

## Racist Mobs Terrorize Black School Children in Chicago

# Who Killed Busing?

For the black school children trying to enter Adlai E. Stevenson grade school in Southwest Chicago this term it was pure terror. They were surrounded and taunted by mobs of white racist adults. Fists pounded thundering threats on their school buses as they remained fearfully trapped inside. Herded off the buses the children had to make their way through packs of jeering, menacing racists—"the gauntlet."

That was on September 9, after a week-long racist school boycott that was 80-percent effective throughout the Southwest side. Since then it has become worse. By September 11 black people could not drive through the Bogan Park area without fearing for their lives. It was a "minefield" of racist assault. Thugs would surround cars carrying blacks, smashing windows and trying to pull out the passengers. Five blacks have so far been reported injured. And when one black driver trying to escape an attacking mob drove into some people by accident, he was immediately picked up by the cops and charged with "reckless driving."

The same day an anti-busing rally in Bogan drew 1,000 racists who burned effigies of the school board. The rally contained the usual assortment of those who preferred to burn crosses outright. The next week it began again with even more racist venom. When black children arrived at Stevenson they were faced by threatening mobs who blocked the doors screaming: "Go back, go back, go back where you belong." And: "Bus

them back to Africa" (Chicago *Sun Times*, 13 September).

The children had been bused from Chicago's Southside ghetto, as part of the school board's "permissive transfer plan" involving in all less than 900 black students. It is certainly a courageous act for these children and their parents to send them in small isolated groups into this stronghold of racist reaction. No doubt some of these parents remember the heroes of the civil rights movement. They may have recalled Rosa Parks who sat defiantly on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama beginning the bus boycott in 1955; or James Meredith breaking the race barrier at the campus of "Old Miss" in 1962. At a "crisis meeting" of pro-busing leadership in Chicago, NAACP leader Charles Davis invoked this past: "I'm taken with a sense of déjà vu today. We've all been here before. Except that some of us are a little plumper, a little grayer, this could be a morning in the 1960's" (Chicago *Sun Times*, 7 September).

The NAACP leader could have added that he was also not much wiser. For at the end of this invocation of the past, Davis reflected on "the illusion of victory" that he and others had nurtured in early days of the civil rights movement. In 1977, in Chicago, only the dangers are comparable to the 1960's. The hope is long gone. And no wonder there was not the same belief that their struggle was breaking new ground for future social equality for blacks: by the time school opened in Chicago it was clear to all that the battle for busing had already been lost.

What pro-busing forces were preparing to defend was not a busing program to desegregate Chicago's school system. It was hardly even a token. The Chicago "voluntary" busing plan itself represented a surrender to racist mobilization. Far from an attempt to integrate the schools, the Chicago plan avoids any mention of race, instead allowing for "volunteers" from "critically overcrowded" schools to transfer to "underutilized" schools. An editorial in the *Sun Times* (6 September) asking the Southwest racists to "Make it Work" argued that, "the plan is, after all, modest... a few buses."

The racists, however, were dead-set against this "modest" gesture. Filled with the confidence inspired by a torrent of anti-busing decisions of the Supreme Court, racist legislation emanating from Congress and their victories in Boston and elsewhere, they would make it a battle on the streets of Chicago. Their rallying cry today was no longer the coded "No Forced Busing" heard so often at the beginning of the mobilizations in the streets of South Boston. Now it is the season for openly racist slogans: "No Integration!" and "No Blacks!"

Not only in Chicago, but across the country busing has been the target of years of frontal assault and guerrilla tactics that have defeated it in every major city as a basis of school desegregation. Each city places its particular stamp on the issue. In Los Angeles, for

### Chicago, 1977:



Love/Chicago Journal

### Boston, 1974:



Boston Globe

instance, the fight is over how many minutes may be spent in a school bus. It is more than an hour ride from Watts to the white-only city schools, so the "moderate" position is for 30-minute maximum bus rides.

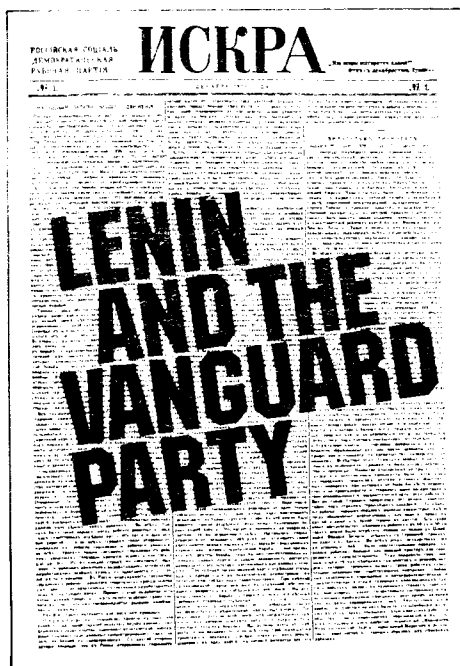
But a pattern emerges. School desegregation plans are "ordered" after court suits are initiated by the NAACP and ACLU under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These plans are then defied by boycotts and trimmed in the courts, school boards and halls of Congress. Liberal pro-busing advocates retreat. New plans are created that fit the new court decisions. "Limited" plans do not bus across the sacred line into the lily-white suburb. "Two-way" busing becomes one-way busing. Enforced busing

becomes "voluntary" busing. And then comes no busing at all, except to bring white students to their white schools and black students to their black schools.

The battle in Chicago today is a "mopping up" action by the anti-busing segregationists. The fact that even this largely symbolic terrain is contested in blood by open racists, while there is no significant attempt to propose or defend busing in any U.S. city, underlines what has been obvious for some time—busing as a means of racial integration is dead. But ominously, as a focus for racist reaction it is very much alive. So who killed busing? Who is responsible for the defeat of school integration in the liberal North?

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## PART TWO



## Bolshevism vs. Menshevism: the 1903 Split

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## Stalinists Hail Parisien Libéré "Victory"

# Paris Printers Unions Give Up Closed Shop

PARIS, September 9—"WE'VE WON" was the giant headline in red in the "victory special" issue of the *Parisien Libéré* strike newspaper published by the Comité Intersyndical du Livre Parisien (Coordinating Committee of Paris Printers Unions). The strikers were served champagne at union headquarters to celebrate their "victory." The Communist Party's *L'Humanité* and *Vie Ouvrière* (the weekly newspaper of the Stalinist-controlled labor federation, the CGT) outdid each other in proclaiming the significance of this triumph. But in reality, the strike settlement abandons the most important trade-union conquest of the Paris printers, union control of hiring.

The newspaper's new boss, Mr. Claude Bellanger, who took over after the death of long-time *Parisien Libéré* publisher and anti-union hardliner Jacques Amaury, set the record straight to *Le Monde*:

"No one disputes that this is a great date in the history of the press... we have principles to defend which are directly linked to safeguarding freedom of the press. They are... the principles of free enterprise, freedom of hiring and the freedom of union affiliation. These are, in fact, recognized in the settlement, as are the monthly [instead of hourly] wage scale, conscientious work without restrictive work rules, and polyaptitude [the elimination of job classifications]."

Following a bitter 28-month strike, the union bureaucrats' claims of victory rest on the definite rehiring of only 62 out of a total of 550 printing workers at the *Parisien Libéré* plant. The others have been forced into early retirement, transferred to other print shops where they will not receive commensurate union benefits, rehired temporarily or moved out of Paris to areas with lower pay scales. Above all, the strike settlement gives up trade-union control over hiring. This capitulation was so outrageous that the CGT bureaucrats have not yet dared to publish the final accord!

During its more than two years' duration, the *Parisien Libéré* strike won the active sympathy of the French working class. Postal workers at sorting centers refused to handle the scab edition, while employees of the monopoly news distribution company black-listed Amaury's racist, anti-communist, union-busting rag. About ten times in the course of the conflict all Paris dailies were shut down for 24-hour periods in solidarity with the strikers, and twice the CGT called national one-day work stoppages. On numerous occasions the union leadership staged "rodeos" which halted delivery trucks and dumped thousands of copies of the pirate edition into the Seine River. This resulted in more than a thousand court cases pending against *Parisien Libéré* workers.

The strike could not have held out for so many months had it not been for the tremendous combativity of the workers involved: This was seen in the daring occupation of *Parisien Libéré*'s Paris printshop in April 1975 and in its militant defense by the occupiers: so effective was it that the cops didn't even try to retake the plant until January 1977. As soon as the police attack was known, all Paris newspapers were immediately shut down. This underlined the strong support from the printers union ranks, who had instituted a strike fund by taxing themselves one day's salary every month.

This unusual militancy and solidarity can be explained by the high stakes involved in the *Parisien Libéré* strike, which was far more than the collision between a right-wing anti-union boss and "his" workers. In all of France, only

dock workers and Paris printers are organized into industrial unions with an effective closed shop. At the beginning of the "cold war," in the major trade-union split which gave rise to the social-democratic Force Ouvrière (FO), the printers federation stayed with the CGT. Through harsh class battles, including a struggle against the 1945-47 government of "national union" which included Communist and Socialist ministers, the Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre (FFTL) won wages for "master printers" that are among the highest in French skilled trades.

Paris printers work a five-day week, six hours a day, with a total of seven weeks vacation. The precise number of workers per job is defined in the contract, and it is forbidden to use a worker for any job outside his classification. These conditions are codified in "technical annexes" for the Paris dailies added to the national printing trades agreement. But now a breach has been opened in this wall of trade-union job protection. Under the watchwords of "polyvalence" and "conscientious work," production standards and job classifications will be gutted; wages will henceforth be based on the pay scales of provincial newspapers of the Amaury-Bellanger chain (one quarter to one third less than Paris levels). Thus the hollow "victory" of the *Parisien Libéré* strike means massive lowering of job standards and wages.

Publisher Bellanger boasted that the settlement meant the end of "the abusive monopoly [of hiring] imposed by the CGT printers union." It is clear that future negotiations between the syndicate of the Paris press (management) and the printers union will be based on extending the *Parisien Libéré* settlement terms to the rest of the industry. This will mean the end of the closed shop, as other unions will move in on the CGT turf—and will consequently reduce union bargaining power vis-à-vis management. The social-democratic CFDT and FO federations are in principle in favor of "trade-union pluralism," and Force Ouvrière has already played a despicable role in the recent strike. Amaury had *Parisien Libéré* printed on his own terms at St.-Ouen, with the scab work performed by FO members with the explicit agreement of the strike-breaking FO leadership!

### Parisien Libéré Strike and the French Left

Within the framework of the "normal" practices of the French labor movement, the Coordinating Committee of Paris Printers Unions conducted a relatively militant strike at *Parisien Libéré*, for it was well understood that thousands of jobs and its own existence as an industrial union were at stake. But it is untrue that everything possible was done to win the strike. An obvious measure was deliberately avoided: instead of dissipating militancy through ineffectual one-day work stoppages, the Committee could have shut down the entire Paris newspaper industry indefinitely to win the demands of the striking printers. Nor were other publications of the Amaury chain shut down in solidarity with the *Parisien Libéré* printers.

But the FFTL bureaucrats were too conscious of their "responsibilities" to undertake such crucial action. Leaders of the popular-front Union of the Left would complain that an all-out strike could upset the appercart in one or another election, potentially alienating middle-class voters. The government and big business spokesmen would seek

just that by whipping up hysteria about "Communist dictatorship" over the press (a battle cry they used against printing workers who sought to insert union communiqués in the newspapers to counter management lies about this and other strikes). And the bourgeois components of the Union of the Left would threaten to break the class-collaborationist alliance over this issue.

Already in 1975 the French Stalinists had indicated their willingness to bargain away union control of hiring in the Paris newspaper printing industry. Georges Ségué, general secretary of the CGT and a member of the Communist Party (PCF) political bureau, stated: "One can well imagine management raising this question [eliminating union control of hiring]... without this causing a breakdown in negotiations" (*Le Monde*, 6 September 1975). And during the *Parisien Libéré* strike the only real demand of the bureaucrats was "for negotiations." Instead of defending these vital union gains, the CGT has sought to channel French workers' struggles against threatened job losses into chauvinist economic nationalism.

For the last two years the central slogan of the FFTL has been "repatriate jobs," denouncing the flight of printing work to Belgium in particular. The same treacherous protectionist appeal has been at the center of the French Stalinists' campaign around the Concorde supersonic jetliner. The PCF plastered Paris walls this summer with posters proclaiming: "New York keeps out the Concorde, let's keep out Boeing"; and "They're taking our factories out of the country, they're taking our

diversion aimed at sidetracking demands for militant struggle.

As befits loyal camp followers of the popular front, the pseudo-Trotskyists of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire (LCR) and Lutte Ouvrière (LO) supported the Stalinists' "victory" claims on the *Parisien Libéré* strike. When the outlines of the settlement were first announced, the LCR's *Rouge* (12 July) ran a banner headline on its front page, "Management Gives In." Its editorial stated, "After 28 months of struggle, the *Parisien Libéré* workers have won a success, with the essentials of the FFTL demands satisfied." The LCR was silent on the abandonment of the closed shop, and a month later still maintained that "the balance sheet is positive in favor of the workers of the *Parisien*" (*Rouge*, 17 August).

LO, although somewhat more guarded, termed the agreement (which directly eliminated more than 400 jobs) a "relative success for the workers" (*Lutte Ouvrière*, 16 July). But where the LCR Pabloists remained silent, the LO syndicalists were actually pleased at the blow struck against industrial unionism. Repeating the bourgeoisie's complaint about the FFTL "monopoly on hiring," LO complained that the CGT had taken up the battle only to "preserve its advantages."

