

86% Ghetto Youth Jobless in NYC

Black Unemployment Skyrockets

Recently a prominent public figure sharply criticized Carter's economic policies as anti-labor and anti-black:

"I am not optimistic about the economy. It is quite sluggish, and nothing is being done to give it a boost.... The greatest crime being committed today is being committed against the black community, against the black teenagers and the white teen-agers."

—New York Times, 31 August

Who is this? A demagogic black liberal like Democratic Congresswoman Barbara Jordan? Or perhaps it's America's house socialist, Michael Harrington? No—believe it or not, it is George Meany, head of the AFL-CIO. The crusty labor boss, who for years has mainly attacked the U.S. government for being "soft" on the Soviet Union, actually criticized the president for neglecting (how could he?) the interests of the workers and the poor. The man who has denounced every black politician to the left of Booker T. Washington as an extremist and rabble rouser is now sounding strangely like the Black Congressional Caucus.

Has the reactionary old labor autocrat undergone some kind of liberal conversion? No, he simply can no longer ignore the immense and rapidly growing number of ghetto unemployed who pose both an economic and political threat to the entrenched, deeply conservative union bureaucracy. Economically, the enormous pool of desperate, jobless blacks provides a basis for the expansion of non-union, super-exploitative sweatshop operations. Politically, lumpenized ghetto youth, who view unionized workers as a privileged social group, can be rallied behind anti-labor black "community control" demagogues like the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Radicalized black youth can also be a dedicated, dynamic component of a revolutionary socialist movement based on the organized working class.

A few days after Meany's press conference it was announced that the August official unemployment rate was



Conrad/New York Times

Unemployed youth at East Harlem Manpower Center in search of jobs.

7.1 percent, up from July's 6.9 percent. What this statistic means can be seen from the fact that in the period from 1962 to 1973 the unemployment rate averaged 4.9 percent (OECD, *Economic Outlook*, July 1977). Even more important than the higher overall rate is that all of the August increase is concentrated among blacks. The unemployment rate for blacks stands at 14.5 percent, almost *two-and-a-half times* that of whites, and the highest since the Great Depression of the 1930's! But even this figure fails to give a sense of the economic desperation of the black community. While joblessness among white teen-agers (16 to 19) now averages 14 percent, the comparable figure for black youth is an incredible 41 percent!

And 41 percent is a national *average*. In New York City, for example, more than *eight* out of every *ten* black and Spanish-speaking teen-agers do not have a full-time job this summer (*New York Times*, 2 August)!

Meany's sudden interest in black unemployment is mainly channeled through a lash-up called the Full Employment Action Council (FEAC), whose goal is the passage of the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act. The Council declared the week of September 4-11 to be "Full Employment Week," during which it sponsored numerous activities to pressure a reluctant Carter and Congress into passing Humphrey-Hawkins.

Symbolically the FEAC is co-chaired by Coretta King and Murray Finley, head of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union. This renewed alliance between the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and the black liberal establishment seems to be brokered by Michael Harrington's Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee. It is mildly surprising that Meany would lend his considerable authority to one of Harrington's "New Politics" operations. For years the New Politics group in the Democratic Party has been a target of Meany's hostility second only to the Kremlin, and far more so than the National Association of Manufacturers.

Paradoxically, it is Carter's aggressive anti-Soviet stance, expressed in a 50 percent increase in the arms budget this fiscal year, that has brought to the fore differences over domestic economic policy between the imperialist big boss and his chief labor lieutenant. "Human Rights" Carter, armed with his cruise missiles and neutron bombs, fully meets

even Meany's fanatical standards of anti-Communism. In the quarrel between Meany and Carter we see the difference between a social-imperialist, who wants the workers movement to get something out of America's place in the sun, and a straightforward bourgeois imperialist, who wants to dominate the world to maximize the profits of U.S. capitalists.

World Economy Turns Down, U.S. to Follow

The persistence of depression-level unemployment in the U.S. takes place against a new downturn in the world economy. During the past three months industrial production has fallen sharply in western Europe and has remained flat in Japan. This new downturn occurs when the world economy has barely recovered from the 1974-75 depression. Industrial production in Japan and Britain did not regain its 1973-74 levels at all; production in West Germany, France and Italy reached pre-depression peaks only in late 1976 and has *since plummeted below* 1973 levels.

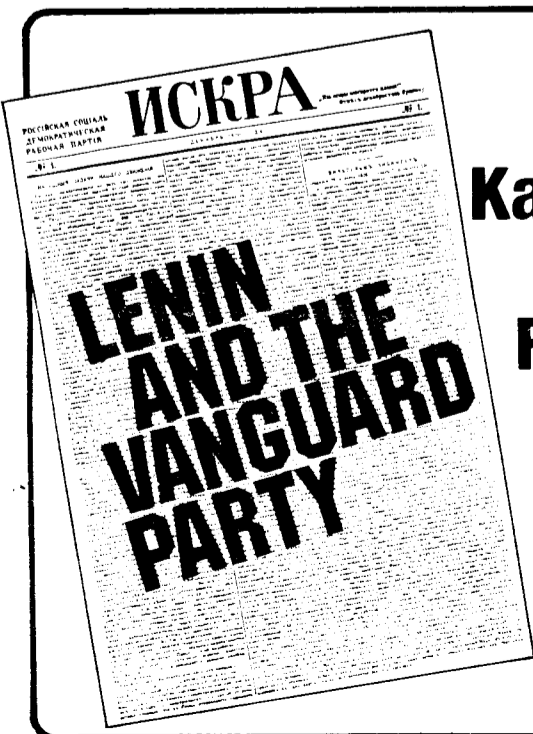
The weak economic recovery is rooted in stagnant capital investment. Even in the U.S., capital investment now stands about 5 percent *below* the 1974 peak. The significant falling off of accumulation in the advanced capitalist world since 1973 is caused by three main factors. Unused productive capacity remains great following the sharpest economic contraction since 1937. The historically high, but widely fluctuating, inflation rates create much uncertainty about future costs, prices and interest rates. And since the mid-1960's the rate of profit has tended to fall more steeply

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PART 1

Kautskyism and the Origins of Russian Social Democracy

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Letters

Shocked

San Francisco,
18 March 1977
Workers Vanguard
New York

To whom it may concern,

Number 145 of your paper, dated 18 February 1977, carried a letter signed by me in the name of the Bay Area Group for the Defense of Paranagua and Pilla, dated San Francisco, 5 February 1977, expressing thanks to you, the Partisan Defense Committee, and the Spartacist League for support work on the Paranagua-Pilla case.

Today I chanced to read the account of the January 29th meeting in New York at which Jim Robertson spoke, in number 3 of the *Socialist Voice*.

I can only say that I am deeply shocked at the tone of Robertson's remarks as reported by the *Socialist Voice*, and that I know I speak for the majority of activists on the Paranagua-Pilla case when I say that, while I do not retract the statements in my letter in *WV* Number 145, I feel very strongly that whether or not the facts as stated in *Socialist Voice* are true, the Spartacist League owes the whole left of the U.S. a full, satisfactory accounting of the comments of Robertson at the January 29th meeting. Furthermore, I must say that if the account published in *Socialist Voice* is true, Robertson should immediately retire himself or be retired from any further leadership activity in the socialist and workers' movements in the U.S., at least until he has attained some kind of responsibility. I feel obliged to let you know I find the remarks reported from Robertson by the *Socialist Voice* a great deal more alarming on their face than anything reported in France from the lips of Varga!

Yours,
Stephen S.

WV replies: If you believe what you read about the Spartacist League in *Socialist Voice*, you'll love the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

Germany/U.S.S.R.

4 September 1977

To the Editor:

I am writing to develop a point that was only left implicit in the article, "West Germany Gets the Bomb" (*WV* 170, 26 August 1977). A brief elaboration might clear up confusion and

possible misunderstanding. The article noted that:

"In the 1920's, as a result of the Versailles treaty, German capitalism was supposed to be demilitarized. Correspondingly the Reichswehr entered into an intimate military collaboration with the Russian Red Army for a period, thus obtaining the opportunity to develop the foundations of Blitzkrieg tactics and train officers."

It was of course not only the German capitalist state, which had been "demilitarized" by the Versailles treaty, that received a considerable advantage out of this clandestine military collaboration. The Russian Red Army, thrust into this episodic collaboration with the enormously more militarily advanced German officer corps, acquired vital competence in the execution of strategy and tactics as well as capacity in improved weaponry. This, of course, was one of the intentions of the Soviet political leadership when it sanctioned

the arrangements (the other main aim being to try to play Germany off against the World War I victors).

But while the Germans retained the advantages accrued and went on under Hitler to build a very powerful military machine, Stalin's great purges in the 1930's virtually annihilated the upper levels of the Soviet officer corps from Marshall Tukhachevsky and Marshall Blücher down. This decapitation of the Red Army was a major factor in the opening weeks of the 1941 German invasion of Russia, when the bulk of the Soviet divisions in European Russia were cut off, surrendered and were dispersed, very nearly bringing the Soviet state to extinction. There is no way to make anything approaching a precise estimate, but perhaps ten million additional Russian lives were lost as a result of Stalin's prior destruction of the Red Army cadres during the purges.

Ironically, a principal charge in

Stalin's frame-up of Tukhachevsky and the rest was the very collaboration in the 1920's with the German military which the Soviet government under Lenin directed the Red Army to conduct. In the hands of Stalin and Vyshinsky during the purges this was turned into its opposite, i.e. treason. No regime lightly destroys its own officer corps. But the emergent Stalinist bureaucracy in the *degenerating* Russian workers state was compelled to recognize, rightly, that the Red Army cadre initially crystallized in the Russian Civil War was not entirely the bureaucracy's servant. Confronted with the choice of more deeply stabilizing its bureaucratic grip on Soviet society, or maintaining the means to militarily defend the Soviet Union against the world's imperialists, it chose the former course.

Comradely,
A.R.

Fernando Marcos Vows to Fight On

By the Partisan Defense Committee

Over the space of several months this past spring more than \$13,000 was collected by the Partisan Defense Committee (PDC) to finance a series of ophthalmological operations to restore the vision of exiled Chilean trade unionist Fernando Marcos. But although the best available medical treatment was obtained, the surgery did not succeed in improving his eyesight.

Marcos lost his sight in a 1972 explosion of industrial supplies which

Temprano who has pioneered a technique whereby an artificial cornea is grafted into the eye. In Comrade Marcos' case, while the grafted tissue was not rejected, the impairment of the light sensitivity of the retina itself was such that his vision could not be restored.

As the PDC stated in our fund-raising brochure for this case: "It is not enough to win asylum for victims of right-wing repression: the entirety of their fate in exile must be of continuing importance." In this spirit the PDC, at the recommendation of the Barraquer Clinic, has agreed to raise the funds to purchase a non-symbolic reading device which would enable Marcos to "read" any normal printed page through touch, without translation into a special symbolic language such as Braille.

The machine and training will cost in excess of \$4,000. The PDC's Marcos

fund currently holds a balance of over half this sum, which will be applied to the purchase of such equipment. In addition, we are once again appealing for donations from supporters who wish to further assist us in this endeavor.

Comrade Marcos has written to the Partisan Defense Committee (see letter printed below) expressing his gratitude to the hundreds of militants, organizations and opponents of junta terror whose contributions made his surgery possible. Despite the bitter blow to his hopes, he vows to continue his class-struggle activity: "Only we, the internationalists," he writes, "will fight to the end for the reforging of the sole leadership of the world proletariat." The concrete solidarity of all those who responded to the appeal on Marcos' behalf will not be forgotten by this proletarian militant. We of the PDC add our thanks to his. ■



Fernando Marcos

Hubert Schatzl

occurred while he was union security chief at a Chilean copper foundry. Two previous operations failed for lack of adequate medical attention, and he understood that these failures as well as the damage in the original accident could mean that his retina had been so badly damaged that he would never see again. Nevertheless, Marcos determined to go through with the painful and complicated surgery.

