autonomy for every sector... as well as the possibility within the organization for

self-organization into exclusionist groups (women, homosexuals, youth). "Debate thus cannot be stopped at the borders of the organization, reserved for 'initiates', 'politicos'... but must be 'exposed to the light of day, giving everyone the possibility for self-expression, avoiding crystallization into tendencies...."

—*Rouge*, 21 April

Najman claims what is needed is a "new principle" to replace democratic centralism, to allow for "permanent tendencies (and their public expression) and the right to experiment with orientations." In short, the guiding principle of this "organization" is that anyone is free to do whatever he wants.

*Rouge* timidly suggests that this model might represent "federated functioning." Again the LCR is in the uncomfortable position of having to uphold "sectarian" "labels" like "democratic centralism" despite its own chaotic practice: publication of tendency platforms in the press, formation of "working groups" so that members may strike out in competing opportunist directions, cells "on strike," etc.

The "Autogestion" grouping will necessarily be a prime target of regroupment for the LCR, and vice versa. The nearly 10 percent of the LCR membership which has already broken in favor of Pablo's new group was heavily drawn from students recently recruited on the basis of the "new mass vanguard" orientation. By offering to replace the LCR's half-hearted and contradictory liquidations with systematic capitulation to every conceivable component of the "new mass vanguard," the Pablo forces could win away a significant portion of the LCR ranks. The ex-LCR rightists who have already gone over to Pablo's newest incarnation have certainly damaged Krivine & Co.'s bargaining position toward any LCR-"Autogestion" merger of the future.

In the great con game of organizational maneuvering to "capture" the elusive "broad vanguard," the pressures on Krivine & Co. to be sucked into Pablo's gambit are strong. But in spite of all the "unity" calls and offers to abandon "labels," it is difficult to imagine that the USec will allow its formerly most prestigious "section" to head for the door, dropping not only its USec affiliation but also abandoning the formal pretense of Trotskyism to anti-Pabloists like the international Spartacist tendency and its French sympathizing section, the Ligue Trotskyiste de France. Still, such a turn is not precluded. The USec's English group, which recently proposed to a state-capitalist organization an electoral bloc modeled on that of the LCR/LO/OCT cartel, is currently changing the format of its paper in order to proclaim it "open to all tendencies."

The "Autogestion" grouping will almost certainly make considerable gains in the short run, but it is not viable for more than a relatively brief period. Unless it can constitute a fairly substantial centrist current to stabilize it in its niche as an uneasily independent tail of the Union of the Left, it will simply be swept pell-mell into the popular front. Its political course recalls the almost forgotten Parti Socialiste Ouvrier et Paysan (PSOP) of the late 1930's, which, breaking from the Socialists while rejecting Trotskyism, regrouped something of a mass base before rapidly vanishing from the scene without a trace.

The entire political history of the LCR tendency has been an open invitation to less shamefaced revisionists to follow the liquidationist course of Pablo to break from ostensible Trotskyism entirely. Over 40 years ago Trotsky wrote to his French followers, then involved in a bitter factional struggle against that same Pierre Frank who is now one of the USec's main spokesmen, "If you want to know what abdication of principles is, you must read P. Frank's letter closely." The statement holds true today for the current LCR and its international braintrusts of the USec. ■

## CP Lauds Strongman Mengistu

# May Day Massacre in Ethiopia

"It may have been one of the bloodiest May Days ever in the history of this proletarian holiday," we wrote several weeks ago. "On Bloody May Day 1977 dozens of workers and leftists were shot to death in the streets of Istanbul, scores were clubbed and horsewhipped in Madrid and Barcelona while incendiary bombs sent flames leaping from left-wing offices in Naples" (*WV* No. 155, 6 May 1977).

But if you read the Communist Party's *Daily World* (3 May) you wouldn't have any idea of this ferocious repression. Everything was sweetness and light as "World's May Day Rallies Mark Liberation's Gains." Aside from the usual throngs of happy Muscovites in Red Square, CP hack writer Tom Foley was particularly enthusiastic about the celebrations in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Accompanied by a photo of Col. Mengistu Haile Miriam, the article quoted approvingly from his May Day speech on the need to fight "internal counterrevolution."

Since then, press reports from Ethiopia—first in Europe and now trickling into the U.S. press as well—tell of a May Day massacre in Addis Ababa of mammoth proportions, far surpassing the bloodbath in Turkey. Over the May Day weekend, more than 500 students were shot down in Addis Ababa by government troops, according to the 4 May London *Guardian*. The London *Times* of the same date quotes sources in Paris estimating up to 1,000 students killed during the two days!

The slaughter began Friday night, April 29, when in four different sections of the capital government militia units began rounding up students believed to be members of the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) on

*continued on page 11*

## Trotsky Had Pierre Frank's Number

4 December 1935

Dear Comrades,

If you want to know what abdication of principles is, you must read P. Frank's letter closely. Politically it is inconsistent. But it reflects the state of mind of a sceptical and disoriented *intellectual* (not to say petty-bourgeois) very well....

And what is Frank doing? He servilely translates this mentality. "No organizational ultimatum." "No currently existing group can lay claim to organizational preponderance." It is humiliating, even for a Marxist, to answer such arguments. Have we ever been concerned with organizational "preponderance"? For us, it is a question of a *program* which corresponds to the objective situation. If an organization larger than ours accepted this program (not in words, but in deeds) we are ready to fuse without any claim to preponderance. Look at the United States and Holland.

But in Frank's letter, in all his thinking (as in the famous call of the "Commune") there is no mention of program—and for cause: the program is a serious obstacle to the general fraternization of petty-bourgeois, intellectuals, pessimists, sceptics and adventurers, whereas we think that program determines everything.

"No organizational ultimatum." What a revolting abuse of the Leninist formula. No ultimatum toward the masses, toward the unions, toward the workers' movement, but the most intransigent ultimatum toward every grouping which claims to lead the masses. *That* ultimatum is called *the Marxist program*....

L. Trotsky

P.S. I want to draw your attention to the completely intolerable practices of the [Frank-Molinier] group of the "Commune".... No, our organization will not be led by such methods. People are much more conciliatory in the centrist swamps. Try your methods down there. "Go to it."

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# Falsifying the Martyrdom of George Jackson

# What "Brothers" Leaves Out

Sometime before the state set George Jackson up for the kill, he wrote that he didn't want to leave "a few sad songs and a hump in the ground as my only monument." He wanted, he said, to leave a world liberated from capitalist oppression, racism, "a thousand different brands of untruth." Yet the new film, *Brothers*—which claims to be "loosely based" on the story of Jackson's life, his struggle, his love and his martyrdom—is just such an untruth.

On opening night in New York City, the particular brand was unmistakably stamped by the glamorous real-life heroine of the story, Angela Davis, one of the most articulate and charismatic spokesmen of the Communist Party (CP). Davis said the film was about "racism and injustice" and asked the audience to contribute to the National

political truth has gotten conveniently lost in the translation from Soledad Brothers to Warner Brothers.

*Brothers* is a special brand of untruth concocted by Stalinist falsification and Hollywood romanticizing. The CP's appetite to cover up its miserable record of betrayal is neatly served by Hollywood's omnivorous craving to sentimentalize and trivialize, stripping Jackson's life of its political core. In *Brothers*, as in "Roots," Hollywood has taken as its raw material the explosive subject of racist brutalization, only to twist it into commercial myth.

## Smash the Racist Prisons!

To its credit, the film—shot "on location" at North Dakota State Prison, using black servicemen from a nearby



George Jackson

Bulletin

ly segregated tiers but also "just for fun" by the depraved racist scum who run the prison. We see the solitary confinement holes where men are left to die or go mad, sleeping naked on concrete floors, eating food poisoned with urine and excrement and cleanser.

But the film never approaches the power of Jackson's evocative descriptions in his prison letters of the way the jails are organized to break men, particularly black men:

"... The noise, madness streaming from every throat, frustrated sounds from the bars, metallic sounds from the walls, the steel trays, the iron beds bolted to the wall, the hollow sounds from a cast-iron sink or toilet.