The third major ostensibly Trotskyist organization in France, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI), formally denounced the *Parisien Libéré* strike settlement for the betrayal that it is and published excerpts from the secret agreement. But if the LCR

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Editions Sociales

Vigil in support of Parisien Libéré strike.

jobs away...let's build French!" Although the PCF ostensibly denounces the lack of patriotism of the bosses, the purpose of this propaganda is to recall the days during and after World War II when the Communist Party collaborated "loyally" with the Gaullists in the Resistance and post-war governments.

It is one thing for an American communist organization to denounce the economic protectionism behind the refusal to grant landing rights to the Concorde in New York, as the Spartacist League/U.S. has done (uniquely, it should be noted, since the fake-lefts are busy tailing the environmentalists). And the Belgian printers unions demonstrated militant internationalism in refusing to print the pirate edition of *Parisien Libéré*, carrying out joint actions with French printers at the border to intercept the few issues which were printed by Belgian scabs. But for the French Stalinists to launch campaigns to "produce French" is an anti-proletarian

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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EDITOR: Jan Norden

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Karen Allen

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Anne Kelley

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WORKERS VANGUARD



## Busing...

(continued from page 1)

In the case of busing, as with so many other issues, yesterday's organizers of defeats pose as the saviors of today's struggles. They must be exposed and ousted as part of the fight to organize for victory tomorrow.

The simple truth is that it was the liberals, not the racist mobs, who actually killed busing. And those in the left and workers movement who capitulate to liberalism share the blame. Liberals and reformists, both black and labor, united in the civil rights movement around a program of pressuring the government, especially the federal government, to enforce democratic rights. For a time in the early 1960's this program combined with mass demonstrations brought limited gains. When the courts and federal government submitted the racist fabric of American society to benign neglect and then began backtracking even on democratic rights, the NAACP et al. cried "betrayal!" But it wasn't the capitalist state which betrayed.

When the battles for desegregation of schools and public facilities began in the South, liberals saw it as a morality play. The villains were local racists: sheriffs like Bull Connor and neanderthal governors like Ross Barnett. The images were vicious police dogs and fire hoses turned on peaceful demonstrators. The heroes were the courts, particularly the Supreme Court; Martin Luther King, Jr., a black liberal; and the Kennedy Democrats who held court in Washington, D.C. As the last vestiges of Jim Crow fell, they believed, with passage of the Civil Rights Act, blacks would finally have "equal opportunity" in the land of golden opportunities.

By the late 1960's, segregationist laws had been wiped off the books, but it was immediately apparent that this failed to relieve the poverty and slum conditions which trapped the black masses in the northern cities. In the resulting disaffection with liberalism, former civil rights activists turned to the reactionary-utopian ideology of black nationalism and the ghettos exploded in rage and frustration. But when the ghettos had been burned out and black nationalism proved incapable of anything but surrender to "separate but unequal" (glorified as "community control"), civil rights liberals reasserted themselves with a new issue: busing.

Busing made sense to a liberal civil rights activist. It combined two critical elements of his accustomed political strategy: a utopian (either cynical or naive) faith in upward mobility through education, and a complete reliance on the instruments of the capitalist state to accomplish this goal. It would sidestep thornier issues such as residential segregation (i.e., enforced ghettoization of the black population) which were not a question of "public policy." But it soon became obvious that the social realities of racist America could not be ignored. Demagogues were able to mobilize the discontents of working-class and petty-bourgeois inner city white neighborhoods against the integration plans, and the suburbs appealed to the courts to stop the buses at the city limits.

In Boston there was an explosion of night-riding attacks on blacks and racist mobilization of white ethnic working-class communities to block the buses and boycott the schools. With the anti-busing forces taking to the streets, black liberals pinned their hopes on the government. With the aid of the reformist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which organized mass demonstrations on their behalf, the NAACP and black Democrats made the demand for federal troops a major focus in Boston. For enforcement of the busing plan they relied on a liberal federal district judge.

But the anti-busing racists in ROAR and similar groups around the country had a better sense of which way the

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## Heat Walkout Pickets Face Jail

# UAW Must Defend Trenton Chrysler Seven!

DETROIT—Over 125 protesters jammed a federal courtroom here September 19 as seven United Auto Workers (UAW) militants went on trial. The charges against them stem from their alleged involvement in a wildcat strike this summer which shut down Chrysler's Trenton Engine Plant for nearly a week. Facing up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine apiece, the Local 372 members are charged with criminal contempt of a Chrysler-obtained restraining order which prohibited picketing at the key plant. Chrysler has already fired the workers—now it is vindictively trying to railroad them in the courtroom as a warning to all UAW members not to act against the company-union enforced no-strike clause.

U.S. district judge John Feikens made clear early on what kind of "justice" he had in mind. Though Feikens' old law firm still handles Chrysler business and his son is on the Chrysler legal staff, the "impartial" judge refused to disqualify himself. Feikens even tried to appoint Chrysler attorneys as special U.S. prosecutors for the case and, reaching a height of arrogance, refused the workers' request for a jury trial. Without massive protest by the UAW ranks, the judge's verdict, due October 6, is highly predictable.

The strike at the Trenton plant was the largest and longest of many walkouts that hit Detroit-area auto plants this summer, most of them sparked by a heat wave that sent temperatures skyrocketing to 120 degrees inside the factories. With UAW officialdom completely unwilling to shut down the infernos which claimed the lives of several workers through heat stroke and heart attack, angry workers hit the bricks on their own.

After a walkout at the Trenton plant July 20, one of the hottest days of the summer, Chrysler management fired chief steward Bob Paolucci and five production workers. On the afternoon shift August 8 hundreds of workers, demanding that the disciplines be dropped, walked out and kept the plant shut down until the following Monday. They continued to picket the plant throughout the week, ignoring Local 372 and UAW International officials who ordered them to return to work. When Trenton police handed out dozens of court orders barring picketing, they were torn up and flung on the ground by pickets who chanted, "Hell no, we won't go!"

The strike remained solid and was beginning to shut down other Chrysler plants which rely on Trenton's engines when Paolucci, looked to for leadership, came through for Chrysler and the UAW hierarchy and urged the workers to end the strike. Though Paolucci has gotten his job back, no doubt thanks to his effort in ending the wildcat, chief

steward Dave Heindrich, alternate steward Roger Elkins, executive board member Thomas Cunningham plus rank-and-filers Al Larcinese, Dennis White, James Hart and Thomas Kemp were fired and are now singled out for prosecution.

An agreement in late August between Solidarity House and Chrysler secured the rehiring of every other worker fired this summer in the heat walkouts, but the seven Trenton workers remained fired and are on trial for a reason: neither Chrysler, the UAW nor the courts want to tolerate violation of the sacrosanct no-strike clause in cumbersome grievance procedure which chains the workers to the assembly lines. Though over 50 workers in the city got their jobs back, the Trenton Seven are

must fight not only for the right to strike over all grievances without the grudging and seldom-given approval of the International. They also need to boot the betrayers out of office and replace them with a militant class-struggle leadership.

### Drop the Charges!

In his summary remarks at the trial, defense attorney Leonard Jaques noted that the prosecution of the Trenton Seven was an "unprecedented case in this court's history." Restraining orders have, of course, been used to break UAW wildcats, but it is quite rare that contempt charges are pursued once a strike is over. Denouncing the selective victimization of the seven workers—out



WV Photo

**Auto worker arrested last August outside Chrysler engine plant in Trenton, Michigan.**

being pilloried as an object lesson in "labor discipline."

In an August 26 press release announcing that most fired Chrysler workers would be reinstated, UAW vice president and Chrysler department director Marc Stepp drove the no-strike point home, taking the opportunity to get in a little "outside agitator" baiting as well. Stepp announced:

"I plan to meet in the very near future, with the leadership of the Chrysler local unions to review with them their responsibilities for handling disputes through the use of normal grievance procedure, as outlined in the collective bargaining agreement with the Chrysler Corporation and the UAW constitution.

"In addition, I want to serve notice that we will no longer tolerate outsiders who choose to interfere in the affairs of our union and its members and who try to obstruct the collective bargaining process, nor will we tolerate management's disregard of the health and safety of our members.

"I want to assure all Chrysler workers in all Chrysler locals that I stand ready to work with them to resolve whatever problems they may have, provided the established procedure is followed. Unauthorized walkouts only serve to hamper that procedure severely and preclude me from giving the assistance that may be needed by the membership."

What "precludes" the UAW hacks from backing up the membership, much less leading them, is not just the no-strike clause which these hypocritical fakers re-negotiate into every contract. It is their iron-clad commitment to keep peace in the plants on behalf of the bosses that is the real source of the bureaucrats' treachery. The UAW ranks

of hundreds of pickets—Jaques correctly charged that the proceedings made the court a "pawn of Chrysler" and that "all labor is on trial in this city, where labor rose up and grew strong."

At a September 18 meeting of Local 372 the membership voted a resolution demanding that all charges against the Trenton Seven be dropped and that they be immediately reinstated in their jobs; that there be no disciplines for the wildcat and that all records be cleared. In addition they demanded that the International throw its full weight behind the defense, including if necessary an authorized strike by Local 372 and all other Chrysler plants.

But Solidarity House has let the Trenton Seven stand trial alone. For fear of appearing to condone an "illegal" strike, the union is providing neither legal assistance nor funds for the workers' defense. A Trenton Defense Committee has been formed in Local 372 and over \$2,000 has been collected in the plant. The Partisan Defense Committee has sent a contribution to the Defense Committee and encourages readers of *WV* to do likewise. UAW members throughout the country have a stake in this case. They must rally to the defense of the Trenton Seven and demand that the International take all necessary action, including a strike, to secure dropping of the charges, rehiring of the seven and wiping out all disciplines.

Contributions can be sent to: Trenton Defense Committee, c/o UAW Local 372, 4571 Division Street, Trenton, MI 48183. ■

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## Front Man for Auto Bosses Wins Primary

# Coleman Young's Phony Renaissance in Detroit

DETROIT—Mayor Coleman Young, the nation's bellwether "progressive" black local politician, easily defeated ten rivals in the September 14 mayoral primary here. Young took a commanding 55 percent of the vote, with the two leading white candidates trailing a distant third and fourth. He will now face the runner-up, city councilman Ernest C. Browne, Jr. in the November general elections. Thus for the first time in a major U.S. city, two black politicians will face each other as the top contenders for the mayor's office. But for Detroit's predominantly black working class and the huge mass of chronically unemployed, the "choice" means nothing. Neither candidate will bring relief from the squalor and grinding exploitation of decaying "Motor City."

Young based his campaign on the claim that he "turned Detroit around." Shaken by the 1967 ghetto explosion, a group of corporate investors led by Henry Ford II bankrolled the showcase multi-million dollar Renaissance Center on the Detroit River, which was inaugurated last spring. The mayor claims this as proof of the city's revitalization. However, the much ballyhooed RenCen towers featuring luxury accommodations for businessmen and tourists loom over rotting slum dwellings and empty office buildings in a downtown that is deserted after dark.

Even the current "recovery" of the auto industry, far and away the largest employer of Detroit workers, is temporary, based on an unsustainable expansion of consumer credit. The upturn was accompanied by the permanent elimination of nearly 100,000 jobs in the industry and enforcement of the worst speed-up campaign in decades. As a result unemployment in Detroit officially stands at nearly 10 percent, the highest rate of any American metropolis. Six out of ten black youth are jobless, and for every four employed one person is on welfare. The crime rate is so astronomical that Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets are guarded by rent-a-cops with high-powered pistols and sometimes shotguns.

For the Detroit bourgeoisie, Young's accomplishment was getting through his first term without a major crisis despite the presence of all the ingredients for a violent social upheaval. Thanks to the sellouts at United Auto Workers (UAW) Solidarity House, he weathered the 1974-75 depression-level unemployment. He rode out a sensational wave of youth gang violence and several near-revolts in the scandal-ridden, predominantly white police force. When the city's "fiscal crisis" hit this year, he cut the budget and the city workforce with a vengeance, while avoiding prolonged strikes with the help of Teamster and public employee union bureaucrats. For his success in keeping the lid on a tinder box of race and class discontent, Coleman Young received the endorsement of the entire Detroit political establishment, from UAW chief Doug Fraser to Henry Ford II and financier/real estate magnate Max Fisher.

### Cops and Crime

Although Detroit has the largest single concentration of workers in heavy industry in America, the absence of a

workers party representing this proletarian mass has meant that politics in "Motor City" is centered on racial hostility. With voters about equally divided between white and black (due to lower registration among blacks), Young's strategy has been to sweep the black vote and pick up enough white liberal support to win. His opponent in the runoff, Ernest Browne, is aiming to do just the opposite. Browne hopes to sew up the white vote and appeal to enough conservative, middle-class and older black voters to put together a majority. Thus the campaign for the November election promises to see both candidates hurling the obvious charge that their opponent is playing racist politics.

Young presents himself as a man who can bring together blacks, industry and labor while projecting a style that is a combination of Southern preacher and hip poverty program hustler. During the primary he blasted Browne as the "first black white hope" in history and a "racist." Browne, who concentrated his campaign in white neighborhoods, called Young a "hoodlum street fighter with gutter values" and a "bad example" for Detroit children. In contrast to Young's mod bachelor image, Browne

stresses that he is a family man, a regular church-goer and long-time Boy Scout leader.