The last operation was performed this summer at the world-famous Barraquer Clinic in Barcelona, Spain by Dr. José

Letter to the PDC

Dear comrades:

After the campaign that you carried out in order to facilitate a complicated surgical operation on my eyes, I feel compelled to write to you, firstly to warmly greet this and other working-class campaigns that the PDC has undertaken, such as the campaign which saved the life of the Chilean militant Mario Muñoz; and secondly to inform you that regarding my personal case, despite two operations I will remain indefinitely physically blind.

Nevertheless this fact has begun to transform itself into a limitation of a secondary nature, to the extent that revolutionaries and the workers movement can count on such organizations as the Partisan Defense Committee that "embrace[s] as our own the 11-year record of principled defense work conducted by the Spartacist League" (PDC Statement, August 1975); and as I, along with you, am perfectly convinced that, "In the spirit of proletarian internationalism the PDC is in the forefront of the struggle against the deportation of foreign workers and gives wholehearted support to the victims of reactionary terror in other countries." (*Ibid.*).

This aspect of your policies takes on great importance for internationalist political refugees like ourselves who have waged an unceasing class struggle against the bourgeois popular front that prepared the defeat for the Chilean proletariat, and who above all today struggle against the impotent nostalgia of the popular front in exile and of its left lackeys—centrists of all shades—who will do nothing. Only we the internationalists will fight to the end for the reforging of the sole leadership of the world proletariat.

Comrades, proletarian greetings to you and a warm embrace.

Fernando Marcos
18 August 1977

WORKERS VANGUARD

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"Fear City" Elections in NYC

NEW YORK CITY, September 12—Liberals peddled the politics of death this summer in New York. It was all they had left to sell as capitalism continued to make an economic graveyard out of America's greatest city. Last week's mayoral primary was this steamy summer's prime spectacle of decay: more nauseating than the stench of the scummy subway stations, more infuriating than Con Ed's blackout, and even more dangerous than the "Son of Sam" mass murderer.

The campaign had much in common with the "Son of Sam" press sensation. It was based on fear—and leaned



Subway ads sell fear.

WV Photo

heavily on the most thinly concealed racism. The candidates' pitch mimicked the way the *New York Post* sells newspapers to a population made morbidly aware of its vulnerability to random violence. In fact, New York sales pitches sound a lot alike these days; Max Factor is trying to sell cosmetics the same way. A woman subway rider habitually avoiding eye-contact by reading the advertisements might spot this one: "A pretty face isn't safe in this city!" Next to it, she might notice the Police Department solicitously counselling, "Rapists don't discriminate." Another subway poster explains the helplessness of old people, isolated, sick, afraid to come out of their homes; the picture shows mail stacking up, while the slogan reads, "The lady in 3C is dying and only her mailbox can save her."

The candidates aimed their message at a more generalized aura of fear: fear of losing jobs and homes and services; fear of poverty and victimization; fear of violent crime. And they directed the climate of fear against the usual scapegoats: blacks, the poor, the unions.

The New York electorate counts 10 Democrats for every Republican, so Democratic Party primary results are considered final. And for the Democratic candidates, the strategy was Jimmy Carter's "new politics" adapted to "Fear City": no liberal promises, lots of talk. But Carter's honey-coated, born-again Baptist moralisms wouldn't have gone down in NYC. Here, the talk was "tough," as the daily headlines interlaced electioneering news with more of the usual: the latest letter from the "44-calibre killer" and the candidates' stands on capital punishment; the "Night of the Animals" and the candidates' charges that their opponents were "soft" on looters. The campaign was an "ethnic purity" theme with blood-vengeance orchestration, a sort of "Son of Jimmy."

The contest's only significance lay in the display of cynical liberals fleeing to the right. But the vote counts held some surprises for the odds-makers. As no candidate received the required 40 percent of the vote total, a run-off primary will be held September 19 between photofinishers Ed Koch and

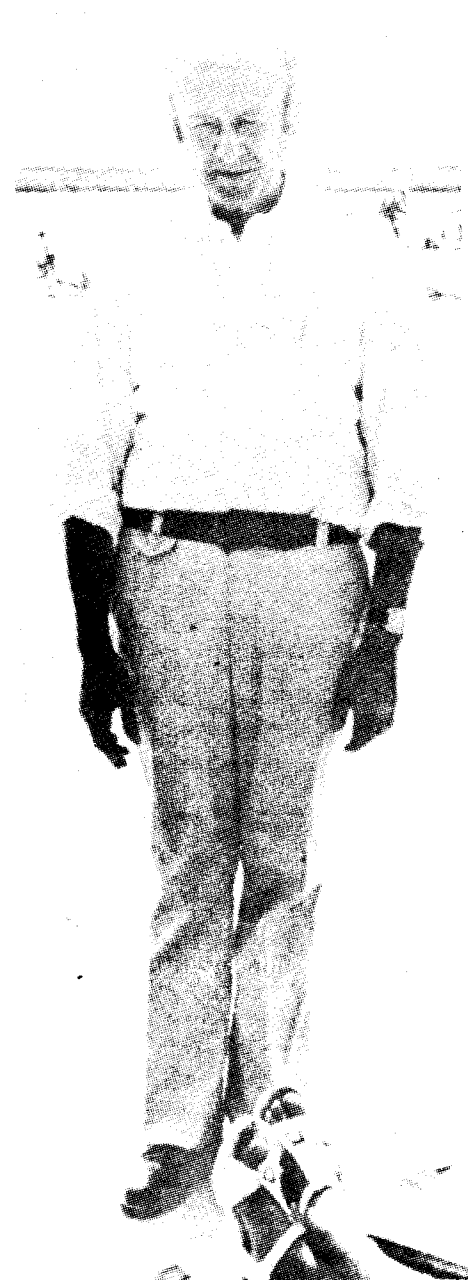
Mario Cuomo, who totaled less than 40 percent between them. The record voter turnout dumped incumbent Abraham Beame, with 18 percent of the vote, out of the money. Bella Abzug, the pollsters' front-runner, finished fourth in this field of seven with 17 percent; Percy Sutton and Herman Badillo brought in the votes of their Harlem and South Bronx constituencies for 14 and 11 percent respectively. Millionaire "citizen's candidate" Joel Harnett got one percent.

Where Have All the Fiorellos Gone?

The election did more than finish the political career of Abe ("Finish the Job") Beame. It also laid to rest a long tradition of New York big-city liberalism. Here were some of the same high-minded liberals who used to regale the Democratic Reform Clubs with denunciations of "law and order" and "neighborhood integrity" as codewords for racism. Now these hypocrites were running for mayor on precisely those terms, with no ambiguity.

During the early years of the Nixon reign, when many a capitalist politician was busy redefining himself as a "moderate" for the silent voting majority, "liberal" was not a dirty word in NYC. On the contrary, candidates would hail the "great liberal tradition" of Al Smith, Fiorello LaGuardia, Herbert Lehman, Robert Wagner. But with no promises left to make, no lies that remain believable, Democratic Party liberals have unleashed a campaign of racist scapegoating.

There was no question of basic differences among the candidates. The bourgeois press called it a campaign of "personalities rather than issues." "Wife and mother" Abzug ran on her hat, for instance; the question she was most often asked was whether she was "too loud" to be mayor.



Harvey Wang/Voice

Edward Koch

There is one real issue in New York City, but all the candidates agree on it. The banks run the city, presenting the "fiscal crisis" as the reason for the cutbacks, union-busting and bitter hardships suffered by New Yorkers. Each candidate intends to run the city as the direct representative of the banks. When the banks via the Emergency Financial Control Board insist on cutback, the would-be mayors vie for the privilege of being the hatchetman.

And they all understand that their main target is the municipal unions. The campaign was filled with talk about who was "tough enough to say no" to the unions, to blacks demanding decent housing, to the youth clamoring for jobs. Beame, for instance, ran on the claim he had "made the tough decisions." Some turned out to be tough luck. Beame was obviously hurt by the publicity given to release of an SEC staff report shortly before the election. The report scores Beame for deciding to lie about the worth of NYC bonds while the banks dumped millions on an unsuspecting public. Beame responded that the deception had been good for the city, and besides, he was just doing what mayors and banks always did. In that he was telling the truth.

What Hath Garth Wrought?

The rush to don the "tough look" led straight to the key "issue" of capital punishment. It is generally advanced by pollsters that it was Koch's enthusiastic advocacy of the death penalty which took him from relative obscurity as the "silk stocking" district Congressman representing Manhattan's fashionable East Side to a plurality in the election. Not so long ago, Koch would have been an unlikely recipient of the "law and order" vote. With an image as a soft liberal, Koch was not accorded much of a chance in the primary. Then he hired



Gossett and Walker/New York Times

Mario Cuomo

David Garth. A media manipulator with a proven record of turning "softies" into tough guys, the successful campaign manager of John Lindsay and Hugh Carey is also Koch's main connection to the bankers who really run things.

To establish Koch's "tough guy" credentials, Garth pushed the death penalty—but not in liberal Manhattan. Koch's death penalty literature was aggressively pushed in Brooklyn and Queens. The same flyer introducing Koch to Manhattan voters cynically omitted his advocacy of the electric chair. Standing outside subway stations of the outer boroughs, it was "Hi, I'm Ed Koch. I'm for capital punishment. Are you?" Chances were the voter was—75 percent of the time, according to Garth's opinion polls. In Manhattan it was just, "Hi."

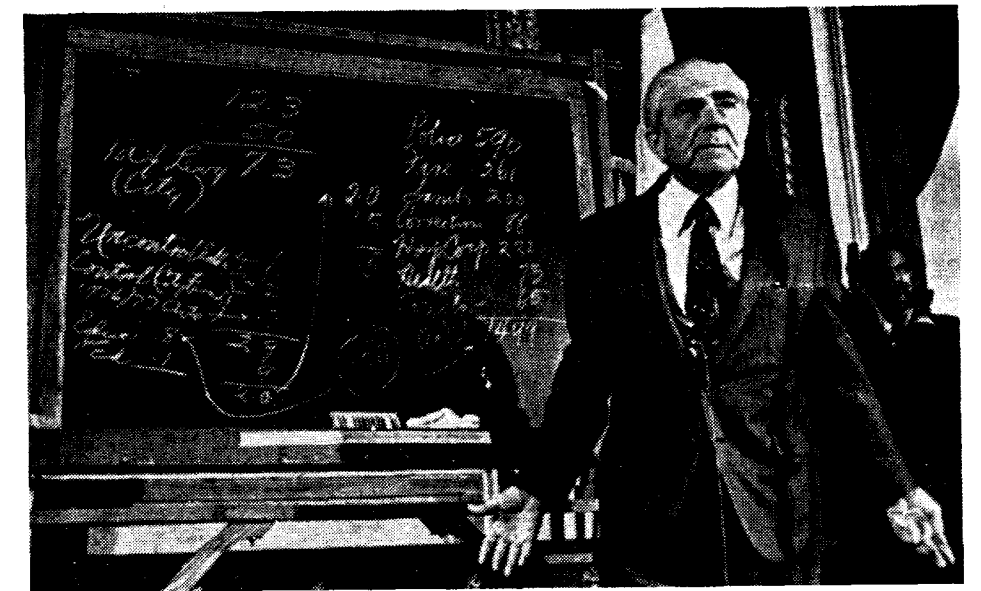
The odds-makers were less surprised by Mario Cuomo's showing. He is Governor Carey's man in New York City, the "ethnic purity" candidate who appeals to the outer boroughs. In this city which votes along religious and ethnic lines even when there seems to be an issue, his image as "tough" negotiator was probably not as big a natural asset as being the only Roman Catholic candidate among the 40 percent Catholic Democratic electorate.

Cuomo—along with Sutton and Abzug—came out against capital punishment, and it hurt him. In a strange debate, Abzug and Koch had each derived their conflicting positions on the death penalty from their "Jewish upbringing" and "the Judeo-Christian code." Then a stranger debate occurred between the Governor and Koch. Put on the defensive by his and his puppet's position against capital punishment, Carey was quoted as saying he would reconsider if his candidate was elected. People got angry, Koch gained, Cuomo wondered out loud if Carey's support was worth the trouble, and Carey claimed to have been misquoted. Then he explained that the death penalty was not tough enough; he was for a "real" deterrent: life in prison at hard labor with no parole. With Koch touting the death penalty as an expression of society's moral outrage and Carey pushing hard labor, are thumbscrews next as the symbol of who really wants to fight "crime in the streets"?