"The smells, the human waste thrown at us, unwashed bodies, the rotten food. When a white con leaves here he's ruined for life. No black leaves Max Row walking. Either he leaves on the meat wagon or he leaves crawling licking at the pig's feet."

—Soledad Brother

Even with all the film's distortions, Hollywood was unable to destroy the impact of the picture of prison life where, in Jackson's words, the hideous brutality "destroys the logical processes of the mind."

What it doesn't show is how, through tremendous effort and unusual strength of character, Jackson fought back by becoming political, beginning to see beyond the prison walls and struggling for a social solution to the plight of the victims of the bourgeoisie's racist "justice." Consequently the film is also unable to probe the limitations of his prison-derived world view. Instead what we get is a film about George Jackson, Angela Davis and late-1960's prison unrest which incredibly avoids mentioning the Black Panther Party, the Communist Party, the Vietnam war, Marx, Lenin, Mao or even Huey Newton and Eldridge Cleaver!

## Truth and Politics

It is not that *Brothers* fails to indict the prison system for its brutal racism. That it does. It shows black convicts tortured to death by the state, which uses informers to frame up the most militant leaders. It is noteworthy that a Hollywood film—even such an inept one—indicates that Jackson was set up and assassinated (though *Brothers* assigns the responsibility to a bumbling warden, rather than provocation by more than one secret police agency, and totally ignores the high-level government conspiracy against the Black Panther Party).

*Brothers* even tries to indicate Jackson's resistance in the face of the most savage victimization. But it is here

that the film departs fundamentally from the truth. For George Jackson was a political man. He was not just a fighter. It was not merely that he maintained his dignity under circumstances that drove lesser individuals to suicide or worse. Amid the horror and degradation of prison "life," he turned toward the radical movement for a "revolutionary theory" which could explain the barbarous social system which confronted him. Cut off from society, he applied himself to discovering the political world through books. Through a commitment to changing the world of racism and injustice his life gained discipline and focus making him, in his words, perhaps "the most resilient dead man in the universe."

Jackson was committed to the politics of the Black Panther Party, the most militant organized expression of 1960's black nationalism. In his prison letters Jackson wrote:

"The Black Panther is our brother and son, the one who wasn't afraid. He wasn't so lazy as the rest, or so narrow and restricted in his vision. If we allow the fascist machine to destroy these brothers our dream of eventual self-determination and control over the factors surrounding our survival is going to die with them, and the generations to come will curse and condemn us for irresponsible cowardice...."

—Soledad Brothers

But the words "Black Panther" are never uttered in *Brothers*! Only once, early in the film, is the hero confronted by his political cellmate (played by "Superfly" star Ron O'Neal), who demands that Jackson control his "blind ignorant rage" with the works of "Fanon, Malcolm and Che." There is a quote from Frantz Fanon, the hero picks up *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, the camera fades out, and that's that. Presto: political development. The cellmate is later beaten to death; after that *Brothers* is nothing but a Hollywood love story in a prison setting.

There are important lessons to learn from the experience of the Black Panther Party, the organization for which Jackson was ready to sacrifice his life. But one learns nothing of that party in *Brothers*. It is as if the Panthers had never existed. If the movie had been simply a work of fiction, it would be a trite testament of liberal anti-racism. It is its claim to interpret the reality of Jackson's life which makes it essentially a lie.

*Brothers* reminds us of what Boris Pasternak once said of the Russian poet Maiakovsky, that he "died twice": Once when he committed suicide, and again when Stalin called him Russia's greatest



Prison scene from the movie "Brothers."

Warner Brothers

Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

Sounding like the promotional material which describes the film as "in the tradition of 'I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang' and 'Cool Hand Luke,'" Davis assured the audience that *Brothers* is simply a progressive film about brutality in U.S. prisons. This is at best a self-serving partial truth. For the film is clearly about George Jackson ("David Thomas"), his brother Jonathan ("Joshua Thomas") and Angela Davis ("Paula Jones") herself—three influential figures of the recent black radical movement. It is not to "protect the innocent" that the names have been changed;

Air Force base to portray prisoners—does suggest the racist hellhole that is the American prison system. Following the character who is supposed to be George Jackson, we see him routinely thrown into jail on an indeterminate one-year-to-life sentence after a kangaroo court trial. There his endless night of terror on "Max Row" (maximum security) begins. The film has moments when one can feel the pain of the clubs, the darkness of solitary, the despairing rage of the trapped men of Soledad.

We see the brutal beatings, the humiliating skin searches by racist guards, the encouragement of racist brutality not only through institutional-

poet. In that same critical spirit one might say that George Jackson was murdered twice: Once by the state of California, and again by Warner Brothers.

### "The Way They Weren't"

*Brothers* is as apolitical a film as could possibly be made of such political people. Not only is there no mention of the Panthers, but neither is there the slightest whisper that Angela Davis is a member of the CP. The words "Communist Party" are also never spoken. The character Paula Jones—who even looks like Davis in soft focus—is presented, according to the promotional blurb, as "the beautiful, brilliant and controversial professor." But the only reason offered for controversy is that her work at the university on "community problems" was "too radical." In fact, Davis was witchhunted out of her teaching position at UCLA precisely because of her CP membership. The film avoids these presumably sordid political details by focusing on a love relationship which the brochure describes as "as classical as Romeo and Juliet."

Certainly the political and personal relationship with Davis was part of the truth of Jackson's life, as conveyed so tragically, ironically and beautifully in his letters. These are not the repulsive race-hate rape fantasies of the loathsome Eldridge Cleaver, but the frustrating often tender reflections of a man coming to terms with his own sexuality under impossible conditions, and in the midst of tumultuous and deadly political events:

"...my thoughts return to your enemies. They are mine too, of course, but

thinking of them as your enemies calls up the monster in me, the dark, terrible things that I keep hidden in the pit, fanged, clawed, armored—they are more awful by far when you become involved...."

"I make this covenant with myself. I'll never again relax. I'll never make peace with this world as long as the enemies of self-determination have the running of things. You may never read this, and I may never touch you, but... I hope that by some means you have discovered that I love you deeply, and would touch you tenderly, warmly, fiercely if I could, if my enemies were not *at present* stronger. I'm going to stop here and do something physical, push-ups, finger stands, something quiet and strenuous."

It is not surprising that Hollywood has a hard time conveying the subtle interaction of Jackson's intense love-by-letter involvement with Davis and his conscious political commitment, turning it instead into a "Romeo and Juliet" fairy tale of the sort with which moviemakers are most familiar and from which real men and women are most estranged. But in *Brothers* this process of sanitizing through cliché serves an additional function: it is the vehicle whereby political truth is sidestepped.

The CP has a long love affair of its own with Hollywood's sporadic ventures into populist-type "progressive" movies where politics becomes moral fable and harsh class realities are swept under the celluloid. *Brothers* stands squarely in the tradition of the popular-front Hollywood war flicks featuring clean-living patriotic peasants heroically sabotaging the Nazi war effort as somebody's national anthem plays in the background. For the "good guys" we have Paula, David, some black convicts and some California state senators,

opposed by the prison guards and some kind of "establishment," loosely defined.

The cloudy love story is convenient for the CP. It neatly hides the fact that Jackson and Davis were organizationally defined—and associated with somewhat divergent political currents. Jackson joined the Black Panther Party on the basis of its call for "urban guerrilla warfare." In political life, and particularly in death, he was a symbol of the "armed struggle" rhetoric associated with the early Panthers and later with the Cleaver wing.

In the film, Jonathan Jackson is turned into a tragic case of youthful spontaneism, while George Jackson and Angela Davis are placed on the same side of the political barricades. This suits the CP's legend of a general radical black upheaval of which it was the organic core, but it doesn't suit the truth. George Jackson never separated himself from his brother's politics, and explicitly solidarized with the Panthers' aim of "a small, tightly knit, totally committed and separate military vanguard such as Jonathan Jackson attempted to build" (*Blood in My Eye*).