Browne's biggest issue is "crime in the streets." He calls for the reintroduction of STRESS (Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets), the Detroit police department's plain-clothes decoy killer squad which Young disbanded in 1973. Browne also vows to put more cops on the streets and opposes Young's "affirmative action" program which has raised the number of black police from 18 to 30 percent of the force while enraging white cops. This appeal to white racism has brought him the support of the Detroit Police Officers Association and the Lieutenants and Sergeants Association.

Such endorsements will cost Browne a lot of black votes, however. Young's pledge to abolish STRESS, which gunned down 13 innocent victims in one year alone, was key to his 1973 victory over police chief John "Blackjack" Nichols. Blacks who recall that the Detroit police department traditionally sent recruiters into the South to hire Dixie's finest racist thugs have little sympathy for white cops passed over for promotion or laid off out of line of "seniority." But as a capitalist politician, the "progressive" Young has no alterna-



Coleman Young

WV Photo

tive to cop terror. He simply proposes to change the color of the faces of these killers in blue and oust a few of the more notorious racists.

### "Bringing Home the Bacon"?

Young plays on his ties to the Democratic administration in Washington. One of Carter's earliest black supporters, Young helped the president ride out the furor over his racist "ethnic purity" remarks and squeak through to victory in the Michigan primary. Now the mayor says Detroit can collect on this IOU. To prove it, just before the election, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) secretary Patricia Harris conveniently presented Young with a \$10-million rehabilitation grant for the city's squalid southeast side. TV spots showed a bank vault door slamming shut "if Mayor Young isn't re-elected," and giant billboards carried the message: "Mayor Young brings home the bacon."

But there hasn't been much bacon for the workers and poor in Detroit. While Young dined with his friend "Hank the Deuce" and other industry fat cats on sterling silver plates at the inaugural dinner in the RenCen's revolving tri-level restaurant, Detroit's laid-off workers live in surroundings of burnt-out storefronts, rubble-strewn ghetto lots and potholed streets. The HUD grant for 300 new housing units pales next to the estimated 10,000 abandoned homes owned by the housing agency in the city. Eighty thousand Mexican Americans are crowded into the southwest section and an equal number of Arabs, the largest concentration in North America, live in even worse conditions.

### Anti-Labor "Progressive"

It should be obvious that the candidate of the auto bosses will not and cannot relieve the plight of blacks, poor and working people in Detroit. Equally predictable has been Young's faithful carrying out of the directives of the banks and businesses during the "fiscal crisis." When city revenues nose-dived in 1975 as a result of depression conditions in the auto industry, Young cut the city payroll by 20 percent. Last year, when a seven-bank syndicate demanded more budget cuts as a condition for purchasing municipal bonds, Young pink-slipped 3,000 more employees.

Early in 1977 Young was admonished by Moody's and Standard and Poor's bond rating services that the city's credit rating was endangered by excessive pay scales and fringe benefits. Once more, Young did the bidding of the financiers.



RenCen—Detroit business' "answer" to urban blight.

WV Photo



# No to Forced Retirement

He vowed to "take a strike" of city employees rather than grant them more than a lousy 4-percent wage increase, far below the increase of the cost-of-living index. With the help of AFSCME bureaucrats who halted a city workers walkout in July after only one day, Young shoved the de facto wage cut down the workers' throats. Detroit teachers got even less—3 percent and an extra quarter hour added onto every class period with no additional pay.

Like Atlanta's black Democratic mayor Maynard Jackson, who last spring broke a strike of the predominantly black AFSCME municipal employees union by firing the strikers en masse, Young has made it clear that any resistance by labor to his job-slashing policies will be met by brutal force. When school bus drivers wildcatted earlier this year in a contract dispute, the



Ken Cockerel

WV Photo

city threatened to fire every worker who did not immediately return to work. During the summer, brief walkouts by nurses at Detroit General Hospital and Teamster garbage truck drivers were ended by court order.

This "big stick" policy could not work, however, particularly in a bastion of organized labor like Detroit, were it not for the collaboration of the labor skates, who have offered up their members' jobs to Young's budget-cutting ax with virtually no fight. And on the heels of these attacks they are giving enthusiastic support to Young's re-election campaign. As in other traditional union towns—New York, where bank-controlled "emergency" boards have ripped up labor contracts left and right, or San Francisco, where a liberal Democratic city administration smashed a 1976 municipal workers strike against massive wage cuts—the situation in Detroit cries out for a labor candidate. And here especially, where the Democratic party exists essentially at the unions' behest, it is clear that the main obstacle to forming a workers party is the pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy.

## Not Young But a Workers Party!

Like his counterparts elsewhere in the country—Newark's Gibson, Los Angeles' Bradley, Atlanta's Jackson—black Democrat Young has performed an important service for the racist ruling class of capitalist America by channeling the ghetto unrest that boiled over in the 1960's into the small change of electoral reformism. Not only has Young *not* brought home the bacon, not only has he launched an attack on the municipal unions, but he doesn't even fight for such elementary democratic rights for blacks as school integration. After the metropolitan busing plan was

*continued on page 10*

On September 23 the U.S. House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to raise the mandatory retirement age in private industry from 65 to 70 and to eliminate any mandatory retirement for most of the federal government's civilian workers. Its proponents chalked the measure up as another "human rights" victory, but the sanctimonious Carter administration itself played no role in passage and is pressuring for major amendments before the bill goes to the Senate.

The national legislative drive follows a spate of municipal and state laws eliminating or raising the mandatory retirement age. Major lobbyists included organizations of the elderly and retired and the American Civil Liberties Union. As one of them noted: "It's a very emotional issue, near to motherhood. It's hard for members of Congress to vote against it" (*Business Week*, 19 September). The vote tally in the House (359 to 4) certainly bore him out. While bourgeois politicians are viciously attacking the democratic rights of racial minorities, women, homosexuals and foreign workers, generalized sympathy for the aged and the significant voting strength of the 21 million people over 65 allows minimal legislative reforms in this area despite the general rightward political drift.

The issue of mandatory retirement focuses on the drastic drop in living



Bob McCullough

standards experienced by the elderly as they are forced out of the labor market. The majority of the over-65 population live at or below the official poverty level. The brute statistics are underlined by the hideous conditions of the nation's nursing homes, the tragic plight of aged derelicts and the sight of old people buying canned dog food as their only affordable source of meat. The plague of malnutrition and poor health is compounded by the trauma of being wrenched from the economic and social mainstream. Having extracted the life's blood of its workers for 40 to 50 years, capitalism discards them into a limbo of enforced idleness and desperate poverty while they wait to die.

The social-democratic reformist Michael Harrington wrote in *The Other America* that the United States is a country where "...youth is worshipped and death is rarely mentioned by name." The Kennedy and Johnson administrations, whose "war on poverty" programs were supposedly inspired by Harrington, ushered in an official lexicon of euphemisms and a mythic conception of the "twilight years" where "senior

citizens" contentedly pursue leisure activities and enroll in "golden age" clubs. While Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and similar measures provide some alleviation of the condition of the aged, their impact is marginal; the major beneficiaries are profit-gouging doctors, drug companies and nursing home proprietors. Such laws have aimed at making the retirement years more bearable without altering the societal exclusion of the elderly. Moreover, welfare programs for the elderly in the U.S. are among the worst in the industrialized capitalist world and qualitatively inferior to the social facilities, services and pensions for the aged in the deformed workers states of the Soviet Bloc.

The question of mandatory retirement encapsulates certain aspects of capitalism's glaring contradictions. Breakthroughs in medical science have dramatically increased life expectancy. At the turn of the century, white Americans lived an average of 47 years (slightly more for women); non-whites lived an average of 33 years. By 1968 life expectancy had grown to 67 years for white men, 74 for white women and 65 for all non-whites. This meant, among other things, a larger potential labor pool.

But capitalism is a system in decline, and the U.S. reversed its historic pattern of labor shortages as the twentieth century wore on. Except in periods of war, the American imperialist economy has been marked by widespread official unemployment and broader disguised unemployment of students, housewives and the retired (along with periodic mass deportations of foreign workers). In fact, the 1935 Social Security Act was drafted by a group of New Deal braintrusts partly to reduce astronomical jobless rates by establishing 65 as the general retirement age for industrial workers.

The labor bureaucracy has generally supported mandatory retirement for the same reason—as an artificial means of keeping the lid on unemployment in a decaying economy. Until this month, the AFL-CIO leadership had worked in tandem with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to block any changes in the mandatory retirement age. To the individual worker, the question of retirement usually reduces itself to the dilemma of choosing (where he is allowed a choice at all) between accepting a drastic cut in income or remaining at a back-breaking, monotonous job. Productive labor is a socially useful activity which forms the nexus of industrial societies. Yet capitalism with its drive for heightened productivity and profits degrades and brutalizes this essential human activity.

A recent Roper poll summarized its findings:

"Nearly two-thirds of working Americans would like to retire before age 62, and over one-third prefer to quit working before they hit 60. However, for people closest to retirement, those 60 and over, only one-third would opt to stop working before 62."

—*Wall Street Journal*, 13 September

More significantly, the opinion survey indicated that 61 percent would prefer to work *part-time* rather than retire completely.

A collectivized economy administered by a workers government would certainly allow older workers a choice between retirement at a decent income or staying at their jobs with working hours reduced to a level commensurate with their desires and physical abilities. The socialist solution to unemployment is not the forced exclusion of healthy, productive human beings from the workforce but a general shortening of the workweek at no loss in pay. Many of the most boring and onerous jobs would

be automated out of existence with the remaining jobs equitably shared out among the entire workforce.

The Spartacist League supports the raising of the mandatory retirement age (indeed, we favor its total abolition) as a simple extension of democratic rights. We also demand a national welfare system with a decent standard of living for the non-working population, and a socialized medical system to provide effective health care to all at no cost. At the same time we warn that the reactionary bourgeoisie always attempts to extract a price for any concessions it makes to the needs of the masses. Already Carter's Commerce Secretary Juanita Kreps has suggested raising the age for full Social Security benefits from 65 to 68 and for partial retirement payments from 62 to 65. And private employers are no doubt scheming for ways to cut back on their contributions to already meager pension funds. While opposing mandatory retirement, the workers movement must fight any attempt by the capitalists or government to raise the age of pension eligibility or otherwise cut back present retirement benefits.

It is the responsibility of the labor movement to champion the interests of all the oppressed. But this is not the program of the wretchedly pro-capitalist, racist, job-trusting labor bureaucracy. The construction of a revolutionary vanguard party with deep and authoritative roots in the trade unions and the toppling of the venal bureaucracy by a class-struggle leadership are key to unlocking the enormous wealth of American capitalism and placing it at the service of the masses through a workers government and a planned economy. ■

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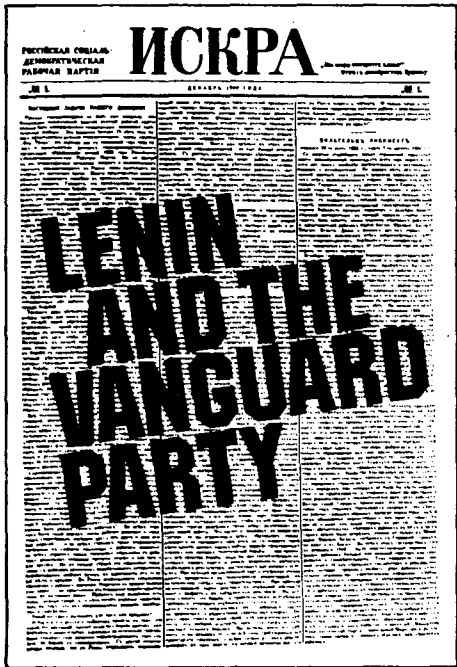
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# Bolshevism vs. Menshevism: the 1903 Split



## PART TWO

To understand the principle of the communist vanguard party, it is necessary to recognize the evolution of Lenin from a revolutionary social democrat to the founding leader of the Communist International. Various revisionists, notably the British workerist-reformist Tony Cliff, have attempted to deny or obfuscate the principle of the democratic-centralist vanguard party by pointing to those elements of classic social democracy retained by the pre-1914 Bolsheviks and conditioned by the particularities of the Russian situation. This series seeks to trace the development of Lenin's position on the party question. The first part (WV No. 173, 16 September) focused on the Kautskyan doctrine of the "party of the whole class" and its relevance to early Russian social democracy.

The Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP), held in Brussels and then London in July-August 1903, was to be the culmination of the Iskraist project to create a centralized party based on a comprehensive program. (In part because of repression, the formal founding congress of the RSDLP in 1898 did not change the nature of Russian social democracy from a movement of localized propaganda circles.) The Economists were not excluded from the Congress, but it was arranged so that the Iskraists would be a decisive majority. The *Iskra* group accounted for about two-thirds of the Second Congress' 46 delegates. Of the remaining third, about half were anti-Iskraists. These consisted of a few prominent Economists (Marty-nov, Akimov) and the semi-nationalist Bund, which claimed to be the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat and demanded a federated party.

In the first phase of the Congress, a solid Iskraist majority carried its line. The Iskraist group, including future Mensheviks, voted unanimously for a program which included elements later very much characteristic of Leninism. For example, the section "On the Trade Union Struggle" contains the following passage:

"...in so far as this struggle develops in isolation from the political struggle of the proletariat led by the Social Democratic Party, it leads to the fragmentation of the proletarian forces and to subordination of the workers' movement to the interests of the propertied classes."