Hypocrites and Hangmen

The capital punishment issue is a phony. It has never been a city issue, in part because the mayor has absolutely no power to enforce or block the death penalty. When Beame came out for legal murder (and quietly quashed plans for "Sacco and Vanzetti Day"), the real campaign was baptized. The function of the death penalty "debate" was as a test

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Neal Boenzi/New York Times

Mayor Beame "explaining" New York's fiscal crisis.

Break the 12-Month Rule!

Britain's Labour Bureaucrats Continue "Social Contract"

LONDON—The annual conference of the British Trades Union Congress (TUC), which ended in Blackpool September 9, officially endorsed the Labour government's plans for yet another year of modified wage restraints. Both the cabinet and the bourgeois press hailed this decision as an important step in their continuing attempt to breathe life into the moribund British economy through continued grinding down of the wages and living standards of the working class. However, neither the capitalists nor their lackeys in the Labour/TUC leadership are confident that the vote at Blackpool will guarantee the willingness of British workers to endure twelve more months of austerity in the interests of increased profitability.

For the past two years the British workers have been saddled with the Social Contract—an agreement between the trade-union bureaucrats and the Labour government to limit annual pay increases to 4 to 6 percent while inflation has been running at approximately 20 percent. The cost of the Social Contract has been devastating for the working class. As the conservative *Economist* (3 September) reported, three years of the Social Contract has meant "the biggest recorded fall in the average Briton's real disposable income for over a hundred years: worse than anything that happened in the 1930's."

The catastrophic and seemingly irreversible decline of British imperialism has forced the ruling class to attack the most strongly entrenched labour movement of any major capitalist country. More so than in any other imperialist power, the dynamic of the class struggle in Britain today can lead to a revolutionary crisis in which the alternative to the workers movement taking power is the rapid growth of fascism and the danger of a rightist military coup. Thus the stakes are far higher than a few pounds a week.

"Social Contract—Social Con-trick"

Despite the government's repeated promises of a future upturn in the economy, the deepening class hostility to declining real wages and soaring unemployment has touched off a series of militant, although isolated and largely unsuccessful, strikes against the pay policy during the past six months. As a result of pressure from the ranks, national conferences of two of the most important unions, the Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU) and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), came out against another year of the Social Contract, demanding an immediate return to free collective bargaining. The Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW) also took a position of opposition to any further form of wage controls. By July even the top bureaucrats of the TUC finally felt it necessary to oppose a Phase III of the Social Contract.

When Phase II officially expired on August 1, the trade-union bureaucrats and the Labour Party leaders began talking about "an orderly return to collective bargaining." Among other things, this "orderly return" includes

what is known as the "twelve-month rule"—a "rule" which dictates a full year's separation between pay agreements. In the present situation of massive inflation, this can mean huge pay losses. Thus, for example, the miners, who are apparently aiming for negotiations in November, will have to wait until March 1978 before putting in another pay claim if they submit to this "rule."

Faced with the obvious impossibility of enforcing another year of the despised Social Contract, the government is offering a new "economic package." This miserable deal proposes a meagre 1 percent reduction in the rate of personal income tax and slightly reduced cuts in social services, in return for establishing a "norm" of 10 percent maximum wage increases in the private sector and substantially less for four million government employees.

Thus the central issue at Blackpool was the question of the future of disguised wage controls, particularly the twelve-month "rule" (none of the bureaucrats would even dare to put the proposed 10 percent "norm" up for a vote). While many leaders of the more conservative white-collar unions could be counted on to vote for the twelve-month rule, the combined opposition of the AUEW, T&GWU and NUM would be sufficient to ensure at the least a very



Jack Jones

Davies/Report

close vote, and in any case would have effectively undermined the authority of any TUC moves to enforce it.

Scanlon's Coup at Blackpool

In the period leading up to the Congress, the cabinet began exerting as much pressure as possible on the trade-union bureaucrats to whip their ranks into line. This took the form of dire warnings about the probability of skyrocketing inflation due to sizable wage increases and claims that rejection of the motion would endanger the parliamentary situation of the Labour government. Prime Minister James Callaghan and Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey combined these threats with pleas for moderation until the promised Golden Age of North Sea oil revenues would restore Britain to its "rightful" place in the world.



News Line

Mass pickets clashed repeatedly with scab-herding cops at Grunwick factory in London on July 11.

It became obvious that the high-pressure tactics had paid off, at least in the short run, when Hugh Scanlon, president of the AUEW, announced at a pre-Congress meeting of his delegation his intention to disregard the union's official policy and cast the AUEW's 1.2 million votes in favour of the TUC's composite motion. As the delegates began to protest vehemently against Scanlon's outrageously undemocratic bureaucratism, he declared that debate was closed and the meeting over!

On the second day of the Congress, Callaghan made an address in which he bluntly told the delegates, "You cannot seek to recover the loss of the last two years." He added, "I would have liked a third year [of the existing Social Contract], but I am told it is not on" (*Guardian* [London], 7 September). The prime minister's speech was interrupted by heckling at various points, and although he received a perfunctory standing ovation from two-thirds of the body, a sizable number of the delegates (particularly those from the fuming AUEW) remained in their seats.

The vote on the twelve-month rule which came the day after Callaghan's speech was almost anti-climactic as the TUC leadership's motion passed by a considerable majority. In the aftermath of the vote, Jack Jones, leader of the T&GWU, who had been compelled to vote against the TUC motion by his national conference, quickly assured the bourgeoisie that his union would comply with the Congress' decision. TUC general secretary Len Murray hastened to pledge that the TUC's considerable muscle would be used to enforce the rule, stressing that it was not a deal with

the government but "a bargain we made with each other in this Congress" (*Guardian*, 8 September).

The passing of the twelve-month rule was indeed a "bargain"—for the ruling class. As soon as results of the vote became known the Confederation of British Industry announced that it was "pleased." The news was well-received at the London Stock Exchange (where the *Financial Times* index jumped 8.4 points) and also among currency speculators, who pushed the pound to its highest level against the dollar in almost a year.

Much of the rest of the Congress was spent on what might be termed "motherhood and steak-and-kidney-pie" issues. Delegates unanimously passed a vague motion calling for solidarity with the beleaguered strikers at the Grunwick film processing laboratory in North London; called for a campaign to encourage breast feeding in Britain; called for more health and safety measures in the factories, and opposed the official secrets act. The assembled

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WORKERS VANGUARD

Former YSAer Joins SL

The Reformist Logic of SWP Black Nationalism

We reprint below a letter of application for membership in the Spartacist League (SL) recently submitted by Jeff H., a black comrade who was previously a member of the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), youth group of the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), and then of Milton Zaslow's Socialist Union (SU), a Los Angeles-area group which supports the European majority of the so-called United Secretariat. The letter traces the comrade's evolution from SWP-style black nationalism to the revolutionary Trotskyism of the SL.

Comrade Jeff H. was a leading member of the Riverside, California YSA and was active in both the 1971 Riverside Black Moratorium Against the War and the National Peace Action Coalition Third World Taskforce. He and a number of vocal black members of the Riverside YSA, a branch with a majority of black, Chicano and Puerto Rican members, took seriously the SWP's uncritical support to black nationalism, suggesting that the SWP/YSA orient its antiwar work to the black communities.

Confronted with this maverick local, the SWP/YSA simply dissolved the Riverside YSA in the spring of 1972. Since then, of the six "Third World Riverside at-large comrades" who opposed the dissolution of their branch by the SWP/YSA leadership and insisted that the YSA be federated along nationalist lines, three have come over to the Spartacist League. After seeking to be the "consistent nationalists" whom the SWP praises, these comrades broke

sharply with this utopian-reformist, divisive doctrine, as the following letter shows. This represents a powerful vindication of the SL's program and is a living example of our struggle to forge a black Trotskyist cadre.

For those black comrades who mistakenly joined the SWP assuming it to be a revolutionary organization; who belong to an organization which asks them to enter and build the treacherous NAACP; which directs them to tail the anti-communist "human rights" crusade of anti-labor racist Jimmy Carter; which asks them to call on federal troops, the butchers of My Lai, to protect black schoolchildren from racists in Boston; which demanded they remain neutral in the face of South African intervention in the Angolan civil war—Comrade Jeff H.'s letter is particularly relevant.

After attempting to take the SWP's black nationalism to its logical conclusion, he came to see that the petty-bourgeois nationalist reformists are unable and unwilling to address the oppression of the black masses. The struggle against the class and racial oppression of the black masses can only be carried to completion by an integrated Leninist vanguard party which will not stop short of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We welcome Comrade Jeff H. into our organization, dedicated to this task, and are confident that comrades like him, whom we now recruit in small numbers, will lay the basis for a party whose ranks will number tens of thousands of black proletarian communists.

In my earlier college years I was involved mainly with Black Student Unions. I was particularly influenced by the Panther Party and its conceptions of Marxism-Leninism. In the Fall Quarter, 1970 I joined the YSA. The SWP/YSA was appealing because of its emphasis on nationalism and what I then considered its Marxist orientation. The extent of the SWP/YSA capitulation to nationalism is graphically illustrated in the following:

"Unlike the reformists or ultra-leftists, revolutionaries understand that cultural nationalism and knowledge of the past is a pre-condition for and part of a revolutionary analysis of black liberation."

—Introduction to the YSA, p. 21

I stress this orientation because cultural nationalism is the most virulent expression of black oppression. Its anarchistic, sectoral, atomized conceptions nurture the illusion that individual efforts (dashiki wearing) can alleviate the terms of oppression. Its most rightist exponents actually are led to "legitimize" American reaction. One of cultural nationalism's earliest organizational proponents was Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association. The UNIA relished the virtues of an African past, and saw the solution to black oppression in the creation of black-dominated capitalist states in Africa. The substance of this reactionary outlook served to bridge Garvey's movement with the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Garvey said of the Klan:

"Lynchings and race riots all work to our advantage by teaching the Negro

that he must build a civilization of his own or forever remain the white man's victim. . . . The Ku Klux Klan is going to make this a white man's country. . . . They are perfectly honest and frank about it. Fighting them is not going to get you anywhere."

—Black Moses, p. 189

More recent versions include Ron Karenga's US organization. In 1970 the YSA labeled Karenga a "reformist" because of his attempts to "... use and distort cultural nationalism to derail the movement for self-determination and to keep it within the confines of liberal capitalist politics." According to the SWP/YSA, Karenga's association with the Democratic Party distorted the content of cultural nationalism. We see, however, in Boston the real fruits of the SWP/YSA cultural nationalist appetite. Precisely because of its pandering to black reformist organizations like the NAACP (which is full of black Democrats) and its reliance on the bourgeois state, the SWP/YSA's betrayal helped pave the way for the domination of reactionary forces.

The SWP/YSA's polyvanguardist/nationalist approach led away from the development of an integrated, revolutionary vanguard. This was clearly brought to bear in the organization of the Riverside Black Moratorium Against the War, in January 1971. The leaflet caption read: "Who Says the Anti-War Movement Ain't a Black Thang" (sic). The slogans included a demand to bring all black GI's home. Their fight was in America. Implicit in

this demand was that whites had an interest in fighting for the bourgeoisie. No statement was ever made regarding the mobilization of political strikes against the war, or the primacy of the proletariat in bringing the war to a halt. In April 1971 I continued this work on the National Peace Action Coalition's Third World Task Force.

In April 1972 the [YSA] national office disbanded the Riverside local. The rationale was to move the Riverside comrades to larger centers. However, no provisions were made to transfer comrades. Responding to this maneuver six "Third World Riverside at-large comrades" wrote a document demanding the organization of minority caucuses at the national level. This document was entitled "Toward the Formation of Nationalist Caucuses Within the Young Socialist Alliance." The foundations for our response were laid by the SWP/YSA's view of the relationship between the nationalist movement and the revolutionary party.

"The existence of the multi-national revolutionary socialist vanguard is not a substitute for nationalist formations, i.e., an all-Black, or all-Latin, or Third World organization, but it is an essential component for the success of the struggle."

—Introduction to the YSA, p. 18

The SWP/YSA's emphasis on the necessity of the independent organization of minorities, its underscoring of the notion of self-determination, its position on community control, its distortions of the Bolshevik position on the national question, paved the way for our attempt to federate the YSA.