The CP cashed in on the mood of militant black nationalism when the militarist voluntarism of the Panthers ran into its dead end. The rhetoric of "picking up the gun" had tapped into a vast reservoir of sympathy among ghetto youth, but the Panthers, faced by murderous state repression, were finding they had to face up to powerlessness and isolation. The dominant wing associated with the Newton forces opted for an overtly reformist turn as the "solution." The cynical, parasitic CP stepped in with lawyers and money,

organizational know-how and influential connections—a slick reformist rationale for dumping "armed struggle" in favor of cultivating "allies." The alliance with the CP was crystallized in the Panthers' "United Front Against Fascism" in the summer of 1969. But this marriage of convenience soon fell apart, and after a couple of years Newton reemerges as a Democratic Party politician. Ironically, Jackson and Davis were in one respect more like Romeo and Juliet than the film is willing to admit. For like the Shakespearean lovers, their relationship cut across political lines whose hostility, in the period of the Panthers' disintegration, sometimes reached fratricidal dimensions.

### Free Ruchell Magee!

The CP must be quite pleased that *Brothers* ducks another touchy subject—the case of Ruchell Magee, who is still behind bars justly screaming about the CP's "back-stabbing efforts." By all rights Magee would have been an important character in any film of integrity about George Jackson. Magee was testifying in the Marin County Courthouse at the time of Jonathan Jackson's dramatic raid. Magee stood trial for the raid at the same time as Angela Davis—she, charged with buying the guns; he, with murder.

*Brothers* makes it clear that Davis was innocent, and follows her as a fugitive and then into jail, but nothing is said of Magee. And the Communist Party must be delighted with that job of editing. For the CP simply abandoned the defense of Magee—the lumpen San Quentin convict with a grade-school education—while running the flashiest, most expensive defense case in years for its "beautiful, brilliant professor."

The Spartacist League of course solidarized with the defense of Davis against a witchhunt aimed against the CP and the black movement. But non-sectarian class-struggle defense required exposing the treacherous way the CP dumped the Magee case, refusing him legal and financial assistance and even blacking out his case in the pages of the *Daily World* at a time when the favorable publicity they were gaining for Davis would have helped him. As part of its depoliticalizing of the events, the film never quite gets to the Davis case at all, instead focusing on touching shots of Paula composing love letters in her cell for David in his.

### Tragic Hero or Radical Martyr?

Jackson, vividly aware of the effects of prison "life," pointed out how "prison twists every decent emotion. I cannot be human." As far as the film is concerned, he reasserted his humanity not through deepening political awareness and the subjective desire to struggle against injustice, but through the convention of the tragically transcendent love. But Jackson's life was political. His political experience—including his failures—must be understood by the new generation of black militants. Jackson must not be canonized as a martyr to true love.

The film's last scene is important in this regard. It shows that after "David Thomas" was assassinated in the prison yard, the white prisoners who had been primitively racist become respectful of the black convicts. As the final credits roll across the screen we see black and white prisoners sitting for the first time at the same tables, grim faces united in silent protest.

Such scenes as this final one did occur, sometimes. In the late 1960's there were some remarkable episodic bursts of prisoner solidarity in the face of extreme victimization. The Attica uprising is, of course, the classic example. But in the context of *Brothers* the scene also means something else, suggesting that Jackson accomplished in death what he was unable to accomplish in life. Through his individual heroism, he brought all the "good guys" together.

One of the co-directors of the film, continued on page 8

## Politics and Prison

# Who Was George Jackson?



George Jackson

Daily World

*Brothers*, with its Hollywood fable of the life and death of George Jackson, compels revolutionaries to re-examine the reality of Jackson's life and politics. The Spartacist League finds itself in the position of defending the political honor of George Jackson against the film's trivializing falsification, notwithstanding our immense distance from his ideology of guerrillaist black nationalism. This responsibility falls to us in part because his Black Panther Party comrades—the natural ones to expose and debunk the movie—are either dead, imprisoned or have sold out shamelessly and utterly. George Jackson is not our comrade, but he is in some real sense our "brother."

### Framed Up and Murdered

The "outside" world heard of George Jackson when he and two other prisoners in Soledad's notorious maximum security "O" wing were charged in 1970 with the murder of a prison guard. The case exposed the sadistic brutality directed against black prisoners, including the long series of murders of militant black prisoners. After the killing of a white guard, the state—in an attempt to crush prison unrest—framed the "Soledad Brothers" (George Jackson, John Cluchette and Fleeta Drumgo).

For months the California authorities had been engaged in a massive cover-up: letters from prisoners to their families about the murders never made it past the censors; petitions were torn up; visiting privileges to those who had witnessed the crimes were restricted. The case first began to break when Cluchette's mother was put in touch with Fay Stender, a young radical lawyer.

Through Stender's efforts reporters and black congressmen were informed of the conditions at Soledad and formal investigations begun. Also through her efforts, Jackson's prison letters were compiled and published.

In *Soledad Brother*, Jackson describes the frame-up:

"Black men born in the U.S. and fortunate enough to live past the age of eighteen are conditioned to accept the inevitability of prison. For most of us it simply looms as the next phase in a sequence of humiliations...."

"...when I was accused of robbing a gas station of seventy dollars, I accepted a deal—I agreed to confess and spare the county court costs in return for a light county jail sentence. I confessed, but when the time came for sentencing, they tossed me into the penitentiary with one to life...."

"This charge [of killing the prison guard] carries an automatic death penalty for me. I can't get life. I already have it."

The next act in this carefully orchestrated tragedy occurred when Jackson's younger brother Jonathan, set up by police provocateurs, led an adventurist raid on the Marin County Court House demanding the Soledad Brothers' freedom. A small army of San Quentin guards who "just happened" to be in the area shot Jonathan down as he was driving the getaway van; inside the van somebody opened fire. Almost all the hostages and captors, including Jonathan, were killed. Ruchell Magee, who had been testifying in the court house at the time and participated in the raid, was charged with the murders; Angela Davis was accused of buying the guns.

The following year—only two days

continued on page 8

# George Jackson...

(continued from page 7)

before the opening of the Soledad Brothers trial—Jackson was shot down by guards in a phony “escape” attempt they had set up. The Soledad Brothers were later acquitted. Jackson of course posthumously. College professor Angela Davis—backed up with CP money, lawyers and influence—proved her innocence. Ruchell Magee got life. The San Quentin Six, charged with the killings which took place during the phony “escape,” are still standing trial.

## Politics and Prisons

George Jackson developed his politics in prison. His early letters to his parents—particularly painful ones to his father—express his first tentative understanding of society. Marshalling diverse statistics and quotations, he polemicized against the view that black oppression is accidental, incidental, a deplorable blot on the face of an otherwise fair system, or slowly getting “better.” The letters document his development to a sophisticated exposition of the “third world” “urban guerrilla” eclecticism of the Black Panther Party.

It is not surprising that Jackson became a black nationalist and a guerrillaist. Not only was New Left terrorism a prevailing mood among radicals in and outside of jail, but such an ideology corresponded to the materi-



Angela Davis

WV Photo

al conditions of prison “life.” For capitalism’s black captives, racial solidarity was not so much a recipe for successful struggle as a prerequisite for survival; the ideology of “picking up the gun” seemed an irresistible and elementary response to limitless and wanton state violence. The implicit corollary of New Left voluntarism was despair of the possibility of wielding the potential might of the organized working class against the system. It was an ideology of hopelessness well suited to the doomed convicts.

The New Left moralists outside the jails enthused over the so-called “prison vanguard.” They held that the most oppressed were naturally the most revolutionary; the black and Latin lumpens concentrated in the prisons should therefore be the best revolutionaries. Thus black lumpens rather than a racially united working class were to lead the revolution; sporadic prison revolts—desperate responses to desperate conditions—were held up as examples of this “revolutionary” activity.

The oppression of blacks as a segregated caste at the lowest economic level of productive society drives them into the lumpenproletariat in disproportionately large numbers. Capitalism in its decay subjects whole sections of this oppressed population to long-term joblessness and the consequent effects of lumpenization—ripping them out of production and dumping them onto “the streets” where crime and survival become virtually synonymous. There, many aspire to become a grotesque parody of the parasitic capitalist entrepreneur—the hustler.