—Robert H. McNeal, ed.,  
*Resolutions and Documents of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (1974)

However, beneath the seemingly solid front of the *Iskra* group were very

considerable tensions. One such potential polarity was between Lenin and Martov, who was consistently more conciliatory to the non- and anti-Iskraist elements of Russian social democracy. Even before the Congress, Martov was generally known as a "soft" Iskraist and Lenin as a "hard." Consequently, those *Iskra* supporters who favored a greater role for non-Iskraists in a unitary party looked to Martov as their natural leader; those wanting the Iskraists to keep a tight control of the party looked to Lenin.

The tension between Lenin's "hards" and Martov's "softs" manifested itself in a series of minor disputes from the very beginning of the Congress. As is well known, this tension exploded over the first paragraph of the rules which defined membership. Martov's draft defined a member as one who "renders it regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organizations." Lenin's membership criterion was "by personal participation in one of the Party organizations."

Lenin's narrower definition of membership was motivated by both a general desire to exclude opportunists (who were less likely to accept the rigors and dangers of full organizational participation) and by a desire to weed out dilettantes who had been attracted to Russian social democracy precisely because of its loose circle nature. Interestingly, it was Plekhanov who stressed the anti-opportunist aspect of a narrower party, while Lenin emphasized more practical, conjunctural considerations. Here is the heart of Plekhanov's argument:

"Many of the intelligentsia will fear to enter, contaminated as they are with bourgeois individualism; but this is all



Leon Trotsky

to the good, since those bourgeois individuals usually constitute representatives of all kinds of opportunism. The opponents of opportunism should therefore vote for Lenin's project, which closes the door to its penetration into the party."

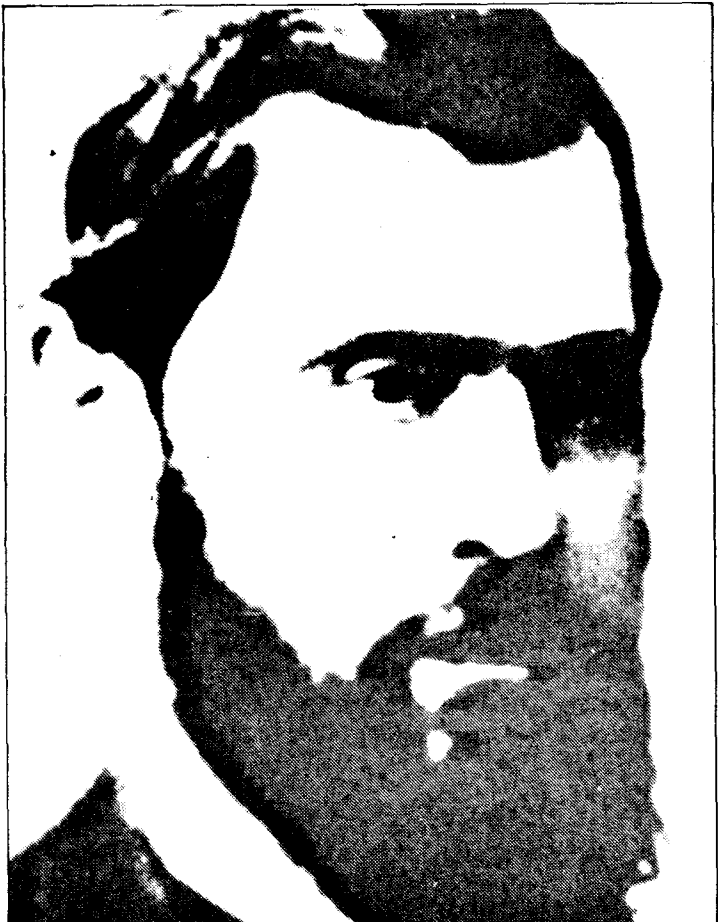
—quoted in Leopold H. Haimson, *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism* (1955)

Lenin argued on somewhat different grounds:

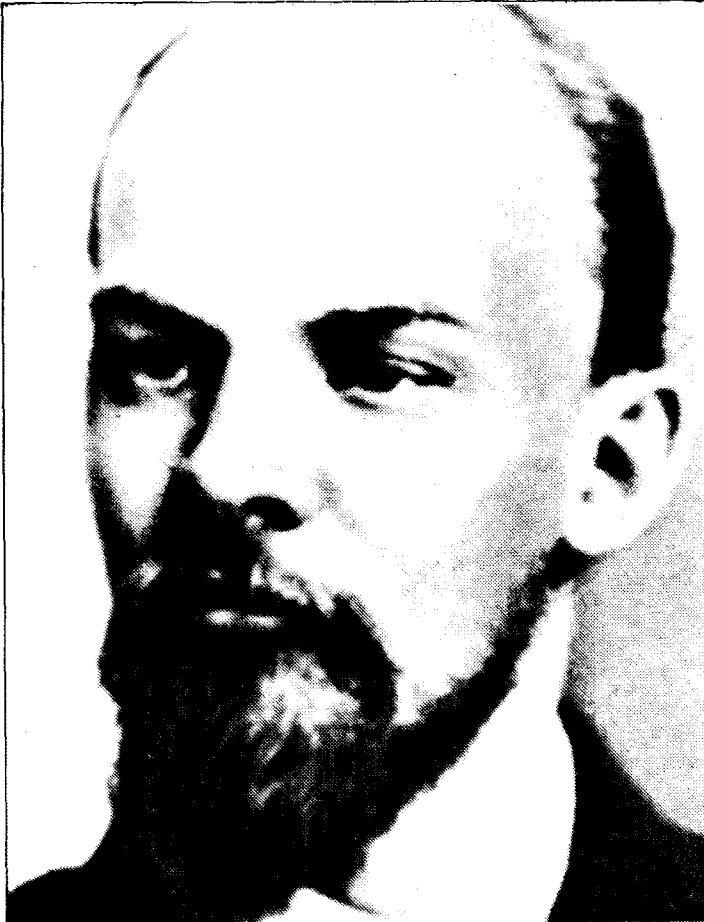
"The root of the mistake made by those who stand for Martov's formulation is that they not only ignore one of the main evils of our Party life, but even sanctify it. The evil is that, at a time when political discontent is almost universal, when conditions require our work to be carried out in complete secrecy, and when most of our activities have to be confined to limited, secret circles and even to private meetings, it is extremely difficult, almost impossible in fact, for us to distinguish those who only talk from those who do the work. There is hardly another country in the world where the jumbling of these two categories is as common and as productive of such boundless confusion as in Russia.... It would be better if ten who do the work should not call themselves Party members... than that one who only talks should have the right and opportunity to be a Party member. That is a principle which seems to me indisputable, and which compels me to fight against Martov." [our emphasis]

—"Second Speech in the Discussion on the Party Rules" (1903)

With the support of the Economists, Bundists and centrists, Martov's formulation carried. However, the Economists and Bundists soon thereafter quit the Congress when it refused to accept their respective organizational claims. This gave Lenin's "hards" a slight majority. The decisive split occurred over the election of the *Iskra* editorial board. The old editorial board contained four Martovite "softs" plus Lenin and Plekhanov. Lenin proposed that the board be reduced to three with him and Plekhanov forming a "hard" majority. This proposal was a highly emotional issue since the veterans, Axelrod and Zastūch, were sentimental favorites in the party. When Lenin's proposal carried, the Martovites refused to serve



Jules Martov



V. I. Lenin

Progress

on either the editorial board or central committee.

Much acrimonious debate centered on whether Lenin had informed Martov of his plan to reduce the editorial board before the Congress, whether Martov agreed, etc. The pre-history of the editorial board fight is unclear because it involved private discussions. What is clear is that Lenin's unwillingness to compromise on the issue derived from the vote on membership criteria. It was definitely Lenin who began the *factional* struggle. He refused to regard the difference on membership criteria as an incidental dispute, but insisted it be made the basis for majority-minority representation on the party's leading bodies.

The period between the Second Congress and the beginning of the revolution of 1905 was marked by the erosion of the Leninist "hard" majority. Throughout this period most of Lenin's political energy was directed against those majority supporters who wanted to restore unity by capitulating to the Mensheviks, reversing the decisions of the Second Congress and liquidating the Bolshevik tendency.

The Mensheviks first counter-attacked at a congress of the Foreign League of Russian Revolutionary Social Democracy in October 1903, where they secured a slight majority. When the League refused to recognize the authority of the leading bodies elected at the Second Congress, the Bolsheviks walked out. This finalized the split.

While Plekhanov supported the Bolshevik faction, he shrank from a definitive split over what appeared to be a purely organizational rather than a principled question. At a Bolshevik caucus meeting in November, he reportedly blurted out: "I cannot fire at my own comrades. Better a bullet in the head than a split" (quoted in Samuel H. Baron, *Plekhanov: Father of Russian Marxism* [1963]). He thereupon used his authority to co-opt to the *Iskra* editorial board the four Martovites from the old board; Lenin resigned in protest.

During 1904 the all-Bolshevik Central Committee, which Lenin joined after resigning from *Iskra*, followed Plekhanov's course. Lenin, believing that his supporters were stronger among the committee men in *Russia* than among the more intellectual exile milieu, came out for a new party congress to reestablish his majority and recapture the now-Menshevik central organ, *Iskra*. The Central Committee opposed a new congress, co-opted three Mensheviks and effectively expelled Lenin from that body.

In late 1904 Lenin completely broke with the official central party bodies and established a de facto Bolshevik central committee called the Bureau of Majority Committees. At the start of 1905, the Bolsheviks established their own organ, *Vperyod*.

The logic of the factional struggle drove the Mensheviks to the right; gradually they replicated the politics of the defeated Economists. Martov and Plekhanov wrote self-critical articles about the old *Iskra*, stating they had been one-sided (in other words, Leninists) in their attacks on the Economists. The organic fusion of the Mensheviks and Economists was signaled by the co-optation of A.S. Martynov to the editorial board of the new *Iskra*.

The Leninists saw their struggle against the Mensheviks, both politically and organizationally, as a repeat of the fight of *Iskra* versus Economism. One of Lenin's lieutenants, Lyadov, instructed a Bolshevik supporter in late 1904 to re-fight the campaign against Economism:

"We are not to leave the party, but to fight for all our worth.... We have to conquer Russia [i.e., the committees] despite the central institutions, and we shall do this in the same way as *Iskra* once did. We have to repeat the work of *Iskra* and bring it to completion."

—quoted in J.L.H. Keep, *The Rise of Social Democracy in Russia* (1963)

By early 1905, Lenin was convinced the leading Mensheviks were incorrigible and organizationally unprincipled opportunists, and came out for a complete split. In contrast to the policy toward the Economists, Lenin opposed allowing the Menshevik leaders to participate in a new party congress, at which he intended to found a Bolshevik party:

"The [Menshevik] centres may and should be invited, but to accord them voting status is, I repeat, madness. The centres, of course, will not come to our Congress anyway; but why give them another chance to spit in our faces? Why this hypocrisy, this game of hide-and-seek? We bring the split into the open, we call the *Vperyod*-ists to a congress, we want to organise a *Vperyod*-ist party, and we break immediately any and all connections with the disorganisers—and yet we having loyalty dinned into our ears, we are asked to act as though a joint congress of *Iskra* and *Vperyod* were possible." [emphasis in original]

—"Letter to A.A. Bogdanov and S.I. Gusev" (11 February 1905)

As Lenin projected, the Mensheviks boycotted the Third (all-Bolshevik) Congress held in London in April 1905 and convened their own rival gathering.

What did Leninism represent in 1904? Above all it represented a firm commitment to revolutionary social democracy, particularly the leading role of the proletarian party in the struggle against tsarist absolutism. It further represented an intransigent attitude toward demonstrated opportunists, like the Economist leaders, and a distrustful attitude toward their possible conversion to revolutionary politics. Lenin was committed to a centralized, disciplined party, and consequently intransigently hostile to the circlism-cliqueism characteristic of the Russian social-democratic movement. Apart from the question of

Trotsky's "prophecy" that Lenin's organizational conceptions would lead the party to "substitute itself for the working classes" ("Trotsky on Substitutionism," *International Socialism*, Autumn 1960; reprinted in the I.S. Collection, *Party and Class* [London, n.d.]). In particular, such left social democrats, claiming that Trotsky foresaw that Leninism must lead to Stalinism, invariably cite the following passage:

"In the internal politics of the party, these [Leninist] methods, as we will see, lead to the party organization replacing the party itself, the central committee [replacing] the party organization and finally a dictator [replacing] the central committee...."

—from "Unsere politischen Aufgaben," in Leo Trotzki, *Schriften zur revolutionären Organisation* (Hamburg, 1970)

Conversely, the Stalinists have exploited "Our Political Tasks" to argue that Trotsky's hostility to the Soviet bureaucracy was nothing but an expression of unregenerate Menshevism.

Apart from a large dose of subjective hostility toward Lenin motivated by a sentimental attachment to the pioneers of Russian Marxism, Trotsky's polemic, like Luxemburg's, is based on an ultra-Kautskyan conception of the party question. He sees the tasks of the party as raising the entire class to social-democratic consciousness through a lengthy, pedagogical process:

"One method consists of taking over the thinking for the proletariat, i.e., political substitution for the proletariat; the other consists of political education of the proletariat, its political mobilization, to exercise concerted pressure on the will of all political groups and parties...."

"The party is based on the given level of consciousness of the proletariat, and intervenes in every great political event with the aim of shifting the line of

the mass of active workers in struggle, but among these workers there are many whose socialist convictions will be partial, inconsistent and episodic.

In his major anti-Menshevik polemic of this period, "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back" (May 1904), Lenin replies succinctly to the Axelrod/Trotsky position:

"The Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused, after all, with the entire class. And Comrade Axelrod is guilty of just this confusion (which is characteristic of our opportunistic Economism in general)...."