Marxists understand that blacks are a racial/color caste restricted in the main to the lower echelons of American society. A black Trotskyist cadre must be developed, armed with a class-struggle program and intercede with this program in the fight to end special oppression. During and since WWI blacks have become more entrenched in the industrial proletariat. Historically

blacks have viewed their greater integration into the labor movement as a precursor to greater integration into American society generally. Black glorification of the ideals of an African heritage as a method for "liberation" arises out of an enforced isolation. This results from an acceleration in lumpenization: being thrown out of the production process. An essential component to the emergence of nationalist movements is the lack of revolutionary leadership in the struggle against special oppression. In viewing the black community as a nation the SWP/YSA negate any possibility for addressing black special oppression, segregate black and white workers, and thereby prepare the American working class for a great defeat.

In August 1971 I began work for the Pasadena/Foothill Branch of the Los Angeles Urban League. Until its April 1972 disbandment I maintained organizational links with the Riverside YSA local. My break with the YSA did not reflect a significant shift in my political outlook. Work in the Urban League and its "community" orientation fit right in. It was not long, however, before the futility of my work in the Urban League, counterposed to a growing familiarity with Marxist literature, brought into sharp relief the inability of the nationalist view to offer any perspective on the problems facing blacks. These experiences only served as a point of departure from the nationalist world view. I did not yet understand the character of the special oppression of blacks nor the elements required to resolve it.

The SWP/YSA outlook on the black worker underscores their reformist conceptions of the tasks to destroy special oppression. This is not restricted to their ideas regarding blacks, but permeates their entire world perspective (women, youth, gay liberation, trade-union work, the antiwar movement).

I now would like to briefly discuss my

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PART 1

Kautskyism and the Origins of Russian Social Democracy

Recently the British International Marxist Group (IMG) and the International Socialists (now Socialist Workers Party—SWP/IS), two of the largest groups of the British “far left,” have taken to revising the history of the Bolsheviks. These groups have attempted to deny or obfuscate the principle of a democratic-centralist vanguard party by pointing to those elements of classic social democracy retained by the pre-1914 Bolsheviks as well as to Lenin’s tactical maneuvers against the Mensheviks.

The IMG, British section of the pseudo-Trotskyist United Secretariat, has performed the remarkable feat of making Lenin out to be a unity-above-all conciliator on the grounds that until 1912 the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were formally factions within a unitary Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDRP). The aim of this particular revisionism is to justify a grand unity maneuver for the British left. Their line is that “the political differences which Lenin and Trotsky considered could be contained within a united organization were vastly greater than those which divide the revolutionary left in Britain today” (*Red Weekly*, 11 November 1976). For an extended treatment of the IMG’s revisionism and its shabby tactical purpose, see “IMG Turns Lenin into a Menshevik,” *WV* No. 164, 1 July 1977.

The most ambitious rewriting of Bolshevik history is that of Tony Cliff, long-time leader of the workerist-reformist SWP/IS. The Cliff tendency today sports a “left” veneer; sometimes they even parade around with portraits of Lenin and Trotsky. But this group had its 4th of August long ago, when in 1950, under the pressure of intensely anti-Communist public opinion, it refused to defend North Korea against U.S. imperialism and broke with the Trotskyist movement over this question. And yet this utterly shameless CIA “socialist” now presumes to lecture on what Lenin really meant to say in *What Is to Be Done?*

In the past Cliff has been a prominent, explicitly anti-Leninist purveyor of Menshevism. His 1959 pamphlet, *Rosa Luxemburg*, states: “For Marxists in the advanced industrial countries, Lenin’s original position can much less serve as a guide than Rosa Luxemburg’s.” This bald statement was deleted from the

second (1968) edition, but Cliff’s substantive position remained the same.

However the Cliffites are nothing if not trendy. And in contrast to the 1950’s and ’60’s, “hard” Bolshevism is now “in” among young leftists. So recently Cliff has written a seemingly sympathetic biography of Lenin, of which two of three projected volumes have appeared. Here Cliff presents Lenin in his own image as a nationally limited, workerist eclectic. Cliff’s central message is that



Tony Cliff

Socialist Worker

there are no Leninist principles or even norms on the organization question:

“Lenin’s attitude to organisational forms was always historically concrete, hence its strength. He was never taken in by abstract, dogmatic schemes of organisation, but always ready to change the organisational structure of the party to reflect the development of the class struggle.

“Organisation is subordinate to politics. This does not mean that it has no independent influence on politics. But it is, and must be, subordinated to the concrete policies of the day. The truth is always concrete, as Lenin reiterated again and again. And this also applies to the organisational forms needed to undertake the concrete tasks. [emphasis in original]

In other words, whatever works at the time, do it.

Genuine Leninists recognize the primacy of the principles embodied in

the first Four Congresses of the Communist International over pre-1914 Bolshevik practice. Further, Trotsky in building the Fourth International systematized and deepened Leninist concepts developed in rudimentary form during the revolutionary turmoil of 1917-23. To deny the evolution of Bolshevism from 1903 to 1917 is to obliterate the principled opposition of Leninism to Kautskyism. To appeal to pre-1914 Bolshevik practice against the democratic centralism of Trotsky’s Fourth International is equivalent to citing Lenin’s “democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry” against Trotsky’s “permanent revolution.”

The Kautskyan Party of the Whole Class

The first volume of Cliff’s biography, subtitled “Building the Party,” ends in 1914. This work mentions Kautsky exactly twice and the Second International not at all! Such an incredible omission warrants dismissing Cliff’s book out of hand as a serious study of Lenin’s position on the party question.

From August Bebel’s offer in 1905 to mediate the Bolshevik-Menshevik split to the “unity conference” arranged by the International Socialist Bureau on the eve of World War I, the International leadership played a significant role in the internal life of the RSDRP. The pro-unity elements in particular, above all Luxemburg and Trotsky, sought to achieve through the German-centered International what they could not attain within the Russian movement.

Lenin was a revolutionary social democrat and, as Cliff himself notes in his second volume, Kautsky “had been the only living socialist leader whom Lenin revered.” (This is actually an overstatement: in 1905 when Kautsky supported the Mensheviks, Lenin was harshly critical of him.) An understanding of Lenin’s position on the party question must therefore begin with the orthodox Kautskyan position; this was the doctrine of the “party of the whole class,” or “one class—one party.” Kautsky’s “party of the whole class” did not mean the recruitment of the entire proletarian population to the party. He recognized that the political activists within the working class would be an elite minority. No social democrat denied that membership standards involved some level of socialist con-

sciousness, activism and discipline. What the Kautskyan doctrine did mean was that all tendencies regarding themselves as socialist should be in a unitary party. Kautsky maintained that revolutionary social democrats could unite and even have comradely collaboration with non-Marxist reformists. Thus the leadership of the German Social Democracy (SPD) at various times collaborated closely with the avowedly reformist, eclectic French socialist, Jean Jaurès.

The SPD leadership was immensely proud of their party’s disciplined unity, which they regarded as the main source of its strength. Bebel/Kautsky played a decisive role in the 1905 reunification of the French socialists, overcoming the split between the Marxist Parti Socialiste de France led by Jules Guesde and the reformist Parti Socialiste Français of Jaurès.

During the campaign to reunite the French, the International adopted the doctrine of “one class, one party” in resolution form at its 1904 Amsterdam Congress:

“In order that the working class may put forth all its strength in the struggle against capitalism it is necessary that in every country there exist vis à vis the bourgeois parties, only *one* socialist party, as there exists only *one* proletariat. Therefore, it is the imperative duty of all comrades and socialist organizations to make every effort to bring about this unity on the basis of the principles established by the international congresses, a unity necessary in the interests of the proletariat before which they are responsible for all fatal consequences of a continued breach.” [emphasis in original]

—reproduced in Olga Hess Gankin and H.H. Fischer, eds., *The Bolsheviks and the World War* (1940)

Before World War I Lenin never challenged the above principle and on occasion affirmed it. When in 1909 the Bolsheviks expelled the ultra-left Otzovists (the “Ultimatists”) from their ranks, Lenin justified this by contrasting the *exclusiveness* of a faction to the *inclusiveness* of a social-democratic party:

“In our Party Bolshevism is represented by the Bolshevik *section*. But a section is not a party. A party can contain a whole gamut of opinions and shades of opinion, the extremes of which may be sharply contradictory. In the German party, side by side with the pronouncedly revolutionary wing of Kautsky, we see the ultra-revisionist wing of Bernstein.” [emphasis in original]

—“Report on the Conference of the Extended Editorial Board of *Proletary*” (July 1909)

In practice in Russia, Lenin strove to create a disciplined, programmatically homogeneous revolutionary vanguard. Until World War I, however, he did not break in principle with the Kautskyan doctrine of “the party of the whole class.” The resolution of that dialectical contradiction was one of the important elements creating Leninism as a world-historic doctrine, as the Marxism of our epoch.

Kautsky’s Analysis of Opportunism

The Kautskyan doctrine of the inclusive party was predicated on a particular historico-sociological theory of opportunism. Opportunist tendencies, it was argued, were a survival of petty bourgeois democracy carried mainly by the intelligentsia and conditioned by the economic and ideological backwardness or immaturity of the working masses. The growth of the proletariat and of its organization would eventually strengthen revolutionary social democracy. Thus, Kautsky could tolerate a current like Jaurèsism as a kind of inevitable transition from radical democracy to revolutionary Marxism.

Kautsky’s identification of opportunism with pre-Marxist tendencies derived from the history of the European left in the decades following the revolutions of 1848. The principal tendencies opposed to Marxism (e.g., Proudhonism, Lassalleism, Bakuninism) all expressed the desire of the artisan class to prevent

its descent into the industrial proletariat. Marx/Engels understood that artisan utopian socialism could not be defeated simply through propaganda and agitation but required the actual development of capitalist society. It was recognized in the Second International that Marxism superseded such primitivist tendencies as Lassalleism in Germany and Proudhonism in France primarily through the transformation of the urban artisan classes into a modern proletariat. The process by which Marxism overcame Lassalleism, Proudhonism, Bakuninism, etc. became for Kautsky a paradigm of the struggle against opportunism in general.

The view of reformism as a historic lag or regression accounts for Kautsky's limited aims in the "revisionist" controversy with Bernstein. He drew a sharp line between naive, pre-Marxian reformists, like Jaurès, and the conscious revisers of Marxism. In a letter of 23 May 1902 to Victor Adler, Kautsky defended the Belgian Socialist leadership from the charge of revisionism on the grounds that they were never

fighting the capitalists that stand in antagonism to them, but do not feel themselves secure enough and strong enough to declare war on the entire capitalist system. These look to capitalist parties and governments for relief."
— *The Road to Power* (1909)

For Kautsky, the growth of the proletariat, of the trade unions, etc. strengthened the objectively revolutionary forces in society. What was required of social democracy was a patient, pedagogical attitude toward backward workers, although Kautsky also recognized that class consciousness could leap ahead during a revolutionary crisis.

With the partial exception of Luxemburg, no pre-war social democrat located the main source of reformism in the conservatism of the socially privileged bureaucracy created by the growth and strength of the labor movement, of the social-democratic parties and their trade-union affiliates.

Lenin's Sociological Analysis of Menshevism

Lenin, following Kautsky's methodology, regarded Menshevism as an

The intellectual elements therefore find it harder to adapt themselves to the discipline of Party life, and those of them who are not equal to it naturally raise the standard of revolt against the necessary organisational limitations...." [emphasis in original]
— "To the Party" (August 1904)

Lenin likewise analyzed Menshevik Liquidationism during the 1908-12 period (opposition to the underground party) in terms of intellectuals versus the proletariat:

"The first to flee from the underground were the bourgeois intellectuals who succumbed to the counter-revolutionary mood, those 'fellow-travellers' of the Social-Democratic working-class movement who, like those in Europe, had been attracted by the liberating role played by the proletariat... in the bourgeois revolution. It is a well-known fact that a mass of Marxists left the underground after 1905 and found places for themselves in all sorts of legal cozy corners for intellectuals."