Another black convict, Malcolm X, penetrated the experience of the street hustler and described it in his autobiography:

“Right now, in every big city ghetto, tens of thousands of yesterday’s and today’s school drop-outs are keeping body and soul together by some form of hustling in the same way I did. And they inevitably move into more and more, worse and worse, illegality and immorality. Full-time hustlers can never relax to appraise what they are doing and where they are bound. As is the case in any jungle...if he ever slows down, the other hungry, restless foxes, ferrets, wolves, and vultures out there with him won’t hesitate to make him their prey.”

The institutional concentration and extreme oppression of black lumpen youth in prisons provided one of the material prerequisites for some of them to begin to understand their racial oppression from a social rather than individual point of view. Many of these black men came to consider themselves black nationalists and turned toward the Panthers or Black Muslims. But prisons, of course, profoundly deform as well—both the man and the politics. Some, like Eldridge Cleaver, are so distorted by criminality that politics becomes only an extension of the cynical street style. Before he called for a government run by the U.S. imperialists and “god,” as he does today, Cleaver as a Panther called for the “dictatorship of the lumpenproletariat.”

Like Cleaver, Jackson firmly embraced “armed struggle” as the sup-

posed alternative to liberal gradualism. But unlike Cleaver he did not glorify the Panthers’ lumpen-criminal style. Of his prison experiences, he wrote:

“I’ll here admit that most of the people who come through these places are genuinely sick in one way or the other, monsters, totally disorganized, twisted, disgusting epitomes of the parent monster. Those who aren’t so upon their arrival will surely be so when they leave. No one escapes unscathed...”

Earlier, he had complained, “They have locked me up with a bunch of twenty-year-olds who don’t know anything about the ways of the world, hate books, can’t think, and won’t listen.”

George Jackson tried to learn about the world and transcend his prison environment through books. Ultimately he did not escape the conditions of his existence: growing up black and poor and on the streets, incarcerated in a racist hellhole for his entire adult life, in contact only with a society of limitless brutalization in a concentration-camp world where naked force was the only political institution. Anguishingly aware of the deformations of prison life, he could not transcend the terrorist strategy of seeking “to transform the black criminal mentality into a black revolutionary mentality” generated by his hideously oppressed condition and by the ideology of New Left-style Stalinist revisionism.

## Jackson and Fanon

The prison politics of lumpen rage found its “international” theory in the writings of Frantz Fanon. Fanon’s book is the only one quoted in *Brothers*; in the film its purpose is to indicate a political direction for violent rage. Fanon was the spokesman for the view that the most oppressed were the most revolutionary, giving that notion a militarist nationalist twist. It was in part Fanon’s stress on the cathartic violence of the oppressed which made him a political fad in the Panther/New Left milieu, and particularly popular in prison.

For Fanon’s brand of nationalism, it was the most “volatile” and violent who would be the vanguard. Just as the guerrillas would bring the revolution from the countryside and shantytowns into the cities, where the proletariat works, so revolution would be brought from the “Third World” global countryside to the advanced industrial nations. Such a theory placed U.S. blacks, and particularly black lumpens, at the head of the American revolution. For many blacks who wrote off the potential of the “white working class,” Fanonism squared exactly with their psychological experience.

While Jackson was strongly influenced by Fanon’s ideas, he was a very different political being than the West Indian intellectual. Fanon, born to the creole elite in the French colony of Martinique, first came to knowledge of traditional Marxism through pro-Moscow Stalinism. His political mentor, Aimé Césaire, was at one point a Communist member of the French

Chamber of Deputies. Under the impact of the Algerian war and Cuban revolution, Fanon moved from Khrushchevism to a radical nationalist populism. In so doing he explicitly rejected the proletarian orientation of traditional Marxism. He was a conscious and knowledgeable revisionist of Marxism; only the great political authority of official “Marxism-Leninism” as upheld by various state powers prevented him from repudiating Marxism outright and embracing the tradition of Bakuninite anarchism, the real historical basis of his views.

George Jackson might be described as a spontaneous Fanonist. His experience as a black lumpen youth and then a victimized prisoner conformed to Fanon’s race-centered “wretched of the earth” view of oppression. He first came to “Marxism-Leninism” through reading Fanon, Mao, the Panther press. By the time he got around to actually reading Marx and Lenin, Jackson already considered himself a communist. Unlike Fanon, he made no attempt to relate his “Third World” vanguardism to traditional Marxism; that kind of appeal to doctrinal consistency did not much concern him.

In large part because he was not involved in the transformation of the civil rights movement (e.g. SNCC, CORE) into black exclusionist groups, Jackson was not so much an American-centered black nationalist as a “Third World” vanguardist. Profoundly influenced by the Vietnam war, Jackson’s vision was of the masses throughout the world picking up the gun against American imperialism. For the U.S., he envisioned black ghetto youth in the vanguard of revolutionary struggle, followed by the increasingly radicalized students, and with the backward white workers as well eventually siding with the cause of “people’s government.”

That Jackson’s politics were fundamentally incompatible with traditional Marxism should be obvious. In attacking imperialist militarism, Jackson condemned European bourgeois civilization in its totality as inferior to the traditional societies of Asia and Africa:

“At no time in European history has there been a period of peace and harmony. Every moment of his past has been spent in the breakdown of civilization by causing war, disruption, disease, and artificial famine. You send me a date from the moment he emerged from his cave-dwelling days and I’ll tell you which of his tribes were at war, either on us or on themselves. The whole of the Western European’s existence here in the U.S. has been the same, one long war with different peoples.”

—Soledad Brother

For Marxists, the European bourgeois revolution, in both its economic and political dimensions, created the necessary historic basis for socialist society. Compare the *Communist Manifesto* with Jackson’s view that the “Third World” guerrillas must surround the cities:

“The bourgeoisie has subjected the country to the rule of the towns. It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life. Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilized, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West.”

As revolutionary Marxists, we stand opposed—no less than did George Jackson—to Western imperialism’s exploitation and oppression of backward nations. This is because imperialism—degenerate capitalism—now arrests the level of global economic development, plunges the world into interimperialist war, maintains the barbaric practices of traditional societies and reinforces the reactionary role of nationalism in the contemporary world. The eradication of imperialism, national oppression and genocide is the historic task of the revolutionary proletarian vanguard, which alone can enlist the impoverished rural masses in the fight for progressive social transforma-

# “Brothers”...

(continued from page 7)

Mildred Lewis, says so explicitly in what has to count as the Pollyanna idiocy of all time:

“I think the story was important to us because it showed that, no matter what happens to a man, he can bounce back.... I’d like people to leave the theater realizing that a human being is a beautiful thing, and that no matter what happens to that human being he can survive.... I guess it’s that you can’t keep a good man down.”

—Mother Jones, June 1977

Whatever comfort this may provide to Christian moralizers, the assassination of George Jackson does not seem to bear this out!

What is needed is precisely what *Brothers* deliberately does not do—an examination of Jackson’s life and death and the Black Panther Party’s rise and demise. These are hard lessons. Jackson did not ultimately transcend the fundamental inadequacies of the 1960’s radical black movement. Like some others, he was a subjectively revolutionary potential leader of the proletariat cut down before he had any chance to find his way to a revolutionary proletarian perspective. If young blacks come to regard simply the aesthetic George Jackson, if they see only that he was beautiful and tragic, as *Brothers* presents, then he will have lived and died in vain.

Future George Jacksons must not be wasted—chained to the walls of a prison and to a futile ideology based on the powerlessness of a prison population. Nor must the CP’s cynically false claim to the revolutionary impulse of the best of the black militants go unchallenged. Jackson’s martyrdom belongs to the future socialist revolution in this country, which in large measure depends upon the development of a black Trotskyist cadre: men and women who do not get mired in the guerrillaist “street politics” of illusory black nationalist schemas or the morass of reformism. These cadres of the future proletarian party must see *Brothers* as an insult to a subjective revolutionary who—in the full awareness of his doom—dedicated himself to the cause of the oppressed. They must grasp the political imperatives of George Jackson’s experience and martyrdom. ■

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tion as a crucial ally of the class-conscious proletariat.

### Jackson and the Panthers

Prison deforms politics in a way that is so obvious that it is often overlooked. It separates men from the living political movement. It is this above all that makes Jackson such a strange and contradictory figure within the spectrum of Panther politics. Curiously, this terrible distortion also accounts in part for his attractiveness, in that he seems to have a general absence of petty factional malice.