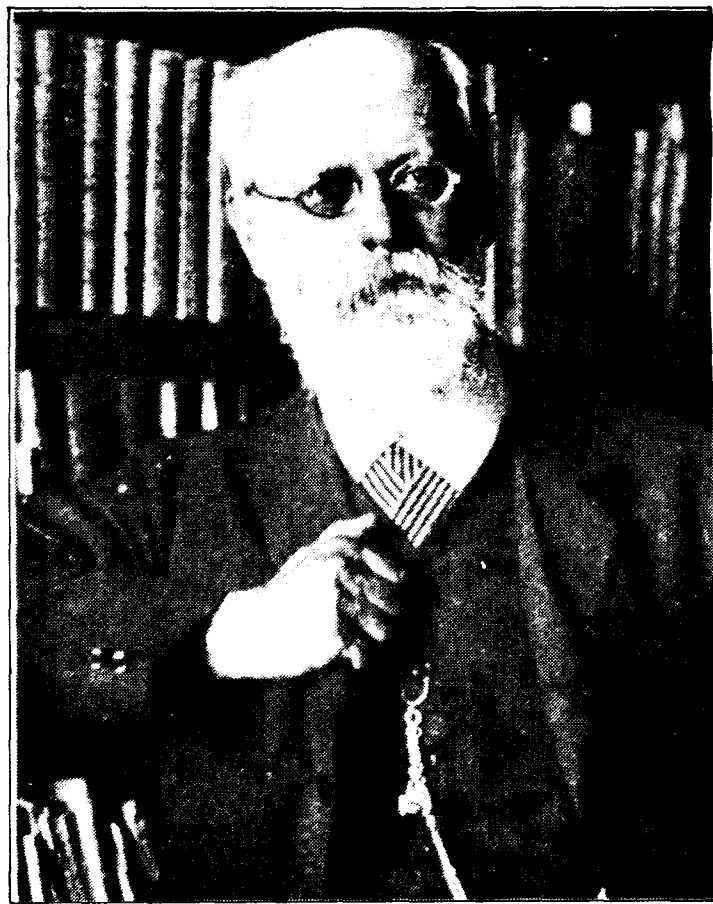
"We are a party of a class, and therefore almost the entire class (and in times of war, in a period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to the Party as closely as possible. But it would be... 'tail-ism' to think that the entire class, or almost the entire class, can ever rise, under capitalism, to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party." [emphasis in original]

It should be noted that Lenin's formulation of class-party relations here still does not completely break with the Kautskyan "party of the whole class" since he obviously assumes only a single party based on the proletariat.

It is not substitutionism for a revolutionary party to lead—through the trade unions, factory committees, soviets, etc.—masses of workers who are not conscious socialists. This is precisely the task of the revolutionary vanguard. Substitutionism is when the vanguard engages in *military* action against the bourgeoisie without the support of the non-party masses. Substitutionism manifests itself in putschism, terrorism/guerrillaism, dual unionism or minority attempts at general strike action (like the German March Action of 1921). Despite repeated



Rosa Luxemburg



Karl Kautsky

membership criteria, these differences between 1904 Bolshevism and Menshevism were difficult to express as counterposed principles. They manifested themselves over concrete organization matters and appeared to most outsiders (like Kautsky) to represent differences in degree rather than in principle.

#### Trotsky's Menshevik Polemic

Among the numerous anti-Lenin diatribes in 1903-04, Trotsky's "Our Political Tasks" was much less significant than those of Axelrod, Plekhanov and Luxemburg. However, because of Trotsky's later authority as a great revolutionary, various reformists and centrists have given prominence to his 1904 polemic. Tony Cliff, long-time leader of the International Socialists (now Socialist Workers Party) of Britain, has devoted a whole essay to

development in the direction of the interests of the proletariat; and, even more importantly, with the aim of raising the level of consciousness, in order then to base itself on that raised level of consciousness and again use it to further this dual aim." [emphasis in original]

Trotsky is here strongly influenced by Axelrod, frequently quoted in the polemic, who at this time came out for convening an inclusive, non-party "workers congress." This would, in effect, have liquidated the weak, fledgling RSDLP.

To postpone the revolutionary struggle for power until the entire working class has achieved socialist consciousness is to relegate it "to the Greek calends"; under capitalism, the working class in its overwhelming majority cannot completely transcend bourgeois ideological influence. The revolutionary vanguard party must lead

Menshevik accusations of Blanquism, Lenin's Bolsheviks did not engage in such adventurist activities. By the eve of World War I the Bolsheviks had become the mass party of the Russian industrial proletariat, far outstripping the ill-organized, disparate Mensheviks.

In any case, those who would use the early Trotsky's polemic against Leninism must come to terms with Trotsky's own later renunciation and critique of his Menshevik and conciliationist position in those years. In *My Life* (1929) he wrote of the 1903 RSDLP congress:

"My break with Lenin occurred on what might be considered 'moral' or even personal grounds. But this was merely on the surface. At bottom, the separation was of a political nature and merely expressed itself in the realm of organization methods. I thought of myself as a centralist. But there is no doubt that at that time I did not fully realize what an

continued on page 8



# 1903 Split...

(continued from page 7)

intense and imperious centralism the revolutionary party would need to lead millions of people in a war against the old order."

Trotsky never authorized a reprinting of "Our Political Tasks," and it was explicitly not included in the Russian edition of his works published before the Stalinist usurpation.

## Behind Luxemburg's Anti-Leninist Polemic

Rosa Luxemburg's "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy," published in the SPD theoretical journal *Neue Zeit* and the Menshevik *Iskra*, is probably the most intrinsically significant of the anti-Lenin polemics following the 1903 split. It stands back from the immediate issues and personal recriminations of the split, and it does not engage in superficial unity mongering. Luxemburg's differences with Lenin exist both at the level of the problems, tasks and perspectives of the Russian movement and of the organizational nature of social democracy in general. In both the Russian and general cases these differences center on the nature of opportunism and how to combat it.

Their differences over social-democratic opportunism in Russia can be briefly expressed as follows. Before the 1905 Revolution, Lenin saw the main opportunist danger as adaptation to tsarist absolutism; Luxemburg saw it as the subordination of the Russian proletariat to revolutionary bourgeois democracy out of power. For Lenin, a social-democratic opportunist was a dilettante quick to make a personal peace with tsarist society, and perhaps an aspiring trade-union official. For Luxemburg, a social-democratic opportunist was a bourgeois radical demagogue actually striving for governmental power, a Russian version of the French Radical leader Georges Clemenceau, an ex-Blanquist.

For Lenin from 1901 through 1904, and for the *Iskra* tendency as a whole, the main expression of Russian social-democratic opportunism was Economism, an amalgam of minimalist trade-union agitation, passive adaptation to liberal tsarism, organizational localism and individualistic functioning. Luxemburg was no less opposed to pure-and-simple trade unionism than was Lenin, but evidently did not regard Economism as a serious opportunist current in Russia, as a serious contender for influence over the working class. As for the circle spirit and anarchistic individualism which Lenin took as his main enemy at the organization level, Luxemburg seemed to consider these traits an unavoidable overhead cost at the given stage of the social-democratic movement in Russia. When the socialist proletariat is small, believed Luxemburg, a loose movement of localized propaganda circles is the normal and, in a sense, healthy organizational expression of social democracy:

"How to effect a transition from the type of organization characteristic of the preparatory stage of the socialist movement—usually featured by disconnected local groups and clubs, with propaganda as a principal activity—to the unity of a large, national body, suitable for concerted political action over the entire vast territory ruled by the Russian state? That is the specific problem which the Russian Social Democracy has mulled over for some time.

"Autonomy and isolation are the most pronounced characteristics of the old organizational type. It is, therefore, understandable why the slogan of the persons who want to see an inclusive national organization should be 'Centralism!'....

"The indispensable conditions for the realization of Social-Democratic centralism are: 1. The existence of a large contingent of workers educated in the political struggle. 2. The possibility for the workers to develop their own

political activity through direct influence on public life, in a party press, and public congresses, etc.

"These conditions are not yet fully formed in Russia. The first—a proletarian vanguard, conscious of its class interests and capable of self-direction in political activity—is only now emerging in Russia. All efforts of socialist agitation and organization should aim to hasten the formation of such a vanguard. The second condition can be had only under a regime of political liberty." [our emphasis]

—Luxemburg, "Organizational Questions of the Russian Social Democracy"

Luxemburg's belief in the gradual transition from a movement of localized circles to a centralized, unitary party was not only counterposed to Leninism, but logically placed her outside and to the right of the pre-split *Iskra* tendency as a whole.

The view expressed above is at some variance with Luxemburg's actual organizational practice in the Polish part of the Russian empire. The Luxemburg/Jogiches Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) was a very small, but highly centralized, propaganda organization. And, unlike Lenin's Bolsheviks, Luxemburg's SDKPiL made serious sectarian and ultra-left errors (see "Lenin vs. Luxemburg on the National Question," *WV* No. 150, 25 March 1977).

Mention of the SDKPiL is a reminder that one cannot simply take "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy" at face value. Though from very different motivations, Luxemburg's Polish social democracy was just as protective of its organizational autonomy as was the Bund. The SDKPiL sent two observers to the second RSDLP congress, where they negotiated for broad autonomy within an all-Russian party. Lenin's advocacy of a centralized party of all social democrats in the Russian empire challenged, at least in principle, the highly-valued organizational prerogatives of Luxemburg's SDKPiL.

Luxemburg looked for Russian social-democratic opportunism in exactly the opposite direction than did Lenin. Luxemburg feared that the Russian social-democratic intelligentsia would give rise to a radical bourgeois party using socialist rhetoric, and thus suppress the development of political class consciousness among the Russian proletariat. With this prognosis, Luxemburg saw in Lenin's centralism, rather than in Menshevism, the most likely source of opportunism (i.e., adaptation to the bourgeoisie). Lenin's insistence on the leading role of social democracy in the struggle against absolutism and on the leading role of professional revolutionaries in the party appeared to Luxemburg (and not only to her) as characteristic of a bourgeois radical party.

In fact, it was common in Menshevik circles in this period to accuse the Leninists of being bourgeois radicals in social-democratic clothing. The leading Menshevik, Potresov, for example, likened the Bolsheviks to Clemenceau's Radicals. Luxemburg saw in Lenin's "Jacobinism" the unconscious desire of radical bourgeois intellectuals to suppress their working class base after overthrowing tsarism and coming to power. She advocated a broad, loose social-democratic movement as a curb on radical bourgeois demagogues à la Clemenceau the ex-Blanquist:

"If we assume the viewpoint claimed as his own by Lenin and we fear the influence of intellectuals in the proletarian movement, we can conceive of no greater danger to the Russian party than Lenin's organizational plan. Nothing will more surely enslave a young labor movement to an intellectual elite hungry for power than this bureaucratic strait jacket....

"Let us not forget that the revolution soon to break in Russia will be a bourgeois and not a proletarian revolution. This modifies radically all the conditions of proletarian struggle. The Russian intellectuals, too, will rapidly become imbued with bourgeois ideolo-

gy. The Social Democracy is at present the only guide of the Russian proletariat. But on the day after the revolution, we shall see the bourgeoisie, and above all the bourgeois intellectuals, seek to use the masses as a steppingstone to their domination.

"The game of bourgeois demagogues will be made easier if at the present stage, the spontaneous action, initiative, and political sense of the advanced sections of the working class are hindered in their development and restricted by the protectorate of an authoritarian Central Committee." [our emphasis]

—*Ibid.*

A central premise of Luxemburg's 1904 anti-Leninist polemic was that tsarist absolutism would soon be replaced by bourgeois democracy ("the revolution soon to break out in Russia will be bourgeois"). That is why she anticipated that radical parliamentary demagogy would be the principal expression of social-democratic opportunism. The revolution of 1905 proved Luxemburg's prognosis wrong. The revolution demonstrated that bourgeois liberalism was totally cowardly and impotent. It also demonstrated that social democracy was the only consistently revolutionary-democratic force in the Russian empire.

During the revolution Luxemburg condemned the Mensheviks for tailing the constitutional monarchists (the Cadets) and moved close to the Bolsheviks. Agreeing with Lenin on the leading role of the proletarian party in the anti-tsarist revolution, Luxemburg/Jogiches' SDKPiL formed an alliance with the Bolsheviks in 1906, an alliance which lasted until 1912 and gave Lenin leadership of the formally unitary RSDLP. At the fifth RSDLP congress in 1907, Luxemburg defended the narrowness and intransigence of the Bolsheviks, albeit with "soft" reservations:

"You comrades on the right-wing complain bitterly about the narrowness, the intolerance, the tendency toward mechanical conception in the attitudes of the Bolsheviks. And we agree with you.... But do you know what causes these unpleasant tendencies? To anyone familiar with party conditions in other countries, these tendencies are quite well known: it is the typical attitude of one section of Socialism which has to defend the independent class interests of the proletariat against another equally strong section. Rigidity is the form adopted by Social Democracy at one end when the other tends to turn into formless jelly, unable to maintain any consistent course under the pressure of events."

—quoted in J.P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg* (1966)

Liberals and social democrats have systematically suppressed reference to Luxemburg's close alliance with Bolshevism from the revolution of 1905 until 1912 and again from the outbreak of World War I until her assassination during the Spartacus uprising in 1919. They have, however, fully exploited her 1904 polemic in the service of anti-communism. Thus, the widely-circulated Ann Arbor Paperbacks for the Study of Communism and Marxism reprinted "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy" under the slanderous title "Leninism or Marxism?"