— "How Vera Zasulich Demolishes Liquidationism" (September 1913)

Lenin's sociological analysis of Menshevism was valid as far as it went. The

workers in advance of Russian social democracy as a whole.

In part because of the imprisonment of the more experienced Marxist leaders (e.g., Lenin, Martov), the turn toward mass agitation rapidly degenerated into reformism. This tendency, dubbed Economism by a hostile Plekhanov, limited its agitation to elementary trade-union demands, while passively supporting the bourgeois liberal efforts to reform tsarist absolutism. In terms of international Social Democracy, the Economists were hostile to orthodox Marxism and consequently were loosely associated with Bernsteinism in Germany and *possibilisme* in France. In the later 1890's Economism was the dominant tendency among Russian social democrats.

In 1900 the second generation of Russian Marxists (Lenin, Martov) coalesced with the founding fathers (Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich) to return Russian social democracy to its revolutionary traditions as embodied in the original Emancipation of Labor program. The revolutionary Marxist tendency was organized around the paper, *Iskra*. Lenin was the organizer of the *Iskra* group. He ran the agents in Russia whose task was to win over the local social-democratic committees or if necessary split them. *Iskra* provided, for the first time, an organizing center for a Russian social-democratic party.

In polemicizing against Lenin's successful splitting tactics, the Economists pointed out that the German center did not seek to exclude the Bernsteinians. Lenin did not and in a sense could not argue for the exclusion of opportunists from the social-democratic party as a principle. Rather he justified his splitting tactics by a series of arguments based on the particularities of the Russian party situation. Right up to World War I Lenin would appeal to one or another aspect of Russian particularism to justify constructing a programmatically homogeneous, revolutionary vanguard.

What were Lenin's arguments for building the RSDRP without and against the Economists? The German party had strong revolutionary traditions and an authoritative leadership. The Russian party was embryonic and could easily fall prey to opportunism. The German leadership, Bebel/Kautsky, were revolutionary while the Bernsteinians were a small minority; in contrast, the Economists were temporarily the dominant trend in Russian Social Democracy. The German "revisionists" accepted party discipline, the Russian Economists were incapable of accepting party discipline. And in any case, the RSDRP did not exist as a centralized organization. These arguments are presented in *What Is To Be Done?* (1902):

"The important thing to note is that the opportunist attitude towards revolutionary Social-Democrats in Russia is the very opposite of that in Germany. In Germany... revolutionary Social-Democrats are in favor of preserving what is: they stand in favor of the old program and tactics which are universally known.... The 'critics' desire to introduce changes, and as these critics represent an insignificant minority, and as they are very shy and halting in their revisionist efforts, one can understand the motives of the majority in confining themselves to the dry rejection of 'innovation.' In Russia, however, it is the critics and Economists who are in favor of what is; the 'critics' wish us to continue to regard them as Marxists, and to guarantee them the 'freedom of criticism' which they enjoyed to the full (for, as a matter of fact, they never recognized any kind of Party ties, and, moreover, we never had a generally recognized Party organ which could 'restrict' freedom of criticism even by giving advice)... [emphasis in original]

As is generally recognized, Lenin's 1902 *What Is To Be Done?* was the authoritative statement of Iskraism. Despite his supposed sympathy toward Lenin, Cliff is much too much a workerist and Menshevik to accept

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V.I. Lenin



Karl Kautsky

Archiv

Marxists to begin with, nor did they pretend to be:

"I maintain an entirely unprejudiced attitude towards them; the talk about their revisionism leaves me cold. They have nothing to revise, for they have no theory. The eclectic vulgar socialism to which the revisionists would like to reduce Marxism is something beyond which they [the Belgian Socialists] have not even begun to advance. Proudhon, Schaffle, Marx—it is all one to them, it was always like that, they have not retrogressed in theory, and I have nothing to reproach them with."

—quoted in George Lichtheim, *Marxism* (1961)

Kautsky's aim in the "revisionist" controversy was not to purge the Second International of reformist tendencies or even practices, but to preserve the doctrinal integrity of the Marxist camp. If this were achieved, believed Kautsky, the development of the class struggle would eventually ensure the triumph of revolutionary social democracy.

Kautsky located the weakness of revolutionary social democracy in the backwardness of the proletariat, which reflected either a continued identification with the petty bourgeoisie or a lack of confidence in the strength of the workers movement:

"To a large degree hatched out of the small capitalist and small farmer class, many proletarians long carry the shells of these classes about with them. They do not feel themselves proletarians, but as would-be property owners.... Others, again, have gone further, and have come to recognize the necessity of

extension of nineteenth-century petty-bourgeois radicalism into the workers movement. Because he considered the Mensheviks an "intellectualist" tendency, in a sense standing outside of the workers movement, he could split from them without positing the existence of two competing social-democratic parties, the one revolutionary, the other reformist. Lenin was convinced that the growth of social-democratic organization among the Russian proletariat would ensure the triumph of Bolshevism.

Lenin regarded the 1903 Martovite grouping as an expression of the attitudes and values of the old, free-wheeling, individualistic revolutionary intelligentsia, as a rebellion of the circle spirit against the construction of a real workers party:

"Nonetheless, we regard the Party's sickness as a matter of growing pains. We consider that the underlying cause of the crisis is the transition from the circle form to party forms of the life of Social-Democracy; the essence of its internal struggle is a conflict between the circle spirit and the party spirit. And, consequently, only by shaking off this sickness can our Party become a real party....

"Lastly, the opposition cadres have in general been drawn chiefly from those elements of our Party which consist primarily of intellectuals. The intelligentsia is always more individualistic than the proletariat, owing to its very conditions of life and work, which do not directly involve a large-scale combination of efforts, do not directly educate it through organized collective labor.

Martovite grouping in 1903 did represent in part the habits of the old revolutionary intelligentsia; one thinks of Vera Zasulich in this regard. Menshevik Liquidationism did represent in part the fleeing of intellectuals from the RSDRP toward bourgeois respectability during a period of reaction. But Menshevism was not primarily a tendency external to the labor movement. The Russian Mensheviks anticipated the labor reformism of the Second International as a whole, including particularly its mass parties. It was only during World War I, in the studies which led to *Imperialism*, that Lenin located the source of social-democratic opportunism within the workers movement—in a labor bureaucracy resting on the upper stratum of the working class.

Iskraism

Organized Russian Marxism originated in 1883 when Plekhanov broke from the dominant populist current to form the tiny exile Emancipation of Labor group. During the late 1880's-early '90's Marxism in Russia consisted of localized propaganda circles designed to educate a thin layer of advanced workers. In the mid-1890's the Marxist propaganda circles turned toward mass agitation intersecting a major strike wave. This turn was in part inspired by the Jewish Bund. Ethnic solidarity enabled the Jewish Marxist intelligentsia to reach and organize Jewish

Lenin and the Vanguard Party...

(continued from page 7)

What Is To Be Done? In fact, a central purpose of his biography is to argue that the 1902 polemic is an exaggerated, one-sided statement which in substance Lenin subsequently repudiated.

First Cliff vulgarizes Lenin's position and then polemicizes against his own straw-man creation:

"In general the dichotomy between economic and political struggle is foreign to Marx. An economic demand, if it is sectional, is defined as 'economic' in Marx's terms. But if the same demand is made of the state it is 'political'.... In many cases economic (sectional) struggles do not give rise to political (class-wide) struggles, but there is no Chinese wall between the two, and many economic struggles do spill over into political ones." [emphasis in original]

Lenin did not attack the Economists for being indifferent to governmental policy. The Russian Economists agitated for state-initiated economic reforms and supported democratic rights, particularly the right to organize. In this purpose they passively supported the liberals. In *What Is To Be Done?* Lenin attacks the Economists' political program as encapsulated in the slogan "giving the economic struggle itself a political character":

"Giving 'the economic struggle itself a political character' means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction for these trade demands, the improvement of conditions of labor in each separate trade by means of 'legislative and administrative measures'.... This is exactly what the trade unions do and have always done....

"Thus, the pompous phrase 'giving the economic struggle itself a political character' which sounds so 'terrifically' profound and revolutionary, serves as a screen to conceal what is in fact the traditional striving to *degrade* Social-Democratic politics to the level of trade union politics!" [emphasis in original]

For Lenin political class consciousness, or socialist consciousness, was the recognition by the proletariat of the need to become the ruling class and reconstruct society on socialist foundations. Anything less was trade-union consciousness.

Like all other current workerists and social democrats, Cliff must attack Lenin's famous statement that socialist consciousness is brought to the workers from without by revolutionary intellectuals, that political class consciousness does not arise simply through the proletariat's struggles to improve its conditions. Here are Cliff's fatuous remarks on this question:

"There is no doubt that this formulation overemphasized the difference between spontaneity and consciousness. For in fact the complete separation of spontaneity from consciousness is mechanical and non-dialectical. Lenin, as we shall see later admitted this. Pure spontaneity does not exist in life....

"The logic of the mechanical juxtaposition of spontaneity and consciousness was the complete separation of the party from the *actual* elements of working-class leadership that had already risen in the struggle. It assumed that the party had answers to all the questions that spontaneous struggle might bring forth. The blindness of the embattled many is the obverse of the omniscience of the few." [emphasis in original]

It is important to quote Lenin's statement in full to understand what it means and does not mean:

"We said that *there could not yet be* Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., it may itself realize the necessity of combining in unions, for fighting against the employers and for striving to compel the government to pass necessary labor legislation, etc. The theory of socialism, however, grew out of the



Paul Axelrod

philosophic, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. According to their social status, the founders of modern scientific socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. Similarly in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose quite independently of the spontaneous growth of the labor movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of ideas among the revolutionary socialist intelligentsia." [emphasis in original]

—*What Is To Be Done?*

This is not a programmatic statement, but rather a *historical* analysis with implications for the organizational question. The socialist movement *pre-dated* the development of mass economic organizations of the industrial proletariat. The socialist movement arose out of the bourgeois-democratic revolutionary currents (the Babouvist tradition represented by Blanquism in France and the League of the Just in Germany). Except for Britain, the earliest trade unions arose through the transformation of the old mercantile artisan guild system.

For example, in the German revolution of 1848 Stephan Born's mass trade-union movement, the Workers Brotherhood, was largely based on the traditional guild structure. The leaders of the embryonic trade unions were generally the traditional authority figures of the plebeian community. Methodist ministers, like the Tory radical J. R. Stephens, played a significant leadership role in the early nineteenth century British workers movement. Catholic priests played a similar role in the first French trade unions, for example among the rebellious silk workers of Lyons. In most countries the emergence of a socialist labor movement resulted from the political victory of the revolutionary intelligentsia over the traditionalist leaders of the early workers' organizations. When Lenin wrote *What Is To Be Done?* the mass economic organizations of the Russian working class were the police led unions (Zubatovite) whose most prominent leader was the priest Gapon.

Lenin was a dialectician who understood that the consciousness and leadership of the working class underwent qualitative changes historically. With the important exception of the U.S., trade-union economism (associated with bourgeois liberal illusions and religious obscurantism) is *no longer* the dominant ideology of the world's proletariat. In the advanced capitalist countries, it is socialist reformism, carried through the social-democratic and Stalinist labor bureaucracies, which binds the working class to the bourgeois order. In backward countries, populist nationalism with a socialist coloration (e.g., Peronism, Nasserism) is the characteristic form of bourgeois ideological dominance over the working masses.

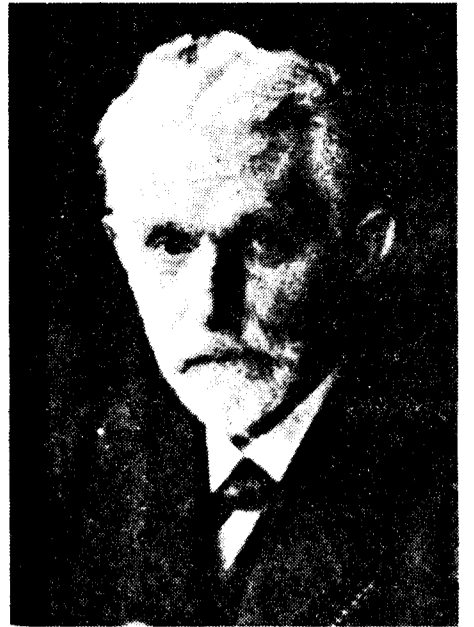
In the Russia of 1902 a small, homogeneous Marxist vanguard, composed of declassed intellectuals with a thin layer of advanced workers, was able



Eduard Bernstein

to break the mass of the workers from police trade unionism and the Orthodox Church. Today it requires an international Trotskyist vanguard, necessarily composed in its first stages of declassed intellectuals with relatively few advanced workers, to break the world's working classes from the domination of social-democratic and Stalinist reformism and populist nationalism.