Ruchell Magee

Max Bloom

A subjectively revolutionary militant, Jackson was not really a radical politician; he had no way to become one. Uninvolved in politics prior to his imprisonment, then caged up in enforced isolation from social struggle as well as from the sharp debates which wracked the black radical movement, he could take no part in leading particular people behind particular policies. Therefore he did not have to take political responsibility for any faction of "the movement."

Jackson never addressed the knotty problems which the New Left sporadically and incompetently debated (e.g., the Sino-Soviet split) and he stood aside from its factional squabbles. He intersected the New Left in his messianic vision of "the inevitable triumph of people's government." At the time of the decomposition and split of the Panthers, he attacked the Cleaver wing on personalist grounds, despite a manifestly greater kinship with its militaristic posture.

By the time of Jackson's entry into political life, the Black Panther Party itself had become a fairly hegemonic umbrella organization of militant nationalism. Whatever political cohesiveness it had earlier possessed as a distillation of the broad black nationalist current—in part through disagreements with figures such as Stokely Carmichael or reactionary "cultural nationalists" like Imamu Baraka—had been undercut by its spectacular success in making itself synonymous with the radical black nationalist mood which characterized the urban ghetto youth of the late 1960's.

Jackson, the messianic prison-writer rather than communist politician, could simultaneously embrace views which tended to divide competing tendencies in the black movement and in the Panthers. He could accept the extreme glorification of military force wielded on behalf of the oppressed which was characteristic of the Cleaver wing; in *Blood in My Eye* he approvingly quoted his brother Jonathan's violence fantasies, soon to be tragically applied:

"Repression is here! I've followed them [the cops], studied them, holed a few of their cars—you should see how they'll run when they can't tell from exactly what quarter they're drawing fire. We overestimate them, or perhaps have little sense of our own power. In the short run, and here I mean in an isolated tactical operation sitting within a particular political design, with military weapons we could easily outgun the establishment's first line of defense. What, for instance, would the city pigs do if they are confronted by a .38 snubbed revolver in the hand of a brother who's fired that .38 perhaps 10 times in his life? Then take the same situation but give the brother a flamethrower (stolen from the military), give

the brother an armored van from inside which he could use said flamethrower, give him two comrades in arms, one equipped with an M60 machine gun, the other an anti-tank rocket launcher. Pigs are punks. Give me 10 cells armed as I've just mentioned and we could start to enforce some of the demands of the people...."

At the same time, Jackson could argue against "the blanket indictment of the white race" and in favor of accepting white radicals as legitimate participants in the struggle against racism—a line much closer to the Newton wing, especially as it turned toward reformist alliance with the Communist Party.

In a 1970 letter to Angela Davis he even made an attempt to rehabilitate Martin Luther King, whose reformist gradualism was the enemy which first defined radical black nationalism:

"It's no coincidence that Malcolm X and M.L. King died when they did. Malcolm X had just put it together (two and two). I seriously believe King knew all along but was holding out and presenting the truth in such a way that it would affect the most people situationally without getting them damaged by gunfire. You remember what was on his lips when he died. Vietnam and economics, political economy...."

As a self-taught intellectual with little more than an ideological tie to organized radicalism, Jackson never felt it necessary to reconcile his sometimes self-contradictory writings or to make a hard factional "choice of comrades." He could write that in "turning inward in our misery and accepting any form of racism we are taking on the characteristic of our enemy" without feeling called upon to disavow any of the white-baiting and anti-Semitism of the official Panther press.

### Build the Trotskyist Vanguard Party!

The figure of George Jackson evokes far more than just sympathy for a man who sought to outline and carry forward a vision of human decency and social justice in the face of overwhelming and ultimately decisive odds. His self-discipline, intelligence and undisputed courage made him an exceptional individual. His death made him a symbol of martyrdom for the cause of black freedom. His letters embody much of what was best in the Panthers: the subjectively revolutionary dedication which—in the absence of a strong

Leninist proletarian vanguard—never transcended decisive elements which combined with bourgeois state repression to destroy the organization: New Left impressionism, nationalism, adulation of "Third World" Stalinism in power, violence-cult adventurism, reformist maneuverism and lumpen-style hustlerism.

Adoption of the "colonial model" for "white fascist Amerika" doomed the black nationalist/New Left movement to self-isolation from the decisive potential power of the working class. But in its heyday, this mood attracted some of the most militant black youth who might—given an upsurge in the class struggle—have found their way to a revolutionary proletarian perspective. As ghetto youth were increasingly drawn to the radical mood, the repression of the most militant expression of black nationalism—the Panthers—was begun with a vengeance on a national scale.

Tragically, the Panthers' glorification of street violence and "off the pig" rhetoric made them an easy target for the provocateurs, hit-men and hired guns of the capitalist class. The Panther leaders were cut down by the state in the most savage and systematic murder campaign ever seen in the modern-day U.S. Jackson called it "natural selection in reverse."

In addition, the Newton-Cleaver split was primarily carried out with street-gang methods; more than a few Panther militants were killed by one another. The inevitable political decomposition of that movement and the murderous cop vendetta left only the dead and imprisoned, the sellouts in the Democratic Party, and the nauseating Eldridge Cleaver, former rapist and recent convert to Christian anti-communist crusading.

It is not surprising that Jackson—caged up for the totality of his adult life—adopted a prison-centered view of revolutionary politics. It is testimony to his power of will and mind that he came to a definite social conviction under the dehumanizing oppression of prison "life." Ultimately, it took state murder to silence his voice. And it will take the proletarian revolution, led by the multi-racial Trotskyist vanguard party, to properly avenge his death. ■

## TLD...

(continued from page 2)

display of contempt for internationalism.

The TLD issued a leaflet, "Defend Workers Democracy," protesting the vicious KB attack. The leaflet explained:

"Since the utopian/reactionary positions of the KB on atomic energy cannot stand up to hard revolutionary criticism, it [KB] is attempting to silence our criticisms by all the methods of Stalinism, in order for its part to be able to falsify them through omission or veiled hints. For the KB knows that interest in discussing the positions of the TLD exists among its supporters. Thus it has already had to deny speaking rights to TLD spokesmen at two meetings it dominated, even though approximately a third of the audience expressed itself in favor of letting the TLD present its criticism."

The *Rotfrontstadt* article's attempted smear job culminates in the statement that the TLD "completely supports the atomic policies of the bourgeoisie"—thereby seeking to avoid answering the TLD's argument that it is not up to revolutionaries to formulate an energy policy for the capitalists and pretending not to notice the TLD's denunciation of state repression directed against anti-atomic power demonstrators, as well as its call for the expropriation without compensation of the entire energy industry.

Demanding "open political debate among workers organizations" as a "life-or-death question for the working class," the TLD concludes: "The KB is

politically defenseless against our criticisms of the petty-bourgeois anti-nuclear power movement and is resorting, like all Stalinists when they are hit particularly hard politically, to the ultimate means of violence and the call for violence. We intend to defend our right to political debate with opportunist currents in the workers movement with all necessary means. We call upon organizations and individuals of the left and workers movement to protest this attack by the KB and to spring to the defense of workers democracy." ■

## Jail Nixon...

(continued from page 12)

FBI from a massive bugging operation against the left.

### Bring Nixon to Justice!

Clearly one of the purposes of the broadcast interviews between Nixon and television entrepreneur David Frost is for the bourgeoisie to celebrate its recovery from Watergate. With the aid of the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy and black misleaders, it has installed a "moral" president and is coming back



John Bryson Time

with a vengeance to reassert governmental authority and the ability of U.S. imperialism to call the shots in the international arena. Nixon's too obvious crimes must be shown as aberrant, their author duly removed from office, chastized and rendered pathetic.

Near the end of his interview, Nixon described himself as a sacrificial victim, "the last casualty of Vietnam." A "casualty" with a pardon from Gerald Ford, a \$100,000-per-year pension, a million dollar TV interview series and his playground in San Clemente! When he tees up for his daily round of golf, this "war casualty" must be very thankful that he will never be brought to justice by his own class.