No less pernicious have been the efforts of many left-reformists and centrists to portray the Leninist democratic-centralist vanguard party as valid only for backward countries, while solidarizing with Luxemburg's 1904 anti-Bolshevik position for advanced capitalist countries. We have already noted that this was exactly the position of the reformist-workerist Tony Cliff, before "hard" Leninism became fashionable among radical youth in the late 1960's.

It is to be expected that an outright revisionist like Cliff would solidarize with Luxemburg against Lenin. What is not expected is that an ostensibly orthodox Trotskyist (i.e., Leninist) organization would adopt the "Luxemburgist" line as valid for advanced countries. Yet this is just what the French Organisation Communiste Internationaliste (OCI) does. In an intro-

duction to a popular French edition of *What Is To Be Done?* OCI leader Jean-Jacques Marie dismisses Lenin's advocacy of a democratic-centralist vanguard as peculiar to early twentieth-century Russia, and asserts that Luxemburg's 1904 position is appropriate to an advanced country with a highly developed workers movement.

"The centralist rigidity of *What Is To Be Done?* is linked to the particular characteristics of the Russian proletariat; that is to say, of a nascent proletariat which had just recently come out of the countryside impregnated with the traits of the Middle Ages, lacking education, crushed by conditions of existence similar to those of the French or English proletariat at the beginning of the nineteenth century....

"The role of the revolutionary intelligentsia as a factor of organization and consciousness, such as Lenin depicted it, is thus proportional to the degree of relative backwardness of a proletariat legally deprived of any form of trade-union or political organization. Thus the conflict between Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, for example, appears—if you leave aside their personal traits—as the expression of the enormous difference which separated one of the most uneducated proletariat in Europe and the German proletariat, at that time the most powerful and politically most vigorous and mature in the world....

"If the struggle for the socialist revolution is international in essence, its immediate forms and also the means to lead it depend on numerous factors, among them the national conditions in which each party matures."

—introduction to *Que faire?* (Paris, 1966)

The viewpoint which J.-J. Marie here attributes to Luxemburg is so diametrically opposed to her actual position it is hard to believe he has ever read "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy." As we have seen, Luxemburg's opposition to Leninist centralism for Russia was predicated precisely on the underdevelopment of proletarian movement. In 1904, Luxemburg was a centralizer and disciplinarian in the German party because the revisionist right was formally a minority. And this is explicitly stated in "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy":

"The Social Democracy must enclose the tumult of the nonproletarian protestants against the existing society within the bounds of the revolutionary action of the proletariat....

"This is only possible if the Social Democracy already contains a strong, politically educated proletarian nucleus class conscious enough to be able, as up to now in Germany, to pull along in its tow the declassed and petty bourgeois elements that join the party. In that case, greater strictness in the application of the principle of centralization and more severe discipline, specifically formulated in party bylaws, may be an effective safeguard against the opportunist danger. That is how the revolutionary socialist movement in France defended itself against the Jaurésist confusion. A modification of the constitution of the German Social Democracy in that direction would be a very timely measure." [our emphasis]

Luxemburg's pressure for greater centralization in the SPD was successful at the radical-dominated 1905 Jena congress, which adopted a genuinely centralist organizational structure. For the first time the officers of the basic party unit were made responsible to the national executive. Later on, of course, the SPD's famous centralized apparatus was used to suppress the revolutionary left led by Rosa Luxemburg.

The heart of the differences between Luxemburg and Lenin in 1904 and also later did not center on the degree of centralization, but on the nature of opportunism and how to combat it. The question of centralism and discipline derives its significance only in that context.

Luxemburg's 1904 anti-Lenin polemic was strongly conditioned by frustration at her essentially hollow victory over Bernsteinian revisionism. Revisionism was formally rejected by the SPD, the opportunists changed their tack and the party political activities continued much the same as before, in the spirit of passive



expectancy. Not long after writing "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy," Luxemburg expressed in a letter (14 December 1904) to the Dutch left socialist Henriette Roland-Holst her disillusionment with internal factional struggle in general:

"Opportunism is in any case a swamp plant, which develops rapidly and luxuriously in the stagnant waters of the movement; in a swift running stream it will die of itself. Here in Germany a forward motion is an urgent, burning need! And only the fewest realize it. Some fritter away their energy in petty disputes with the opportunists, others believe that the automatic, mechanical increase in numbers (at elections and in the organizations) is progress in itself!"

—quoted in Carl E. Schorske, *German Social Democracy 1905-1917* (1955)

Luxemburg's belief that an upsurge of militant class struggle would naturally dispel the opportunist forces in the SPD proved very wrong. In 1905 and again in 1910 a rising line of mass agitation against restricted suffrage was effectively suppressed on the initiative of the trade-union bureaucracy. In 1910 the *Neue Zeit*, under Kautsky's editorship, even refused to publish Luxemburg's article advocating a general strike.

In concluding "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy," Luxemburg develops a theory of the inevitability of opportunism and even opportunist phases in a social-democratic party. Attempts to preserve the party against opportunism through internal *organizational* means will, she contends, only reduce the party to a sect. Herein lies Luxemburg's fundamental difference with Lenin in 1904 and later:

"It follows that this movement can best advance by tacking betwixt and between the two dangers by which it is constantly threatened. One is the loss of its mass character; the other, the abandonment of its goal. One is the danger of sinking back to the condition of a sect; the other, the danger of becoming a movement of social reform."

"That is why it is illusory, and contrary to historic experience, to hope to fix, once for all, the direction of the revolutionary socialist struggle with the aid of formal means, which are expected to secure the labor movement against all possibilities of opportunist digression. Marxist theory offers us a reliable instrument enabling us to recognize and combat typical manifestations of opportunism. But the socialist movement is a mass movement. Its perils are not the insidious machinations of individuals and groups. They arise out of unavoidable social conditions. We cannot secure ourselves in advance against all possibilities of opportunist deviation. Such dangers can be overcome only by the movement itself—certainly with the aid of Marxist theory, but only after the dangers in question have taken tangible form in practice."

"Looked at from this angle, opportunism appears to be a product and an inevitable phase of the historic development of the labor movement."

Due to attempts by semi-syndicalist and ultra-left communist elements (e.g., "council communists") to claim Rosa Luxemburg as one of their own, it is often ignored that her polemic against Lenin on the organizational question was rooted in orthodox social-democratic concepts. The above quoted passage is ultra-Kautskyan in identifying the social-democratic party with the entire labor movement. From the premise of Kautsky's "party of the whole class," Luxemburg's logic is unassailable. Not only is there an opportunist wing of a social-democratic party, but there must be periods in which the influence of this wing is expanding.

From her German vantage point, Luxemburg saw that to form a Leninist party must mean a break with significant working-class tendencies under opportunist leadership and influence. This anti-social-democratic conclusion was blocked from Lenin's view by the *unorganized* state of the Russian party. In contrast to Luxemburg, Lenin was not faced with opportunist social-democratic tendencies which enjoyed a mass base. He believed the Mensheviks to be an intellectualist tendency incap-

able of building a mass workers movement.

### Kautsky/Bebel Intervene to Restore Unity

While Luxemburg's 1904 anti-Leninist polemic is today far better known, at that time the active pro-unity intervention of the SPD central leadership, Kautsky and Bebel, was more significant. It is important to consider Kautsky/Bebel's intervention in order to realize that Lenin built a programmatic homogeneous revolutionary party in Russia in the face of opposition from the leading authorities of the Socialist International.

In early 1904 one of Lenin's lieutenants, Lydin-Mandelstamm, wrote an article on the split for publication in Kautsky's *Neue Zeit*. Kautsky refused to publish it, and his reply to Lydin in mid-May 1904 is his earliest written statement on the split. He found the split entirely unjustified and profoundly irresponsible. He was also astute enough to recognize that it was Lenin's intransigence on the organizational question which perpetuated the split:

"Great responsibility rests upon the Russian social democracy. If it cannot unite, then it will stand before history and the international proletariat as a group of politicians which, out of personal and organizational difficulties of a very minor nature compared with its great historic task... has let slip an opportunity for striking a blow at Russian absolutism. But Lenin would bear the responsibility for having initiated this destructive discord." [our translation]

—quoted in Dietrich Geyer, "Die russische Parteispaltung im Urteil der deutschen Sozialdemokratie 1903-1905," in *International Review of Social History*, 1958

On the substantive organizational question which led to the split, Kautsky saw "neither a principled opposition between the needs of the proletariat and intellectuals nor between democracy and dictatorship, but rather simply a question of appropriateness."

Kautsky sent a copy of his reply to Lydin to the Menshevik leadership, who rightly regarded it as support to their side. With the author's permission, it was published in the new *Iskra*. In a letter (4 June 1904) to Axelrod, Kautsky deepened his pro-Menshevik stance to the point of giving them advice on how to best Lenin:

"But to a great degree the differences between you and the other side seem to rest upon misunderstandings. Not between you and Lenin, that I consider out of the question, but between you and Lenin's supporters in Russia. I have at least had the opportunity of conversing with various supporters of Lenin who came from Russia and I have found among them no views which would render cooperation... impossible. Their prejudice against you seems often only to rest on misinformation. If this is so, then unification would have to be possible, over and above Lenin's head, if these elements are treated judiciously..."

—*Ibid.*

And, in fact, the Mensheviks sought, with some success, to win over the more conciliatory Bolsheviks.

A more public indication of Kautsky's anti-Lenin stance was that *Neue Zeit* published Luxemburg's "Organizational Questions of Russian Social Democracy" without dissociating the journal from the views expressed therein. When Lenin wrote a reply, Kautsky refused to publish it on the grounds that *Neue Zeit* was not the appropriate arena to fight out the RSDLP split. In a letter (27 October 1904) to Lenin, he justified publishing Luxemburg's article by asserting that:

"I did not publish Rosa Luxemburg's article *because* it treated the Russian disputes but *in spite of this*. I published it because it treated the organizational question *theoretically*, and this question is also a subject of discussion with us in Germany. The Russian disputes are touched on there only in a fashion that will not draw the uninformed reader's attention to them." [emphasis in original]

—*Ibid.*

Kautsky's last assertion is disingenuous.

Kautsky advised Lenin to recast his reply in more theoretical terms if he wanted it published in the German organ. So far as we know, Lenin did not reply. One presumes Lenin regarded as decisive the specifics of the RSDLP split and didn't want to be drawn into an abstract discussion on principles of organization.

In October 1904 August Bebel, the venerated chairman of the SPD, proposed to the Menshevik leadership that they call a unity conference of all the groups present at the Second Congress of the RSDLP. Shortly thereafter, the German leadership urged a *far broader* conference including the petty-bourgeois populist Social Revolutionaries and national-liberationist Polish Socialist Party. Thus in 1904 the German Social Democratic leadership favored a bloc, if not a party, embracing all the oppositional forces in the tsarist empire to the left of the bourgeois liberals. The Mensheviks rejected such a broad unity as opportunist. This was an early indication that the Martovites were *not*, as Lenin mistakenly believed, to the right of the SPD central leadership.

Kautsky believed that the Mensheviks were as desirous of restoring unity as he was. But the Mensheviks' pro-unity stance was in part a pose for foreign consumption. In theory committed to a broad, inclusive party, the Menshevik leadership did not want to be in the same organization with Lenin's "hards." In response to Bebel's proposal, they agreed to call a "unity" conference inviting the Bund, Luxemburg/Jogiches' SDKPiL and some smaller social-democratic groups. But they *refused* to invite the Leninists! By this time Lenin had lost the former leadership of the RSDLP and had set up the Bureau of Majority Committees.

Kautsky now criticized the Menshevik leaders as irresponsible splitters. In a letter (10 January 1905) to Axelrod, he wrote:

"I don't understand your not inviting Lenin. This may well be justified on formal grounds, but one cannot view the matter so formally. From a *political* standpoint the exclusion [of Lenin] from the invitation seems to me an error. Even if he does not formally represent a particular organization, still he has a great deal of support, and your task is either to win him along with his supporters or separate these supporters from him.... In the present situation, which demands a unity of all revolutionary forces, it is my view that your task is to go the utmost in conciliation. If unity is then demonstrated to be impossible, then Lenin will have placed himself in a bad light, then you can

proceed against him with much greater force and success than at present, where your conflict appears almost solely one simply of authority...." [emphasis in original]

—*Ibid.*

Following the Bloody Sunday massacre in January 1905, the SPD leadership once again attempted to reunite the Russian social-democratic movement. Bebel publicly offered to arbitrate the differences. Bebel's offer concluded with a paternalistic scolding of Russian social democracy:

"The news about this split has stirred up great confusion and definite discontent in the international social democracy and everybody expects that after a free discussion both sides will find a common basis for struggle against the common enemy."

—quoted in Olga Hess Gankin and H.H. Fisher, *The Bolsheviks and the World War* (1940)

The Mensheviks, knowing Bebel was close to them politically, readily accepted his proposal. Lenin in effect rejected the unity proposal. In a reply (7 February 1905) to the German party chairman, he stated that he had no authority to accept the arbitration offer, which had to be put to a new party congress. He then added that in view of Kautsky's one-sided intervention, "it will not surprise me if intervention on the part of representatives of the German Social Democracy encounters difficulties within our ranks."