In exactly the opposite sense of Cliff, *What Is To Be Done?* cannot be regarded as the definitive Leninist statement on the party question. Despite the angularity of its formulations, the 1902 polemical work does not go beyond the bounds of orthodox pre-1914 social democracy. If this work had represented a radical break with social democracy, Plekhanov, Martov et al. would never have endorsed it. It was only *after* the split in 1903 that Martov, Axelrod and other Menshevik leaders discovered in *What Is To Be Done?* alleged substitutionalist and Blanquist conceptions. It was Lenin's intransigent attitude in practice toward opportunism, circle-spirit cliquism and all obstacles to building a revolutionary RSDLP that caused the Menshevik split, not particularly the ideas expressed in *What Is To Be Done?* If Cliff finds *What Is To Be Done?* too Leninist for his liking, it is because his



August Bebel

hostility to Bolshevism is so strong that he must reject Lenin even when the latter was still a revolutionary *social democrat*. In reality the 1902 work is an *anticipation*, not a full-blown exposition, of post-1917 communism.

It is common in left-wing circles to regard *What Is To Be Done?* as the definitive Leninist statement on the party question. For example, the American Shachtmanite Bruce Landau, in a critical review of Cliff's biography (*Revolutionary Marxist Papers* No. 8), concentrates on the *Iskra* period. He justifies this narrow focus by quoting Trotsky on Lenin's development:

"It was precisely during this short time that Lenin became the Lenin he was to remain. This does not mean that he did not develop further. On the contrary. He grew in stature... until October and after; but this was really organic growth."

—*On Lenin: Notes for a Biography* (1924)

Trotsky is here referring to the development of Lenin's political *personality*, not to his ideas and their *programmatic* expression. The decisive period for the development of Leninist communist doctrine was 1914-17, not 1900-03.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

SWP Black Nationalism...

(continued from page 5)

association with the Socialist Union/Internationalist Tendency (SU/IT) which began in 1974 with the December 14 School Integration March in Pasadena. Three small groups, located in San Francisco, Boston and Los Angeles, began gravitating toward the IT after its expulsion from the SWP/YSA. None was ever recruited into the Tendency. For the most part, they existed on the fringes of the IT. The Los Angeles Socialist Union, headed by Milt Zaslow, had a unique relationship with the Tendency. It joined with local ITers and sought admittance to the IT's April 1975 national convention. Preceding this convention, discussion within the Tendency, including the outside groups, centered around the basis of reintegration into the SWP....

[A] document... was written [by Zaslow] in January 1975. It was called "The Crisis in the International Tendency." It was submitted to the Political Committee of the IT over the signatures of the Los Angeles ITers (Judy S.; Gene W.; Ron W.; Bart M.; Milt Zaslow, the document's author, did not sign it). What conclusions did the document draw about the character of the SWP/YSA?

"In sum, the SWP, in spite of its Trotskyist veneer, must be characterized as *centrist* politically, *monolithic* and *bureaucratic* organizationally, *sectarian* and *dishonest* in its methods and style of work.

"Lakhdar II [the IT perspectives document] concludes that 'th(e) SWP re-

mains a Trotskyist organization'. This characterization, to be precise, requires an amendment. It remains a *degenerated* Trotskyist organization. It is not within the scope of this contribution to explore the causes of this degeneration." (Zaslow's emphasis)

...The program of the present-day SWP/YSA is reformism: each element of its polyvanguardist sectoralist perspective leads the working class into a blind alley and paves the way for the maintenance of bourgeois rule. The SWP/YSA has consciously abandoned revolutionary Trotskyism. Its "monolithic and bureaucratic" organizational structures are specific products of its movement away from the revolutionary course. It is "sectarian and dishonest in its methods and style of work" because it seeks to institute the policies of the bourgeoisie in the workers' movement. The characterization of the SWP/YSA as a "degenerated Trotskyist organization" is elementally an attempt to reconcile principled revolutionary politics with reformism; its purpose is to create the "unity" of so-called Trotskyist organizations on any basis whatever.

Internationally, both the SU/IT and SWP/YSA voice allegiance to the United Secretariat (the SWP/YSA on the right). This patchwork International arising out of a unity for convenience is incapable of providing revolutionary leadership. If there is any doubt about this after examining the political appetite of its American sympathizing section, then the recent attempts of its sympathizing section in Spain to get the remnants of the Franco dictatorship to "democratize" itself delineate clearly its political content.

Jeff H.

31 July 1977

"Fear City"...

(continued from page 3)

of who would be the "toughest"—on blacks and minorities, on the poor, on the unions.

Similarly, the question of looters was loaded. Koch attacked Beame for not calling out the National Guard to "protect" against looting. The *Village Voice* reports that 9 out of 10 of the sizable clique of "shoot the looters" advocates were Koch backers. Beame denounced Cuomo for having said the looters ought to get their "constitutional rights." In fact, "looters" arrested during the blackout's wave of racist hysteria are getting significantly stiffer sentences than others convicted of similar offenses.

"Get tough" on looters, rapists and murderers—all the old "crime in the streets" standbys—are pushed with evident delight. Added to the list of symbolic "issues" is the death penalty for "terror bombers." Seizing on an incident of indiscriminate bombing of a Mobil Oil office in which a secretary was killed, the candidates concealed a call for a witchhunt against the FALN, Puerto Rican nationalists and perhaps Puerto Ricans in general.

The insiders' political issue is Carey's fight to gain control of the Democratic Party apparatus, which has run NYC politics for decades. So Koch is likely to get the support of politicians loyal to the faltering city machine. Already Herman Badillo has thrown his support to Koch; it is possible that Badillo and Sutton ran in the first place just to take votes away from Abzug, who at the time looked like a winner against Beame.

Badillo, Sutton and Abzug—the poor man's bourgeois troika. Abzug and Sutton both pushed a strident "law and order" line—Bella managed to pull in the endorsement of the PBA's former top cop, Ken McFeely. Badillo—who ran strong in the 1973 primary, when he lost in a run-off to Beame—claimed to represent a "coalition between the poor and the middle class," which turned out to mean a partnership with millionaire Conservative candidate Abe Hirshfeld.

This trio of has-been poverty hustlers screaming for "law and order" fooled only the Communist Party, which discerned in the election the perennial contest between "progressive" Demo-



New York Times

Mayor Beame and friend.

crats and their conservative opponents. Complaining that "the progressive vote fragmented among the three more liberal candidates," the *Daily World* (10 September) longs for a united Democratic ticket based on "people's issues," while the CP-front group, "Conference on Independent Politics" congratulated their "progressive" Democratic Party candidates.

New York, New York

The "law and order" mayoral primary was all that the once liberal office-seekers could pull out of their hats. The days of big government spending programs are over, and with them the liberal "principles" of massive pork-barrelling. There is just no pork to go around. All the capitalists are agreed. No more talk about "war on poverty"—just plans for more war on the poor, more union-busting "sacrifice" for the good of the banks.

The dearth of "fun city" rhetoric reflects the absence of even campaign-promise options. It is obvious to all that the social decay of New York is irreversible under capitalism. The politicians can no longer pretend to have a program to clean up the ghetto, to offer jobs to the youth. They instead have a program to prevent "looting" by punishing "criminals."

Theirs is the same basic "program" as Jimmy Carter's. But NYC is not "middle America." It is the far side of decaying urban life. To the tens of millions who find Plains, Georgia an inspiration, New York is a stinking infestation of "foreigners." Of the more than 900,000 voters in the Democratic primary, 40 percent were Jewish, 40 percent Catholic (including a large number of Hispanics), and of the remaining Protestants only a small percentage were white. New York is the center of bourgeois culture and corruption. It contains the most lavish wealth and the most unliveable ghettos, the most potentially powerful municipal unions and the most groveling bureaucrats.

To get to know the social reality of this city in a hurry, one need only take a ride on the IRT subway from Manhattan through the South Bronx. The train roars out of the underground in Harlem at 155th Street and becomes an elevated over the Grand Concourse, once the main shopping street of the Jewish middle class and now the heart of the Hispanic ghetto. What follows cannot be captured by still photograph. For what is so appalling is the extent of the decay. Miles and miles of gutted apartment houses. Where a building has collapsed, a heap of rubble remains. Black holes stare from burnt-out brick shells where windows used to be. Some have paper or boards or rags across the window frames where people try to live.

Some have compared these sections of the city to Dresden, Germany after the fire-bombing. But this is to miss the point. For the South Bronx cannot be rebuilt this side of the socialist revolution. It is not the conscious target of imperialist terror, but the irredeemable

product of capitalism's slow, relentless war on the poor. In this sense the desolation of the South Bronx is worse, for its inhabitants know their fear and despair is not exceptional but inevitable.

The new ghettos are the worst of all. The blackout looting introduced Brooklyn's Bushwick area to the national bourgeois press, conditioned to think of Harlem when they think of a New York slum. Unlike Harlem, or Chicago's South Side, or Los Angeles' Watts, new ghetto areas have even less social fabric and fewer long-established enclaves of stable residential areas. Of the 134,000 black and Spanish-speaking residents of Bushwick, for instance, 30 percent are jobless, while youth unemployment runs almost three times that figure. Sixty percent are on welfare. Among those who are lucky enough to have jobs, only 5 percent make more than poverty-level wages. There are almost no households made up of only one family.

These residents are the most frequent victims of the lumpen criminal. Driven out of the labor market, jobless and on the streets, ghetto youth are also denied adequate welfare. Survival more often than not is a "hustle." Crime becomes a way of life. This most pernicious effect of capitalism, forcing blacks and other minorities into the lumpenproletariat, then becomes the fuel for the racist hysteria which is bourgeois politics' only campaign "issue." Lumpenization is the heart of "Fear City" and racism is the blood it pumps.

City Labor and the Rightward Drift

One of the more ominous features of the Democratic primary was the unanimity with which all the union bureaucrats—and most of the voters—took it for granted that the municipal unions should be major targets for cut-back. The Democrats who for years ran as "friends of labor" competed for the most anti-union image. To indicate any "softness" toward the city's unions was the kiss of death. Abzug muttered about inflated pension funds while Cuomo postured as the "tough negotiator for city government."

But why have New York's working people so passively accepted the unions as the scapegoat of the "crisis"? Certainly, there are many who buy the cynical line that New York's fiscal problems are due to the "piggishness" of the city unions. But the main reason is that the union bureaucrats, no less than Beame, accepted the banks' union-busting rule over New York.

When the banks zeroed in on the unions to pay for the "crisis," it was fight or knuckle under for the unions. And

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fighting was scarcely a question for the entrenched labor bureaucracy. "We will sacrifice," said the labor fakery. And by "we" they meant their memberships, who have seen the reversal of most of the gains they had fought for over the last 40 years. Shanker and Gotbaum, Van Arsdale and Guinan brought the most powerful municipal union movement in the country to its knees at the behest of the bankers and their government.

The labor bureaucracy, tied to Beame and the Democrats, accepted a wage freeze in the name of "fiscal responsibility"; cost-of-living clauses went out the window; contractual benefits were overturned. Millions of dollars in union pension funds were poured down the sewer of worthless city bonds. Before it was over, 70,000 jobs had been lost. Subway fares were hiked. Hospitals and fire stations were closed. The 129-year policy of free tuition at City University ended. And the labor tops trailed along behind Beame, all the way to the primaries.

In failing to lead a struggle against Big MAC, the bureaucrats not only betrayed their ranks, but also an entire city suffering under the blows of the bankers and bosses. Preaching "sacrifice," they accepted the blame for the decay of the city, contributing to the ominous logic of union-busting and to the dangerous polarization between the union movement on the one side and desperate plebeian masses and enraged petty-bourgeoisie on the other.