The real casualties are the millions of Indochinese peasants and workers who were subjected to round-the-clock bombing, hundreds of thousands of them killed, their skin burned with napalm and their bodies torn by the fragmentation bombs of "democratic" American imperialism. At the time of the Watergate revelations, as bombs still rained down on North Vietnam, we demanded that Nixon be extradited to Hanoi, to face the families of the victims of his "peace with honor" pratfalls and be tried for his monstrous war crimes against the working people of Indochina.

After his resignation, when Gerald Ford pardoned this no. 1 criminal, despite the fact that he was obviously guilty not only of mass murder in the name of anti-communism but also of massively violating even capitalist legality in the U.S., we demanded that he be jailed. Yet the American bourgeoisie, alarmed by its loss of credibility, was not about to try and convict, or even impeach Nixon. He knew too much, he could implicate too many, it would prolong "the crisis."

We continue to demand that Nixon be jailed. Failing that, there is ample evidence in his television interviews to lock him up in facilities for the confinement of the criminally insane. This "paranoiac for peace" is still a menace to society. But in any case the murderous power of U.S. imperialism remains—justice for Nixon's victims awaits the victorious socialist revolution. ■

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# Israeli Elections

(continued from page 1)

Zionists" intended to dangle before the Arab states as bait for a peace treaty. But in order to maintain its coalition with the National Religious Party of orthodox Jewish fanaticism, the "Labor" government not only refused to forcibly remove the "illegal" Kadum settlers, it provided the settlement with material support, and as a pre-election sop to hawks and right-wingers it authorized the army agricultural corps, the Nahal, to begin developing a settlement near Kadum at the Arab village of Mas'ha.

Begin's demagoguery regarding the Palestinians has only been a more forthright and brutal expression of the genocidal racialism and territorial expansionism that is inherent in all the parties, wings, shadings, sects and cliques that embrace Zionism. Armed with an Old Testament quotation, Zionist zealots hold that, "In that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying 'Unto thy seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt unto the great river the River Euphrates'" (Genesis, Chapter 15).

Likewise, according to Begin, Eretz Israel (the land of Israel) is not only the present state of Israel plus the occupied territories, but also includes at least the East Bank of Jordan. In response to the UN partition of Palestine, which from the standpoint of demography as well as the distribution of economic resources was highly unjust to the Palestinian Arabs, Begin said,

"The Jewish homeland, the area which covers both sides of the Jordan, is a

complete historic and geographic entity. Dissection of the homeland is an unlawful act; an agreement to dissection is also unlawful and not binding on the Jewish people. It is the duty of this generation to return to Jewish sovereignty these parts of the homeland which were torn from it and given over to foreign rule."

—quoted in Moshe Menuhin, *Decadence of Judaism*

But Begin's response was fundamentally no different from that of the George Washington of Zionism, David Ben Gurion, who laid claim to "all the territory of the land of Israel, on either

substantial investment in order to integrate the West Bank into the Israeli economy. Begin, feeling that "Labor" had essentially coopted his hard line on the occupied territories, engineered a series of electoral deals which incorporated various splinter groups and ex-"Laborites." This was confirmed by the fact that, although Begin lost and "Labor" won in the 1973 elections, the economic integration and development of settlements in the occupied territories continued apace.

While Begin embodies in more

cal origins in the Zionist revisionism of Vladimir Jabotinsky. Jabotinsky counterposed to the utopian collectivist schemes of the early Jewish pioneers in Palestine an explicitly capitalist and militarist colonization of the territory, one which would be defended by a modern army that would serve as the foundation for a modern Jewish state. Only after such a state and army were established could large-scale Jewish emigration take place.

So many of Jabotinsky's tenets are taken as home truths by the modern



Zionist ultras march to hold Arab land in the occupied territory of the West Bank.

Carol Gootter

bank of the Jordan" (David Ben Gurion, *The Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*).

At a conference at the "left-wing" Zionist Mapam kibbutz at Ein Hahorsh, Begin attacked the contradiction between the claim of Mapam (United Workers Party) to recognize the existence of a Palestinian nation and its right to self-determination while building kibbutzim or agricultural collectives on lands that belonged to the Palestinians. He chastised the Mapam kibbutzniks:

"When you recognize the concept of 'Palestine' you demolish your right to live in Ein Hahorsh. If this is Palestine and not the land of Israel, then you are the conquerors and not the tillers of the land. If this is Palestine, then it belongs to a people who lived here before you came."

—quoted in Ari Bober, *The Other Israel*

Likud was formed in 1973 in response to "Labor's" adaptation of the so-called Galili plan. Named after "Labor" minister Israel Galili, the plan calls for

extreme form the racialism to be found in all the Zionist currents, nonetheless his electoral victory, particularly given his history, is a dangerous development. For Begin has never repudiated his activities as an Irgun terrorist. On the contrary he boasts of them, requesting only that he be referred to as a "freedom fighter" and not as a terrorist. Now this advocate of unrestrained terror and violence against the Palestinian people—and against anyone who believes that Palestinians have a right to exist—is on the verge of acquiring not merely the handguns and Molotov cocktails of his Irgun days but the technologically advanced arsenal of a modern state power, including the capacity to make atomic weapons. Thus it is well worth looking at his sordid history.

## Origins of Irgun

The Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) had its ideologi-

Zionist movement that it is hard to realize that at the time he launched his Revisionist party in 1925 he was considered within the Zionist movement as an ultra-right-wing fanatic. Ben Gurion called him "Vladimir Hitler." Mussolini remarked to Rome's chief rabbi in 1935, "For Zionism to succeed you need to have a Jewish state with a Jewish flag and a Jewish language. The man who understands this is your fascist, Jabotinsky."

Tension between the Revisionists and the "Labor Zionists" escalated. Employers imported scab workers through the Revisionist National Labor Federation to break Histadrut strikes. In June 1933 Chaim Arlosoroff, a leading "labor" Zionist, was murdered. The Revisionists were suspected and one of them was arrested. Finally in 1935 the Revisionists split from the Zionist organization. In 1931 the Haganah, the unified militia of Palestinian Jewry, also split, and the Revisionist-dominated Haganah "B" was formed.

During the 1936 Arab revolt the official line of the Haganah was "restraint," that is communal self-defense and collaboration with the British. Jabotinsky supported the policy of restraint, thereby splitting Haganah "B" with half of its 3,000 members following his recommendation and reuniting with Haganah, and the other more extreme half carrying out a campaign of active terror against the Palestinian Arabs. This half went on to form the Irgun. The Irgun symbol was a hand grasping a rifle over the map of Palestine (including Trans-Jordan) with the motto, "Rak Kach" ("Only Thus").

With the outbreak of World War II the Irgun itself was split into those led again by Jabotinsky who wanted to collaborate with Britain in the war against Germany and the majority of the Irgunists led by Abraham Stern. Stern formed the Lochamei Herut Israel (Freedom Fighters of Israel) and continued to see Britain as the main enemy. He even approached German representatives in the Near East, seeking a deal with Hitler. Those terrorists who remained in the Irgun worked closely with the British occupation forces, especially the Criminal Investigation Department, devoting most of their resources to

## ILWU...

(continued from page 3)

cratic cronies in Los Angeles. Apparently under pressure from L.A. as well as from the Local 10 ranks, even the bureaucratic group around Larry Wing and Herb Mills came out against forced transfers at the May 21 meeting, a switch from their earlier support for LWOP. (However, these "oppositionists" still consider "voluntary" transfers necessary.)

Caught in an equally uncomfortable position are well-known CP supporter Billy Proctor and his ally Leo Robinson. Their only proposals to date have been for "voluntary" transfers, while they violently denounce the "Longshore Militant" call for strike action. But "voluntary transfers" is not a program to win jobs—at best it delays the institution of LWOP, while fueling regional rivalries within the ILWU and playing lower-seniority "B" members off against "A-men."

A "Longshore Militant" leaflet issued on May 18 spelled out the threat facing Bay Area longshoremen, and by extension the rest of the longshore division, if the PMA is allowed to gut Local 10: "... converting Local 10 into a strictly steady-man operation in which the hiring hall is abolished and virtually all non-skilled men are driven off the waterfront." The leaflet put forward the only program which can defend dock workers whose livelihoods are threatened in this crisis:

"There is only one alternative to being driven off the waterfront: break the contract and strike for a program of more jobs. We need a shorter work shift with no loss in pay, 6 hours work for 8 hours pay or better, with no extended shifts and a big pay boost...."