The all-Bolshevik Third Congress in April took no position on Bebel's proposal, in effect rejecting it. The Bolsheviks' self-confident spirit and unwillingness to accept German tutelage is well expressed by the delegate Barsov in his speech on Bebel's offer:

"...our German comrades are a force, they have matured through an inexorably critical, internal struggle against all forms of opportunism at party congresses and other meetings—and we must mature in the same way in order to play our great role, independently forging our own organizations into a party, not merely ideologically but in reality.... We must become active leaders of the entire proletarian class of Russia, by uniting and organizing ourselves immediately for struggle against autocracy for the glorious future of the reign of socialism."

—*Ibid.*

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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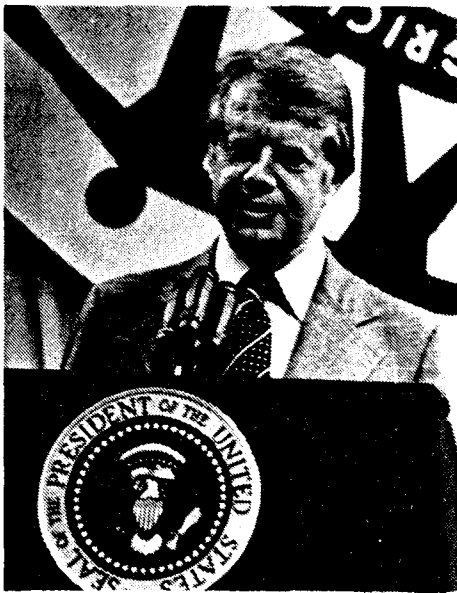
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# Busing...

(continued from page 3)

political winds were blowing. Liberal senator Kennedy stayed out of the issue entirely; liberal mayor White adopted a pose of neutrality while pressuring the court to "modify" the busing plan; and the judge agreed to greatly reduce its scope. President Ford, meanwhile, openly sided with the anti-busing forces, and the Supreme Court began issuing a series of decisions which add up to a ban on further court-ordered school desegregation plans.

The first decision was a key ruling against a "metropolitan" plan incorporating the suburban school systems in a common pool with the predominantly black inner-cities. In 1974 the Supreme Court ordered that busing in Detroit would stop at the city line. More recently, in 1977, the Court has ruled that it is necessary to show "intent" to keep blacks out in order to knock down discriminatory residential zoning ordinances. Then this same doctrine was extended to school segregation within a city when it



Jimmy Carter

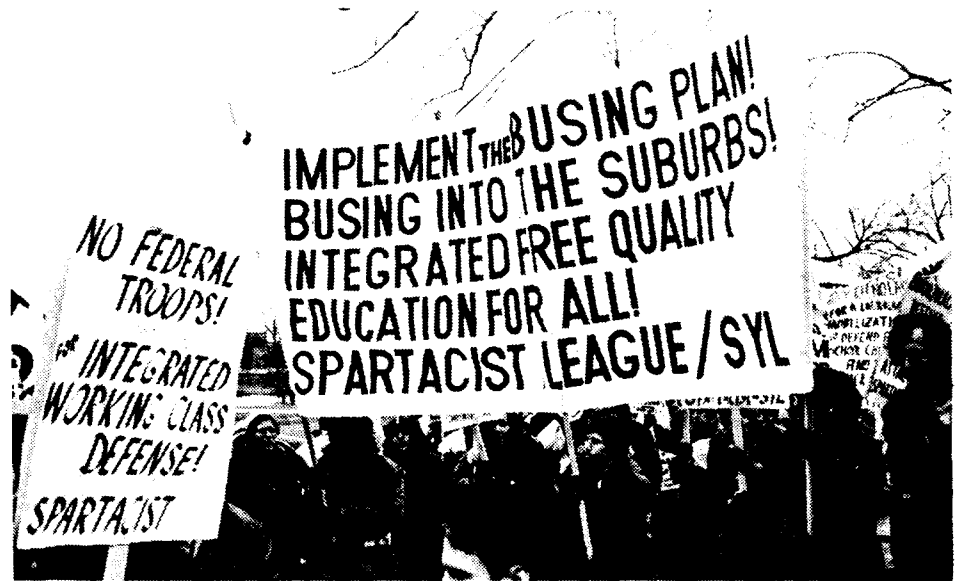
election of Carter, not only is the Supreme Court no longer liberal, the Senate is not liberal, the president is not liberal and the liberals are not "liberal." As U.S. imperialism declines and the crumbs become scarcer, the bourgeoisie and its state are no longer disposed to endorse limited or even token reforms on behalf of the oppressed.

The role of liberalism was to keep the struggle for black social equality within capitalist bounds and subordinated to the bourgeois state—and of course to prevent the development of a revolutionary proletarian vehicle to lead those struggles. But now busing is dead and the same state which once was hailed by civil rights liberals was the murder weapon. What has changed?

The liberals say it is the attitude of the government. The obvious conclusion: elect a new government, more sympathetic to the downtrodden and oppressed. And that is exactly what the black liberals and labor reformists claimed they were doing in 1976 when they backed Carter. But instead of a sympathetic hearing in Washington, what they got was more of the same.

What has changed is the objective situation of American capitalism, and thus of the liberal bourgeoisie as well. The new posture of liberalism is expressed in Carter's remark that "life isn't fair." The Democratic Party, which used to promise pie in the sky to labor and the poor, now smugly advises impoverished blacks to abandon all hope and make their peace with this hell on earth. And so the reformists, whose policies, as always, are centrally defined by partnership in crime with the Democrats over the key question of faith in the capitalist state, become the last apologists of liberalism, an ideology without true believers.

While the SWP, the Communist Party and other reformists were relying on the judge in Boston to implement busing and calling for its enforcement by federal troops, the Spartacist League demanded the busing plan be implemented as an



Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League contingent in December 1974 pro-busing march in Boston.

rejected the Indianapolis busing plan. While a number of other busing plans are still at one stage or another in the judicial pipeline, the "intent" doctrine will ensure that they are rendered meaningless or simply thrown out.

With "white flight" assuming mammoth proportions, the Supreme Court has thus put the judicial stamp of approval on the increasing segregation of urban and suburban America. But this is not its only crime. The Court and liberal Congress which trampled on the democratic rights of blacks in schools, jobs and housing also ruled in favor of capital punishment, against federal funds for abortions for the poor, etc.

So for liberals and reformists it has been difficult to explain how the state which could be pressured by legal, peaceful and orderly means to become the vehicle for democratic and progressive social change has suddenly become the instrument of reaction. For a time they could blame it on Nixon, and then the "Nixon court." But now with the

elementary democratic right of blacks to equal education, called for it to be extended to the suburbs and called for labor/black defense to enforce school desegregation against the racist mobs. This demand was an expression of the transitional program which is the route to enlisting the ultimately decisive social power of the organized workers movement in the fight for black freedom.

Under slavery it was a crime to teach a slave to read. The idea that a black slave had a right to an education was a dangerous idea. The decisions of the Supreme Court today mimic its Dred Scott decision of 1857. They offer democratic rights only in the abstract while practically condemning the oppressed black masses to a life of increasing misery with no legal means to realize their rights. It took a civil war to overturn slavery, and it will take a socialist revolution by the united proletariat to make capitalism go the way of slavery. To lead this struggle for human liberation is the task of the communist vanguard. ■

# Steel...

(continued from page 12)

necessary—plants must be closed, thousands of steel workers thrown onto the scrap heap, and more brutal forms of exploitation instituted.

## Wall Street Demands: "More Youngtowns"

When the American steel bosses make their case that they are the victims of "unfair competition," they are lying through their teeth. They know full well that the domestic industry is not competitive with the Japanese. Were it otherwise, they would never have scrapped millions of tons of steel-making capacity. But it is necessary for them to whip up patriotism and scream "foul" at their antagonists, principally the Japanese, in order to win public support for their protectionist drive.

Nevertheless, a quite powerful section of the American bourgeoisie has no use for this mystification and has been actively debunking the myth of an efficient American steel industry. A recent comparative study of the Japanese and American steel industries carried out by the Wall Street firm of Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith ripped the steel bosses' case to shreds. The findings indicated that the U.S. steel bosses have been unable to cut into the 30-percent Japanese cost advantage since 1972, despite the effects of a devaluation of the dollar and relatively higher increases in raw material costs for the Japanese. This was essentially due to the much more rapid increase in the productivity of Japanese steel. By

1976 U.S. steel productivity stood at 302 tons annually per production worker, compared to 459 tons per worker in Japan—a decisive 50 percent differential.

Japanese mills are newer and more technologically advanced. Only one medium-sized mill has been built in the U.S. in the last 15 years, while eight giant mills have been constructed in Japan, in the same period. Few Japanese plants are older than 20 years, while some U.S. plants go back almost a century.

All steel production in Japan is carried out in basic oxygen or electric furnaces, while 18 percent of U.S. steel is still produced in the antiquated open hearths; some 36 percent of Japanese steel is shaped by the modern continuous casting method, compared to only 10 percent of U.S. production; electric furnaces are 30 percent more productive in Japan; blast furnaces are larger and more efficient (Inland Steel is using Japanese advisors to build its new blast furnace); and industrial processes that more efficiently utilize coking coal offset the greater cost of raw materials used in making pig iron in Japan.

Steel protectionism is unpopular on Wall Street as well as among the liberal bourgeoisie, major consumers of steel (e.g., the auto industry) and, thus far, the Carter administration. There are rational reasons for this. A *New York Times* editorial of 5 September is fairly representative of these sentiments:

"While some producers in other countries—notably Japan—were building new plants based on the most advanced technology, the big American companies were content to patch up existing facilities.... Protecting ineffi-

# Detroit...

(continued from page 5)

struck down by the courts in 1974, Young came out against any proposal for busing within the city.

Following in Young's footsteps is a new layer of black careerists eager to get their hands into the pork barrel. Ken Cockrel, once a leader of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers and well-known in Detroit for his legal defense activities, received over 100,000 votes to place in runoffs for city council. Having dropped all pretense of revolution,

Cockrel now has his eyes on the mayor's mansion. When he submitted his election petitions in July, this one-time "Marxist-Leninist" told *WV*: "I'm not opposed to police. If the citizens of the city of Detroit indicate that they want more police, that's fine."

Joe Madison, 28-year-old former executive director of the Detroit NAACP and frequent guest speaker at functions sponsored by the reformist Socialist Workers Party, also qualified for the city council runoffs. Madison shamelessly pushed a campaign centered on an Anita Bryant-like attack on prostitution and pornography.

As for the left, it has been largely silent on Detroit elections, mainly out of a desire not to criticize the "friend of labor and blacks" mayor. However, the Communist Party, which in 1973 aggressively beat the drums for Young and sent Angela Davis to Detroit for his victory celebration, could not restrain itself from denouncing "ultra-rightist forces" that have the mayor under attack. A 15 January 1977 *Daily World* article by Billy Allen, veteran CP toady for Solidarity House, called on the Detroit labor movement to "unite to repulse the ultra-right, anti-labor forces and help elect a progressive Council majority."

Even at the heart of American industry, urban decay continues to spread in times of capitalist "recovery" as well as during the increasingly severe economic crises. Despite the presence of a few "progressive" black capitalist politicians in office, conditions for the working people, poor and ghetto masses of Detroit will remain intolerable so long as the capitalist system which enriches itself on their misery remains. ■

# Paris Printers Unions...

(continued from page 2)

tails behind the CFDT and occasionally the CGT bureaucrats, the OCI has a longstanding softness toward the Force Ouvrière tops. Thus when FO authorized its members to print the scab edition of *Parisien Libéré* at St.-Ouen, the OCI could only manage the most weak-kneed "protest": "The printing workers...correctly consider the position of Bergeron, general secretary of FO, on this question as incorrect." And this in the face of open strikebreaking!

The *Parisien Libéré* strike was a victim of the popular front, as the CGT bureaucrats successfully hamstrung the workers' militancy even when facing a defeat which could destroy the FFTL as an industrial union. The inability of the would-be Trotskyist centrist organizations to present a strategy for a strike victory was no less political: it would have meant a direct clash with the reformist apparatuses. By instead tailing after the Stalinist and social-democratic bureaucrats they have utterly failed to defend such vital trade-union gains as industrial unionism, the closed shop and union control of hiring. A truly Bolshevik vanguard would have fought tooth and nail to protect these conquests and to oust the treacherous misleaders who sacrificed them on the altar of class collaboration. ■

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WORKERS VANGUARD



cient American companies from efficient Japanese companies would raise steel prices, hampering efforts to expand the economy without increasing inflation.... Shielding steel from the long-term discipline of competition, moreover, does nothing to eliminate the basic problem of high production costs."

The fundamental problem with protectionism for the imperialist bourgeoisie is that it would perpetuate costly and inefficient operations in the steel industry. Given the central role of steel in the economy, higher steel prices would translate themselves into higher prices universally, and the inefficiency of a protected steel industry would weaken American industry as a whole. Thus, steel protectionism in the long run would accelerate the decline of American imperialism.

The anti-protectionist bourgeoisie has another solution: force the steel companies to continue to rationalize their operations, eliminating their less-productive plants and probably forcing bankruptcies and a concentration of capital through mergers. The *Times* editorial bluntly made just this recommendation:

"Left on its own, the American steel industry undoubtedly faces rough times ahead. Older plants will be closed and employment will decline. Adjustment will be hard for steelworkers. From the nation's point of view, however, the burden of protecting the industry from unpleasant realities would be too great."

In other words, more Youngtowns, more Lackawannas, more Johnstowns! Having determined that the dollar devaluations, Nixon's wage controls and the union's no-strike agreement have not achieved a reversal in the declining role of American steel, a powerful section of the bourgeoisie is determined upon a full-scale rationalization of the industry, to be accomplished by scrapping obsolete facilities, laying off thousands of workers and building new, more productive plants requiring fewer employees.