The union "leaders" were Big MAC's most loyal allies in bludgeoning the city. They were Beame's right arm as they collaborated in his crimes against the working people. It is no wonder that Beame is widely despised, and no wonder that so much hatred is misdirected toward the unions as well.

There was a moment when the unions could have turned the tide, when instead of being the scapegoats of the "fiscal crisis" they could have united nearly the entire population of the beleaguered city in citywide strike struggles against Big MAC. As we said at the time:

"Today it is possible to break through the vicious cycle of union-black confrontations and organize the poor and much of the vacillating petty-bourgeoisie against capital, provided that the labor movement puts forward an audacious program of transitional demands which can provide a real answer to the needs both of the workers and the non-proletarian population."
—*WV* No. 75, 29 August 1975

But this would have meant a break with Beame and all wings of the Democratic Party, a break from the bureaucracy's conscious policy of class betrayal which is its only "principle."

The Democratic primary was a foretaste of things to come under the twin parties of the bourgeoisie. In NYC the historic choice is brought into sharp focus: intensifying racist mobilization orchestrated by the parties of capital, or a class break with those parties; the barbarism of the South Bronx or the socialist revolution. Now more than ever, the urgent task is the construction of a class-struggle alternative to the union bureaucracy which is wedded to the death to the Democratic Party. ■

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Black Jobless...

(continued from page 1)

than in the previous two decades.

In late 1976 it appeared that the U.S. economy would turn down along with the rest of the capitalist world. However, both consumers and businessmen believed the new Democratic administration would spur the sluggish economy and they acted accordingly. In the first half of this year consumer purchases, inventory stockpiling, housing construction and small-scale capital expenditure all spurred ahead. The factors making for Carter's mini-boom are unsustainable and very short-lived.

The consumer spending that sustained the U.S. recovery is based on a marked expansion of personal debt. From the beginning of 1976 through this May, outstanding consumer debt increased 14 percent, while auto loans alone jumped 23 percent (*Federal Reserve Bulletin*, July 1977). Between January 1976 and March 1977 outstanding mortgage loans for family homes increased 17 percent. This significant rise in consumer indebtedness occurred although real take-home pay has remained unchanged since 1974 (when it fell sharply). American workers and salaried petty bourgeois cannot continue to increase their consumption through an ever greater burden of personal debt. In fact, manufacturers' new orders for consumer goods peaked in March and have since fallen.

Carter's economic recovery has not been based on the expansion of productive capacity. In the first half of this year real investment in new plant has increased all of one percent (U.S. Department of Commerce, *Business Conditions Digest*, July 1977). Capital spending has been concentrated on small, marginal items. Although equipment purchases jumped 7 percent the first quarter of the year, 90 percent of this increase was accounted for by company cars and trucks (*Ibid.*). Despite much official optimism about a coming investment boom, most of the signs remain negative. The volume of new contracts for manufacturing and commercial structures hit a high point in March and has declined since then. Another indication of weak investment prospects is the recent sharp decline of stock market prices, which, the *Wall Street Journal* (29 August) observes, "has been triggered by investor concern about the strength and durability of the recovery and about rising interest rates."

One major U.S. industry that has already been overtaken by the world economic downturn is steel. Twenty years of failure to invest in new technology, plus monopolistic pricing, have made the American industry uncompetitive as against West Europe and Japan. The current world slump has aggravated this situation as foreign steelmakers, faced with falling demand elsewhere, ship more to the U.S. American steel production for 1977 is now running 5 percent behind last year. Second-quarter profits of the two largest companies, U.S. Steel and Bethlehem, were down 36 percent compared to last year (*Wall Street Journal*, 28 July). As a result Bethlehem has laid off 7,500 workers, and U.S. Steel is considering shutting down its Chicago Southworks and Youngstown, Ohio, plants for good.

Fraud of Bourgeois "Full Employment" Legislation

The current unemployment statistics reveal in the starkest possible way the racist nature of American society. The economic basis of black oppression is precisely the concentration of blacks in the lowest levels of the working class, the reserve army of unemployed and the lumpen population. Even the ruling class knows that the mass concentration of unemployed, desperately poor ghetto



George Meany with Carter in Washington.

Dennis Brack/Time

youth is "social dynamite" as liberal Democratic Congressman Henry Reuss recently put it.

There is thus pressure on the ruling-class to find a *reactionary* solution to black unemployment. One drastic solution would be a new version of Roosevelt's New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps. Black teenagers would be taken from the inner cities to do make-work for zero wages in rural camps. But the main ruling-class policy to "create jobs" for black youth is to increase their rate of exploitation, a policy centering on the minimum wage. The insistence by Carter and Congress that the minimum be held far below official poverty levels stems in part from the belief that this fosters jobs for black teenagers. It is significant that the leading black establishment economist, former Federal Reserve Governor Andrew Brimmer, has come out for holding down the minimum wage in order to "create jobs." A scheme that is gaining ruling-class support is a two-tier minimum wage, with a significantly lower rate for teenagers than for adults. Such a South Africa-type wage law would institutionalize the super-exploitation of black youth; they would get less pay for doing the same work.

While the capitalist class tends toward a "solution" to black youth unemployment through super-exploitation, the labor bureaucracy and its social-democratic hangers-on are pushing the Humphrey-Hawkins bill. This much touted measure is not only fraudulent (it cannot possibly be implemented), but is even legislatively unnecessary. The now watered-down Humphrey-Hawkins bill is simply a more detailed version of the Employment Act of 1946, whose key passage states:

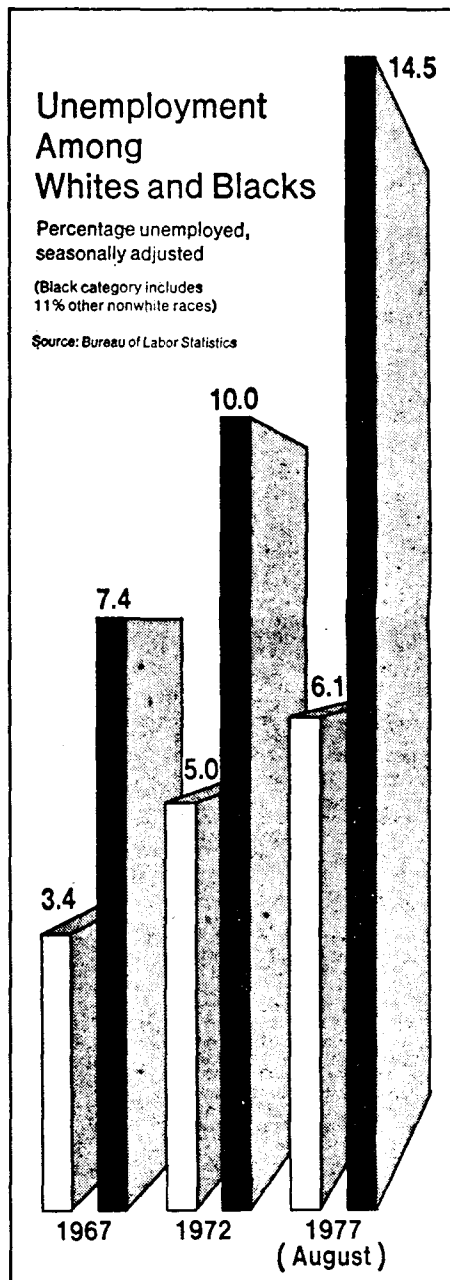
"The Congress hereby declares that it is the continuing policy and responsibility of the federal government to use all practicable means consistent with its needs and obligations...to promote maximum employment, production and purchasing power."

Of course, the 1946 law has been so ineffectual that few Americans even know it exists.

In an interview with the liberal economics journal *Challenge* (November-December 1975), the head of the AFL-CIO Research Department, Nat Goldfinger, revealed that no new "full employment" legislation was needed since every administration has disregarded the 1946 law:

"I think the Employment Act of 1946 probably provides the kind of planning that is necessary. It hasn't been carried out. The intent of Congress in adopting the Employment Act of 1946 has been distorted. Not only by Republicans and reactionaries, but also by the Democratic chairmen of the Council of Economic Advisors and by self-styled liberals."

For those who take bourgeois "full



New York Times

employment" legislation seriously, not only Gerald Ford but also Jimmy Carter can be charged with violating the law of the land.

Nonetheless American social democrats insist that a left-liberal Democratic administration can ensure permanent full employment and economic prosperity. This is the message, for example, of "The Specter of Full Employment" by Robert Lekachman, an academic sidekick of Michael Harrington in the Democratic Agenda. (The Democratic Agenda is one of Harrington's endless front groups designed to "democratically socialize" the party of Hiroshima, the Bay of Pigs and My Lai.) Lekachman's article, reprinted by the Democratic Agenda, ends with the following inspiring call to change American society:

"Until a credible left rises in the United States, unemployment will be a little higher when the Republicans are in the White House, a little lower [!] when the Democrats take their turn. Genuine full employment, decent jobs at decent wages for every man, woman and youth interested in working, has been a myth,

and will stay a myth so long as every four years voters choose between one party minimally to the right of dead center and a second minimally to the left."

This is a bad season to peddle such social-democratic economic nostrums. In Britain the Labour government (an example of Lekachman's "credible left") reigns over a 6 percent unemployment rate (*Economist*, 3 September). British unemployment statistics are not comparable to American; the 6 percent figure would be far higher if calculated by U.S. standards. And an official unemployment rate of 6 percent has not been experienced in Britain since the early 1930's! American social democrats naturally don't like to talk about the British economy under Labour. So what about West Germany where Helmut Schmidt's Social Democrats rule in coalition with the liberal Free Democrats? The July unemployment rate was 4.5 percent (*Economist*, 3 September) again this would be much higher by U.S. statistical standards. The current state of the West German "miracle" economy can be gauged by the fact that in the period 1962-73 the official unemployment index averaged 1.7 percent (OECD, *Economic Outlook*, July 1977).

It is empirically indisputable that no capitalist government, whether of social democrats or bourgeois rightists, can secure the full utilization of labor and other economic resources. Bourgeois full employment legislation will not and cannot be implemented because a reserve army of the unemployed is a necessary condition for capitalist production. Without a surplus population of workers, the increased demand for labor power during a boom would immediately lead to competition among employers to attract each other's workers, thereby raising wages and reducing the rate of exploitation. Attempts to offset rising wages in a tight labor market through easy credit lead to accelerating inflation and ever increasing business indebtedness. Only the expropriation of the capitalist class and the replacement of production for profit by socialist economic planning can secure full employment, maximum labor productivity and the steady increase in leisure time and levels of consumption.

But we do not limit ourselves to explaining the future benefits of socialism. As Trotskyists we put forward a program of transitional demands which links the struggle around the immediate felt needs of the working class to the overthrow of the capitalist system. Thus the Spartacist League calls on the trade unions to organize the unemployed, demanding unconditional, unlimited unemployment benefits at full pay, financed by the corporations and the government. Unemployment, SUB pay and welfare benefits must be consolidated into a single fund at the highest level. Laid-off workers must have unlimited job recall rights (in addition to retaining union membership). Medical care and urban transit should be made available free of charge.

But simply ameliorating the economic situation of the unemployed is not enough. The unions must launch a militant offensive to combat unemployment. A class-struggle labor leadership would undertake coordinated strike action for a shorter workweek at no loss in pay, thus opening up more jobs. Faced with massive layoffs, as in steel today, such a union leadership would organize the seizure of idle factories, demanding expropriation of shut-down firms and imposing workers control. Carrying out such a program and fighting for a workers government requires the construction of a revolutionary party and a struggle within the labor movement to oust the pro-capitalist Meany's and Frasers, who are incapable of anything except begging a few jobs from their Democratic Party friends. ■

Britain...

(continued from page 4)

bureaucrats also passed a treacherous motion calling for trade-union participation on the boards of directors of British companies, and TUC head Murray prevented a motion calling for a £50 per week [\$88] minimum wage from coming to a vote. This effectively endorsed the government's intention to keep wages down largely at the expense of weak and poorly organized sections of the working class, while conceding, if necessary, somewhat higher settlements to the more powerful unions.