It is urgent for longshoremen that this program be implemented. The ILWU ranks must demand that the issue of LWOP be brought before them at a membership meeting where it can be democratically debated rather than in a shotgun referendum ballot. Should the issue remain on the ballot, LWOP must be voted down and preparations made for a Coast-wide strike to win jobs for all. ■

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aiding the British in hunting down Stern gang members.

## The Irgun Under Begin

The period of collaboration with the British, which saw the death of Jabotinsky and of Irgun commander David Raziel, was one of decline for the Irgun. It was revived again by an influx of recruits, many of them deserters from General Waldislaw Anders' Polish Army, temporarily stationed in Palestine. These new Irgun recruits were ideologically educated in the fanatical Revisionist youth movement, Betar, tempered by being first-hand witnesses of the Nazi holocaust and professionally trained soldiers. Among them was the leader of the Polish Betar, Menachem Begin. Born in Brest-Litovsk in 1913,

## Ethiopia ...

(continued from page 5)

charges of handing out anti-government leaflets. Troops later shot many of them in cold blood. Witnesses say many of the bodies were found stacked in huge piles, and others dumped in a mass grave just outside the capital. Many had been partially eaten by hyenas.

At Menelik Hospital in Addis Ababa there were 170 bodies, some of them mutilated. Relatives coming to pick bodies out of the piles had to pay heavy fines in order to claim them. On Saturday morning, more students were rounded up and taken to an army division headquarters. When relatives attempted to bring food, they were told, "food is no longer necessary." Nothing further has been released by the regime about these students' fate.

While the May Day slaughter was proceeding, Mengistu addressed a pro-government rally in the center of the capital, vowing to crush all oppositionists. It is this horrendous mass murder of left-wing students which the tinpot dictator was justifying and which the Communist Party hails! After the ceremonies, he flew off to Moscow where, in honor of the Kremlin's growing links to the Ethiopian military junta, he was feted at a state dinner given by Soviet president Podgorny.

"We are glad," said Podgorny, "that in the fierce clashes with reaction you are gaining ever more victories...." Then, referring to the genocidal war being waged against the Eritrean people, without blinking an eye the Russian bureaucrat concluded:

"The nationalities question is one of the complex problems which the enemies of the new Ethiopia are seeking to use for their own ends. We regard with understanding the intention of the PMAC [Derg] to resolve this question on a democratic basis...."

—Daily World, 6 May

The Stalinists' nauseating attempt to pass off the gory torrent of blood let loose by kill-crazy "progressive" dictator Mengistu as some kind of socialist revolution is mind-boggling. So grotesque are the scenes reported from Addis Ababa that rival Soviet-backed "socialist" military strongman Siad Barre of neighboring Somalia—who has had his own domestic Communists locked away for years—was able to remark: "The Ethiopians kill their students, their professors—why? If you kill everybody, what does that have to do with socialism?"

The Stalinist bureaucracy, which rose to political power in the USSR over the corpses of the defenders of proletarian internationalism, follows a nationalist course of seeking diplomatic advantage through deals with one "Third World" tyrant after another. The martyred students and leftists of Ethiopia are victims of Stalinist class collaboration as well as Mengistu's bonapartist terror, and their deaths can be avenged only through international proletarian revolution which will sweep away not only the Mengistus and Amins, but also bring forth a day of reckoning for their apologists in the deformed workers states as well. ■

seized for Zionist activities in Soviet Lithuania in 1941, after a year in a Siberian labor camp he was allowed to enlist in the Anders army. By December 1943 he had taken over the leadership of Irgun.

Under Begin's command the Irgun broke off its collaboration with the British, the command was centralized and it began a campaign, along with the Stern Gang, of extortion from British businessmen. The British, with full knowledge of Hitler's "final solution," blocked Jewish immigration either to England or Palestine, thereby infuriating both the official and dissident Zionists. "Illegal" Jewish immigrants captured by the British were interned in concentration camps.

Following World War II the official Zionist movement also broke with the British, escalated the illegal immigration and launched its own campaign of terror. On the night of 17 June 1946, Haganah units blew up ten of the eleven bridges connecting Palestine with neighboring countries. The British response was swift, harsh and massive. On June 29, "Black Sabbath" to Palestinian Jewry, the British began a two-week nationwide mass arrest operation. Buildings were searched block by block, schools and hospitals as well; even the casts of patients were broken open.

The Irgun responded on July 22. A group of armed Irgunists planted timed explosives in the kitchen of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. An entire wing of the building was occupied by British government offices, including those of the Criminal Investigation Department. The Irgun had come full circle from active collaboration with the CID to active terror against it. Begin claims that the Irgun telephoned a warning of the impending explosion; the British authorities deny it. In any case the building was not cleared and the explosion killed 91 British, Arabs and Jews and injured 45.

## Irgun, Stern Gang and the Birth of Israel

But while anti-British terrorism received the most publicity, the British were not the main targets of the Irgun and Stern Gang. At the end of 1947 the Stern Gang boasted that it had killed 373 people, of whom 300 were civilians, many of them Jewish. But much of the violence was directed specifically at places where Arabs and Jews had lived, worked and shopped together for many years.

This was particularly the case following the UN-announced partition scheme. For example, on 30 December 1947 members of the Irgun threw bombs from a passing vehicle into a group of Arab workers standing at the gates of a Haifa oil refinery, killing 6 and wounding 47. The Haifa docks and refineries had a long tradition of common class struggle. But in retaliation the Arab oil workers attacked Jewish co-workers with knives and pickaxes, killing 41 and wounding 15.

Not unlike the terrorism of the Orange extremists and the IRA in Northern Ireland, the terrorism of the Irgun and the Stern Gang served to cut across common class solidarity and exacerbate the national antagonisms, so

that only a nationalist solution would appear possible.

In addition, the Irgun and Stern Gang terrorism sought to drive the large Palestinian Arab minority from that portion of Palestine allotted by the UN partition to the future Jewish state. Zionist apologists claim that Palestinian Arabs were ordered by their leaders to flee or simply left during the Arab-Israeli war to avoid the consequences of battle. This is a complete fabrication. In fact, there was a concerted campaign of terror by which the Arab population was driven out prior to the Arab-Israeli war, and in which the Stern Gang and the Irgun were in the vanguard. The most infamous episode in this campaign was the massacre perpetrated by the Irgun and the Stern Gang at Deir Yassin.

## Deir Yassin

Deir Yassin was a few miles west of Jerusalem. According to the UN partition plan, accepted by the Zionists at

day the Irgunists called a press conference where they bragged about their "victory" at Deir Yassin.

In his book, *The Revolt: The Story of the Irgun*, Begin boasts of the role Deir Yassin played in spreading panic and terror within the Palestinian Arab communities, facilitating the Zionists in effecting their forcible population transfer.

"Panic overwhelmed the Arabs of Eretz Israel. In the rest of the country Arabs began to flee in terror, even before they clashed with Israeli forces.... Meanwhile Haganah was carrying out successful attacks on other fronts. All the Jewish forces proceeded to advance through Haifa like a knife through butter. The Arabs began to flee in panic shouting 'Deir Yassin'."

Of course the official Zionist establishment would denounce Deir Yassin, but the massacre could not have occurred without the cooperation of the Haganah; and the consolidation of a homogeneous Jewish state through the forcible expulsion of the Arab population would have been more difficult, if



Roth/Sygma

Former prime minister Rabin, left, with Labor Party leader Shimon Peres.

that time, it belonged to the Jerusalem international zone over which Israelis had no jurisdiction. Further, the villagers had gotten along with pre-Zionist Jewish settlers. Amidst a growing confrontation and unrest from Palestinian Arabs and Jews at the time, Deir Yassin was held up as a model of amicable coexistence. It was precisely for this reason that the Irgun and Stern Gang chose to wipe out Deir Yassin.