### Protectionism

However, any rationalization of the American steel industry would proceed slowly. To significantly retard the decline of the American steel industry would require sizable investments in new plant and equipment. In the meantime, the unemployment rate is already high. Continued layoffs in steel are both socially dangerous and could have major repercussions on an already tottering economy.

Hence it is possible that the bourgeoisie could opt for some form of steel protectionism. However, this would not mean more jobs for steel workers, as the reactionary USWA bureaucracy promises. It would only slow down the reorganization of the steel industry,

with a certain number of jobs that would have otherwise been slashed conserved at the expense of foreign steel workers. The lesser efficiency of such a method would necessarily require that it be accompanied by stringent labor discipline, speed-up, etc.

Were effective steel protectionist measures actually implemented by the American bourgeoisie, it could well set off a series of retaliatory responses by foreign governments, ushering in a period of greatly intensified economic nationalism. The likely victim of such a policy would be Japan, whose economy is heavily dependent upon foreign trade. (For example, Japan exports 28 percent of its steel products, while almost all American steel is produced for the domestic market.)

If American workers support protectionist legislation that drives Japanese workers out of jobs, they will be lumped together with the American bourgeoisie as targets for a reinvigorated Japanese nationalism, whose social base in part would be embittered unemployed workers and whose program will be to recover lost markets by force of arms. Protectionist ideology is a poison which welds the proletariat to the imperialist designs of its own bourgeoisie, and it must be fought down the line by those who stand for the interests of the *international* working class.

### Reformist Bureaucrats Take Up Protectionism

Whatever the fate of the protectionist schemes, the main target for the American bourgeoisie is clear: steel is to be made profitable through intensified exploitation of the steel workers, and by victimizing tens of thousands who work in unprofitable plants. The question is, what is the Steelworkers union going to do about it?

The USWA International bureaucracy has already given its answer. Continuing the policy laid down by his predecessor, I.W. ("No Strike") Abel, and MacDonald and Murray before him, McBride is marching in lockstep with the steel bosses in their drive for protectionist legislation. Against the mass layoffs and plant closures they have done and will do nothing at all.

And Ed Sadlowski? Earlier this year several hundred thousand steel workers voted for the "rebel" bureaucrat, then director of the Chicago-Gary District 31 of the USWA, for president of the union. Most undoubtedly believed they were voting for a more militant policy than Abel/McBride's. But just as on the basic steel contract, the Sadlowski camp has utterly failed to provide steel workers with a fighting program to counter the companies' protectionism/layoffs offensive. Instead, all that these "Fight Back" bureaucrats have done is to send up a cloud of smoke about "price gouging."

According to Jim Balanoff, Sadlowski's handpicked successor as head of District 31, foreign competition is irrelevant; overpricing by the companies is the real problem. If the steel companies lower their prices, they will be able to compete, steel workers will have jobs and everything will be rosy. Thus at a time when American steel companies can't compete at the lower prices established by foreign steel producers, Balanoff calls for price cuts as a way to bail out the industry!

But, unfortunately for Balanoff, he must descend to earth and confront the threatened closing of the South Works plant in his own district. And it is at South Works' Local 65, whose president is Sadlowski supporter John Chico, that one can find the real politics of these "reform" bureaucrats. The reality is that their program is no different from McBride & Co.

On August 29, Local 65 officials accompanied by Balanoff met with South Works management to discuss company requests that the union local participate in lobbying for protectionism and endorse a management propo-

sal for a thinly disguised productivity campaign. Shortly afterwards the Local 65 leadership issued a special newsletter, the gist of which was that it would *not* oppose the company's speed-up and protectionism drive. The newsletter noted:

"We have been seriously considering the suggestion from the Company that we lobby in opposition to foreign steel imports, and after many hours of deliberation and research on this complex problem, have decided to ask our government representatives to investigate the entire question of steel production—imports, prices, costs, together with obsolete plant facilities, tax credits, subsidies, etc."

Thus, while McBride goes to Washington to lobby for protectionism, the Sadlowski forces decide to ask the advice of the capitalist politicians! This is a cowardly betrayal and backhanded support to McBride's chauvinism. The Local 65 leadership also pledged itself to a massive lobbying effort to enlist federal, local and state politicians, building contractors, merchants and religious organizations in South Chicago, the Environmental Protection Agency[!], etc., in a campaign to pressure U.S. Steel to keep South Works open. Not militant action, but the same miserable pleas to management that failed in Youngstown, Lackawanna and Johnstown! As one can see, the Sadlowski bureaucrats are but small-time versions of McBride & Co.

### Seize Shut-Down Mills—For an Industrywide Strike!

Steel workers must not become helpless victims of capitalist competi-

tion and the scramble for profits. Workers at shut-down mills like those in Youngstown must answer the companies by plant seizures. Steel workers throughout the country must fight for a national strike against mass layoffs in response to these attacks. Such militant actions would frighten the steel barons as an attack on their sacred property and inspire the entire workers movement to resist the attack on jobs *politically*. Bankrupt steel companies or operations must be expropriated without compensation; all jobs must be maintained at full union wages and conditions.

It is obvious that Carter and his labor flunkies like McBride would never support such an attack on "property rights," even when such "rights" are deliberately used to throw tens of thousands of workers onto the pavement. Plant seizures and expropriations require a determined struggle against the pro-capitalist AFL-CIO bureaucracy, leading to a workers party based on the trade unions.

Ultimately, American imperialism requires a viable domestic steel industry. This means either the wholesale rationalization of the industry, with mass layoffs, plant closings and intensified exploitation, or major doses of chauvinist protectionism, which will spawn trade wars and lay the basis for a third world war. Thus the fight against steel layoffs is intimately bound up with the revolutionary struggle for a workers government to expropriate the bourgeoisie and lay the basis for international socialist planning. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## Youngstown, Buffalo, Who's Next?

# Crisis in Steel

Shock waves emanated from the banks of the Mahoning River in Ohio as the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company announced the elimination of 5,000 jobs at the massive Campbell Works in Youngstown last week. As a result, steel workers with well over ten years seniority will be driven out of this dying industrial area to search for new jobs, and many forced out of the industry entirely.

The massive job elimination followed only a month after the nation's second largest producer, Bethlehem Steel, announced that it was cutting back its production capacity by 10 percent. Some 7,500 workers were canned—3,500 at Bethlehem's Lackawanna facilities outside Buffalo, and 4,000 in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. These workers, like those in Youngstown, will not get their jobs back even if the economy picks up—their jobs are gone for good.

Meanwhile, at U.S. Steel's South Works complex in Chicago, rumors continue to circulate about a total or partial shutdown of plant facilities. The plant, which began operations in 1880, has been a consistent money-loser over the last two years. As a belt-tightening measure, U.S. Steel has already announced that 1,000 administrative workers at its five plants in Indiana and Illinois will be laid off by December.

The immediate trigger for the layoffs and job cuts was the stuttering economy. The faltering recovery has not generated any qualitative increase in spending for industrial expansion and non-residential construction. Since some 70 percent of all steel products are consumed by the capital goods sector, the steel industry is hurting.

The steel industry has traditionally been volatile. Since World War II, beginning in the recession-laden 1950's, there have been periodic layoffs. But this time it is different. The American steel industry has not only lost its competitive edge, but it has been decisively surpassed by Japan. Thus, substantial sections of American steel are deficit operations at any time except during peak production periods. The Youngstown plant, for example, was dominated by open hearth production, an antiquated method of steel-making.

Lackawanna and Youngstown were not mere layoffs, nor even partial temporary plant shutdowns such as those that swept the auto industry three years ago. These are the permanent scrapping of obsolescent facilities, and only the first wave of such closings, as the American steel trust desperately seeks to catch up with its foreign competitors. If the steel companies get their way, the burden of this drive to restore profitability is to be borne by the steel workers—through mass layoffs, speed-up and a clamp on wages—and by the rest of the economy, in the form of price increases caused by protectionist curbs on imported steel. Wrapping themselves in the American flag, the robber barons are trying to put the screws on everyone.

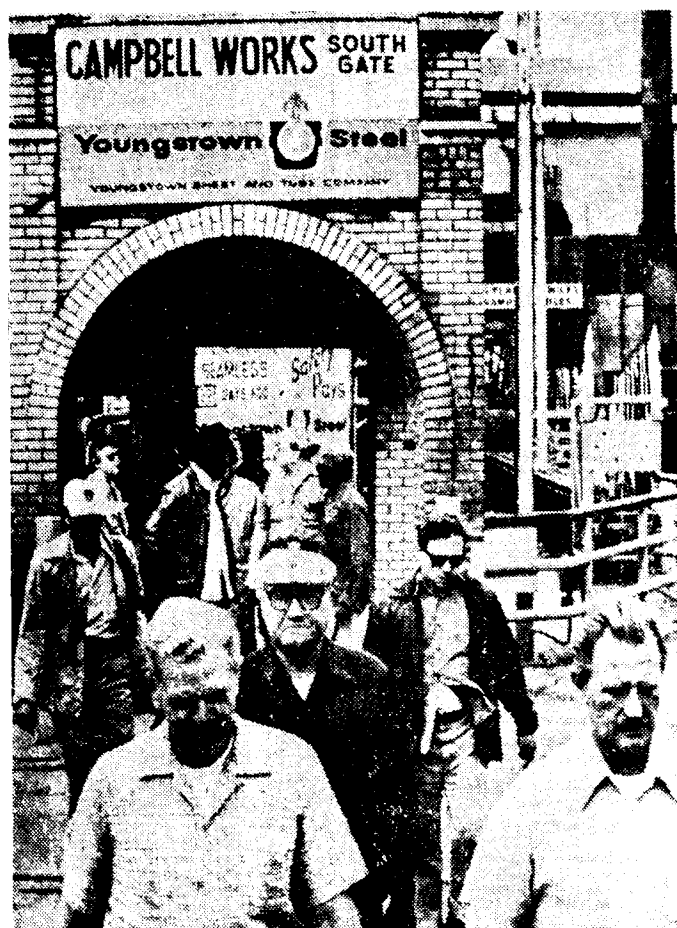
Thousands of steel workers are on the street. The axe hangs over the head of thousands more. This attack must be fought, through powerful industrywide strike action for jobs for all. The bourgeoisie is striking at the vitals of a key section of the American proletariat. The United Steelworkers (USWA), one of the most powerful unions in the country, must strike back decisively, preparing to mobilize broad sectors of the working class in its defense, or have its strength broken.

### Obsolescent Mills

The central weakness of the American steel industry has been dramatically highlighted in the past period. With the economic downturn reaching more advanced stages abroad, the U.S. market has become a battleground for competing steel producers. But although its location gives it a strategic advantage in this competition, the American steel industry has fared badly. The share of foreign imports has risen to its highest level in several years, up to almost 20 percent. In 1976 Japanese steel imports jumped 36 percent, while the rate of Common Market steel exports to the U.S. doubled in the first half of 1977. Under the whip of this intensified capitalist competition, the weakest elements of the American steel industry are being driven out.

This represents a real defeat for the

Right, steel workers leaving Youngstown Sheet and Tube Campbell Works after plant closure announced last week. Below, Ohio steelworkers demonstrating against plant closures on the steps of the Capitol, September 23.



New York Times

policies of the American bourgeoisie. A prime consideration in Nixon's draconian economic measures of 1971 was concern over the declining position of the once-hegemonic American steel industry. In fact, these measures were imposed immediately after the 1971 steel settlement and the subsequent disclosure of an intended price increase by the steel companies. The devaluation of the dollar and the institution of wage controls were designed to arrest the decline of American capitalism. The recent shutdowns demonstrate that it has not worked—at least for steel, whose viability is central to the maintenance of American imperialism.

In response, the American steel trust, backed loyally by its lackeys in the

bureaucracy of the USWA, is mounting a major drive to back protectionist legislation. Already a number of Congressmen from steel-producing areas have been rounded up to constitute a so-called Steel Caucus in Washington, whose goal is import quotas on foreign steel.

An article in the *Gary Post Tribune* of September 11 by Edgar Speer, chairman of the giant U.S. Steel Corporation, laid out the basic arguments the steel companies are making for trade quotas:

"Too few Americans seem to realize that foreign competition is unfair competition... that the steel industry's battle is not with free trade, but with unfair trade. There are still those who suggest—falsely—that what the domestic steel industry wants is 'protectionism,' ignoring the fact that the American steel industry is an efficient industry, anxious to compete openly in world markets if such competition can be made both free and fair."

Speer charged further that "steel exports have been dumped into this nation's market... sold at prices below those being charged overseas... prices that have not reflected their own full production costs." This, said Speer, was "the result of a deliberately planned strategy on the part of governments overseas."

But it is the steel workers who will pay the biggest price for the crisis in the industry. For years the Abel/McBride leadership of the Steelworkers has served as the loyal handmaiden of the bosses' efforts to keep American steel profitable. Abel sat on Nixon's pay board, and when wage controls expired he instituted the no-strike Experimental Negotiating Agreement (ENA). The ENA was justified on the grounds that steel strikes provided major opportunities for foreign steel-producers to gain a foothold in the American market. But this gift to the steel trust has achieved nothing. Steel imports are now higher than ever, and the competitive position of American steel is at a low point.

While there are sharp differences over the demand for protectionist legislation the American bourgeoisie as a whole is determined to reorganize its steel industry so that it can compete effectively with its imperialist rivals. The message to McBride & Co. is: "ENA is not enough!" More drastic measures are

continued on page 10



Wide World