Wage Restraint and the Lib-Lab Pact

The chief threat used by the Labour Party and TUC brass to shove the twelve-month rule and the ten percent wage guideline down the throats of Britain's trade unionists is the prospect of the collapse of the minority Labour government, which would usher in an overtly anti-union Conservative cabinet. Labour's partners in parliament, the bourgeois Liberal Party, have repeatedly warned that its continuing support depended upon the government's ability to hold down wages. Liberal leader David Steel praised the TUC decisions: "The prospect for this success [in shackling pay increases] looks decidedly brighter now and, so long as the government remains on course, I see no reason for cutting short the lifetime of this Parliament, which is not due to expire till October 1979" (*Guardian*, 10 September).

Callaghan/Healey are no less desirous of wage restraint than are the Liberals. However, the Labour leadership depends ultimately on the trade-union bureaucracy, which rests on the many-million-strong union movement. Thus sometimes the Labour tops must conciliate in order to control their base. But as a purely bourgeois party with a middle-class electoral constituency, the Liberals are absolutely intransigent toward the unions. Callaghan can conveniently blame his anti-union coalition partners for seeking to continue wage restraint. Class-conscious workers must demand a break from the Liberals and dumping of the Social Contract in all its forms as a precondition for even the most critical electoral support to Labour.

Steel's threats to bring down the government provide the Labour Party leadership and the TUC tops with their main means of defusing working-class militancy on the one hand, and of keeping the Labour "lefts" in line on the other. Although the former may prove to be rather difficult, the latter have presented little problem, as the "lefts" have virtually ceased criticising the Lib-Lab pact, with which they hope to cling to their parliamentary seats for another year or more.

The Labour "lefts" have always viewed the Social Contract as a perfectly acceptable policy. When Healey announced his stingy "economic package" (with 10 percent wage "norms") in Parliament, "even dyed-in-the-wool Tribune left-wingers like Mr. Ian Mikardo could not withhold their praise, and their cheers" (*Times* [London], 16 July). While the "lefts" occasionally express "sympathy" for those workers who are seeking to make up the losses of three baleful years of Labour misrule, they counsel "restraint" and advocate increased public spending and the imposition of chauvinist import controls as the solution to the problems of British workers.

Labour and the "Revolutionary" Left

Likewise, the government's incomes-slashing Social Contract and the treacherous deal with the Liberals have not alienated the affections of the self-styled revolutionary left in Britain. While



Socialist Press

The vote against "social contract" at the T&GWU conference.

criticising the Labour tops' betrayals, the various "Trotskyist" organisations (as well as the Communist Party) continue to tacitly support Labour, merely bemoaning the fact that the "ill-advised" policies of Callaghan/Healy are paving the way for the return to power of the Tories.

The elementary Marxist principle of working-class political independence is upheld in Britain today solely by supporters of the international Spartacist tendency. Only the London Spartacist Group has called for conditional opposition to the Labour Party so long as Labour remains committed to enforcing capitalist austerity in the trade unions and is mired in a formal coalition with the second party of the British bourgeoisie.

In addition to denouncing Healey's 10 percent wage "guideline" and the twelve-month "rule," and calling for cost-of-living clauses to be included in upcoming contracts, various ostensible revolutionary groups have concentrated on coming up with some kind of cheap gimmick to spice up their apolitical economism. The ex-International Socialists, now the Socialist Workers Party (SWP/IS), staged a "Right to Work" march on the TUC Congress. As for the International Marxist Group, its main preoccupation seems to be interesting the SWP/IS in a joint slate of candidates for the next general elections, as a means of exerting left pressure on the Labour Party.

The Workers Socialist League (WSL) attempts to add a political note to its propaganda around the Social Contract by arguing: "We must bring right into the wages struggle the need to remove Healey and Callaghan, the open spokesmen of the ruling class within the labour movement, and to establish a government based on the interest of the working class" (*Socialist Press*, 20 July).

As a first step in establishing such a government, "there must be a fight both in the trade unions and the Labour Party for the demand that the Labour 'lefts' break from Healey and Callaghan and the coalition government and take on themselves the task of establishing a socialist programme for the next general election" (*Ibid.*).

In an incomprehensible display of centrist double-think, a subsequent article in *Socialist Press* smugly comments that "Life has not been easy recently for those who cling on to hopes that 'left' Labourites such as Eric Heffer will some day turn and fight the reactionary Callaghan-Healey leadership" (*Socialist Press*, 17 August). One might presume that this article signaled a change in line for the WSL, whose long-term strategy for establishing socialism in Britain hinges on "making the lefts fight." But no—further down the page, in the same article, the WSL proclaims that: "...Labour 'lefts' must campaign for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership."

Despite the formal victory for Labour's wages policy at the TUC conference there is every indication that the vast bulk of British trade unionists are determined to avert the continuing deterioration of their living standards. Already a whole series of unions have lodged pay claims ranging between 30 and 50 percent. The three most powerful, and traditionally most militant unions of industrial workers are officially on record as opposing any further wage restraints.

While Hugh Scanlon's coup at the Congress (which caused so much jubilation among London stockbrokers) ensured a comfortable paper majority for the twelve-month "rule," the AUEW brass will no doubt find it a good deal more difficult to enforce any more "austerity" on their seething ranks. Among the miners and transport work-

ers opposition to any further wage restraint is so intense that both Joe Gormley (head of the NUM) and Jack Jones (of the T&GWU) suffered humiliating personal defeats at their own national conferences preceding the TUC conference as they attempted to pass motions in favour of Callaghan's "orderly return to collective bargaining."

It is of critical importance to the British working class for all the remnants of the Social Contract to be smashed—the twelve-month rule, the "orderly return," as well as Callaghan's insulting 10 percent "norm."

As the TUC conference amply demonstrates, the pro-capitalist misleaders of the trade unions stand as obstacles to the ability of the workers to ensure that they do not bear the brunt of the crisis of the British bourgeoisie. Only through the construction of class-struggle groupings in the unions based on the Transitional Programme can an alternative leadership to the present bureaucrats be built which will be able to ensure the full weight of Britain's powerful trade-union movement is brought to bear in the defence of working-class living standards.

Smash the remnants of the Social Contract! Down with the Lib-Lab Coalition! ■

Chile...

(continued from page 12)

junta protesters marching with the CSC and the Dominican PLD (supporters of ex-president Juan Bosch), chanting slogans in support of the Allende popular front, almost 100 picketed together with the SL in an anti-popular front contingent on the opposite side of the street. When the Stalinists and nationalists chanted "Junta no, Chile si!" the SL-led contingent replied, "Juntas no, obreros [workers] si—Overthrow the bourgeoisie!" (Although the CP has now ostensibly dropped its support to Argentine dictator Videla, its ranks are unclear about the shift and the Stalinists studiously avoided anti-Videla chants both in Washington and New York.)

Spartacist supporters also carried signs proclaiming "Build the Organización Trotskista Revolucionaria of Chile!" The international Spartacist tendency recently fused with the Chilean OTR, which was unique in its class opposition to the Allende popular front during the UP regime. Also picketing together with the SL were militant auto workers and seamen, supporters of the Partisan Defense Committee, the Communist Cadre and Communist Cadre-Marxist (and the latter's "mass" front group, the "Friends of Santucho").

In a separate corner was a ragtag YAWF contingent. While joining CP supporters in popular-front chants such as "El pueblo unida, jamas sera vencido!" ("The people united will never be defeated!"), YAWF made itself look ridiculous by presenting two counterposed slogans, one demanding "Respect Human Rights, Free All Political Prisoners" and the other equating Carter's "human rights" with Pinochet terror. In contrast to the classless YAWF slogans, the SL banner proclaimed: "Smash the Juntas—Workers to Power!" ■

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TORONTO

WORKERS VANGUARD

While Panamanian Leftists Protest Treaty

U.S. Fake Lefts Accept Imperialist Canal Swindle

Last week Jimmy Carter, Godfather of imperialist "human rights," banqueted two dozen of his western hemisphere "capos" in Washington at a celebration of the just-signed Panama Canal Treaty. As Panama's "anti-imperialist" General Torrijos dined on lobster alongside hangmen Pinochet (Chile), Videla (Argentina), Banzer (Bolivia) and Stroessner (Paraguay), 2,000 demonstrators marched outside the White House.

Yet, scandalously, as Carter's guests toasted the pact which assures continued American control of the canal backed up by U.S. military bases until the year 2000, and sanctions U.S. "protection" of the canal's "neutrality" in perpetuity, *the only left-wing group marching on Pennsylvania Avenue which protested this imperialist swindle was the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League (SL/SYL)*. Moreover, the rotten bloc of fake-radicals and Latin American nationalists which ran the demonstration went to considerable lengths attempting to exclude the SL/SYL banner reading "U.S. Out of the Canal Zone! No to Carter/Torrijos Imperialist Rip-Off!"

For three-quarters of a century the Panama Canal has been a symbol of American imperialist domination of Latin America. In recent weeks, thousands of Panamanian leftists have protested as the terms of the scandalous pact were released; and on September 7, the day the treaty was signed, dozens were injured and 30 arrested in clashes with Torrijos' riot police at the Panamanian foreign ministry in a protest which called for immediate U.S. withdrawal from the Canal Zone. Yet U.S. reformists and centrists failed to carry out their elementary internationalist duty to denounce the Carter-Torrijos treaty!

Once the self-proclaimed "Maximum Leader of the Panamanian Revolution" endorsed the treaty, a chorus of Stalinist and "Third World" nationalists quickly followed suit. The Communist Party (CP) mouthpiece described the canal pact as representing a "progressive trend in international life" (*Daily World*, 9 September). In Washington the CP-led Chile Committee on Human Rights opposed taking a position on the treaty and argued that the rally be held at the White House, rather than the Organization of American States offices, in order to eliminate any possibility of embarrassing Torrijos.

However, an Associated Press wirephoto clearly depicting the SL/SYL banner was published in major bourgeois dailies across the country. The *New York Post* (8 September) headlined its story, "Protests Hit Canal Pact." Thus the Stalinists were frustrated in their attempt to limit the action to an anti-Pinochet demonstration.

At least the CP is relatively forthright about its chauvinist policies. The Mar-

cyte Youth Against War and Fascism (YAWF), however, carried a banner calling for the U.S. out of the Canal Zone but was silent on the Carter/Torrijos treaty. And YAWF marshals were the most provocative in trying to exclude the SL/SYL banner. As for the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which opposes the treaty in the pages of the *Militant*, it was nowhere to be seen, not even in the guise of the SWP-controlled U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners—their usual disguise.

Lacking a Leninist outlook, most of the fake-lefts use the word "imperialist" just as they use "fascist"—to indicate the "bad guys." As a result, it only took a few cheap remarks about "human rights" from the mouth of Jimmy Carter, and all the reformists took up the slogan, asking only that the U.S. imperialist chief turn his words into acts. Meanwhile, after meeting with the American president, the bloody executioner Pinochet announced that the two had completely agreed on human rights, and once again offered to exchange left-wing political prisoners for imprisoned Soviet dissidents.

The Spartacist League, however, has called Carter's anti-Communist crusade by its true name from the beginning. Another SL/SYL banner at the Wash-



Wide World
Spartacist League denounces imperialist Panama Canal swindle as "leftists"/nationalists beg Carter for "Human Rights."



WV Photo
SL/SYL-led anti-popular front contingent denounces pro-Junta concert at Town Hall on September 11.

ington demonstration read: "Carter's 'Human Rights' Means Videla/Pinochet!"

September 11 Chile Protests

The same nationalist and reformist politics were served up at several demonstrations in cities around the country on September 11, the fourth anniversary of the bloody Pinochet coup in Chile. In New York City

approximately 400 picketed the appearance of a pro-junta singing group, Los Huasos Quincheros, at the Town Hall theater. The largest contingents were from the CP-dominated Chile Solidarity Committee (CSC), the Spartacist League, YAWF and several Latin American leftist groups.

Recalling a militant demonstration in March 1976 which protested a performance at the same theater by the same reactionary group, a large squad of

police initially restricted pickets to the sidewalk across the street from the performance. A CSC spokesman pleaded with the cops to grant it permission to march closer to the entrance, in order to remain separate from the SL contingent which she slandered as a "disruptive counter-demonstration."

While there were roughly 200 anti-

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