With the aid of Haganah the terrorist groups occupied the village. The Haganah men then withdrew and on 9 April 1948 the Irgun and Stern Gang murdered 254 Arab villagers including women and children. The mutilated carcasses were thrown into a well. A handful of survivors, Arab women and children, were brought in trucks to Jerusalem and paraded through the streets where they were jeered and spat upon. On the same

not impossible, without the terror of the Stern Gang and the Irgun.

In the consolidation of a modern state power and army during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, Ben Gurion suppressed the Stern Gang and Irgun. Although Ben Gurion would never admit it, these gangsters played a necessary role in the birth of the Zionist state. Begin and his Irgun cronies turned in their guns and bombs and began a legal party, the Herut, or Freedom Party. It soon joined the official Zionist establishment and along with Mapai, Mapam and all the other Zionist parties received its portion of Jewish Agency subsidies.

Now Begin need only perform the tedious ritual of putting together a majority coalition government from the fractious and clique-ridden Zionist parties in order for this Eichmann of the Palestinian people to become the next prime minister. The arsenals of the Israeli state, amply oversupplied with the latest weaponry from the U.S. and possessing the capacity to make nuclear weapons, will be placed in his blood-stained hands.

A dangerous period has opened in Israel with vicious repression in the occupied territories and right-wing bonapartism in Israel itself placed on the agenda. The Israeli working class, especially the oppressed Sephardim, will soon discover that the terror of the former Irgun leader in government will be turned against the proletarian class enemies of the Israeli state even more rapidly and more viciously than against its national enemies.

Israeli workers must be broken from their Zionist masters! Revolutionary unity of class-conscious Arabs and Hebrew workers must be forged! The crimes of Deir Yassin and the Irgun must be avenged through proletarian revolution or indeed the Hebrew people will find but another holocaust awaiting them in the Near East. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Jail Criminally Insane Ex-President!

# Nixon on the Loose

There he was again on prime-time TV: the "new Nixon," scratching his ear and droning on in mad sincerity about how he brought "peace with honor" to Vietnam. In his unforgettable tone of hollow-sounding moral uplift, he uttered the familiar alibis for the plumbers and assassins. He called on the "great silent majority" to vindicate him, quoting witless aphorisms by Bob Hope's wife on love and hate, forgetting whether or not he had authorized the firebombing of the Brookings Institute, oozing bitter resentment over not being invited to the White House by the Kennedys and comparing himself favorably to Lincoln and Jefferson.

He was, as always, banal, frumpy, rancorous and stupid. But in this third televised interview there was not the repentant Nixon of the earlier sessions when he did his hangdog, "I have let the country down," routine. No, this was Nixon on the offensive, the warrior in "the national interest." It was Joseph McCarthy's ex-staffer going after his abundant enemies with every available means (usually illegal): Nixon the criminal... and the criminally insane.

### "Paranoia for Peace"

On the bombing of Cambodia, Nixon said his "only regret" was that he hadn't moved "sooner, stronger." He argued that it was he and the military who were trying to achieve peace in Indochina, dragging in the old line about how it was necessary to bomb the North Vietnamese to the bargaining table. It was "violence-prone" protesters who prolonged the war, Nixon claimed with a straight face, so it was necessary to crush anti-war demonstrations in order to get a negotiated settlement. After all, Hanoi had to be convinced that they couldn't win in Washington what they didn't take on the battlefield.

It is, of course, true that nothing *could* be won through peace crawls with Democratic Party doves in Washington that wasn't won by force of arms in Vietnam. Despite the unpopularity of the war, U.S. imperialism continued to bomb away until its puppet army collapsed. In the end, the NLF/DRV took it all on the battlefield, but it wasn't for lack of trying to strike a deal with Washington. More than once Ho Chi Minh and his successors proved willing to *give up* what they had won, in exchange for empty promises from the imperialists. But the intransigence of the Nixon regime and the terminal corruption of its lackeys in Saigon frustrated the class-collaborationist plans of the Vietnamese Stalinists.

As for American promises, it was finally confessed last week that the 1973 "peace" agreements included a secret clause committing the U.S. to \$4.5 billion in aid to "contribute to post-war reconstruction in North Vietnam, without any political conditions" (*New York Times*, 20 May 1977). Not only was the treaty provision repeatedly denied by Nixon-Ford administration officials,



Nixon: "Paranoia for peace isn't that bad."

Actualidad Espanola

but the ex-president now justifies refusal to deliver aid on the spurious grounds that the North Vietnamese allegedly violated the accords. Nixon seemed determined to prove the inverse of the *Reader's Digest* axiom that you can never trust the Russians to live up to a treaty.

While advocating "peace through war," Nixon also asserted that the president need not bother with legal niceties in order to uphold "law and order." Driven to distraction by peace demonstrators (who could be heard as they encircled the White House, "even if I had plugs in my ears"), the imperialist commander-in-chief attempted to silence his opponents. Sounding like a cross between Caligula and the Mad Hatter, Nixon explained to a scandalized David Frost, who pressed for an explanation of the patently illegal Wilson plan for intensive surveillance and disruption of the Viet

congressional committee... the best... and... and...

"NIXON: Well, when the president does it, that means it is not illegal."

"FROST: By definition."

"NIXON: Exactly. Exactly. If the President, for example, approves some-

thing because of the national security, or in this case because of a threat to internal peace and order of significant magnitude, then the President's decision in that instance is one that enables those who carry it out, to carry it out without violating a law. Otherwise they're in an impossible position.

"FROST: So, that in other words, really you were saying... between burglary and murder... the dividing line is the President's judgment?"

"NIXON: Yes...."

The history of Nixon's "judgement" in such matters is well-known. There was no "dividing line" for the infamous COINTELPRO in its war against the government's usual targets: the left, black and labor movements. There was not only authorization for illegal wiretaps, mail openings, police provocations, disruptions and "black bag" burglary jobs galore; as shown by the assassination of Black Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, even murder was fair play.

It was only when the "enemies list" went beyond the usual victims of capitalism's secret police to include Nixon's heinous political opponents that a "Watergate crisis" developed. Frost seemed willing enough to understand why the president of the United

States would harass and victimize the left, but why did his "enemies list" include Joe Namath? Why did Nixon use the Internal Revenue Service against prominent liberals? Nixon asked the obvious question himself: "A paranoid attitude?" He answered with a clinical version of Barry Goldwater's famous dictum for conservative Republicans: "Call it paranoia, but paranoia for peace isn't that bad."

### Nixon Isn't the Only One

It is beyond mere hypocrisy for Richard Nixon to proclaim that he "brought peace with honor," but it all made sense to this self-diagnosed paranoid. The political paradox and irritating irony is that this most discredited and exposed U.S. president of the imperialist era, a self-evident criminal and bumbling liar, when flailing about for a defense of the indefensible has been in some respects the most straightforward of recent American chief executives.

There has been plenty of media-image-building for duplicitous and mediocre U.S. presidents. TV cameras trotted behind LBJ along the Pedernales River picking up bits of "folksy" Texas humor; meanwhile, the other Lyndon Johnson was directing massive carpet-bombing of Vietnam from his toilet seat. While television focused on the Kennedy of Camelot—the debonaire president, his fashion-conscious wife, jet-setting relatives and French chef—the secret JFK was not simply fiddling and faddling, but arranging the Bay of Pigs invasion and authorizing CIA assassination teams with Mafia hit squads. But there is no secret Nixon.

After the transparent display of contrition in the initial installments of the Nixon-Frost interviews, the Watergate president offered his best defense: they all do it, it comes with the job. And it's true, of course, which helps to explain why the Democrats were, at the end, not so anxious to engage in impeachment proceedings. Kennedy, Nixon pointed out, bugged Martin Luther King and spread the gossip "all over Capitol Hill."

When Nixon states that the president may sanction burglaries or murders with impunity, the *New York Times* and the rest of the liberals professed shock. But why? Isn't it established that Kennedy repeatedly tried to have Fidel Castro assassinated? Kennedy was simply smart enough and stealthy enough not to go blabbing about it as though it were some kind of divine right. Nixon is the one who got caught.

So now Carter intones that the president is "not above the law" and submits a bill to require judicial authorization for wiretapping in "national security" cases. Don't count on it, though. It has been illegal for years to tap phones without a warrant in all other cases, but that hasn't stopped the

*continued on page 9*