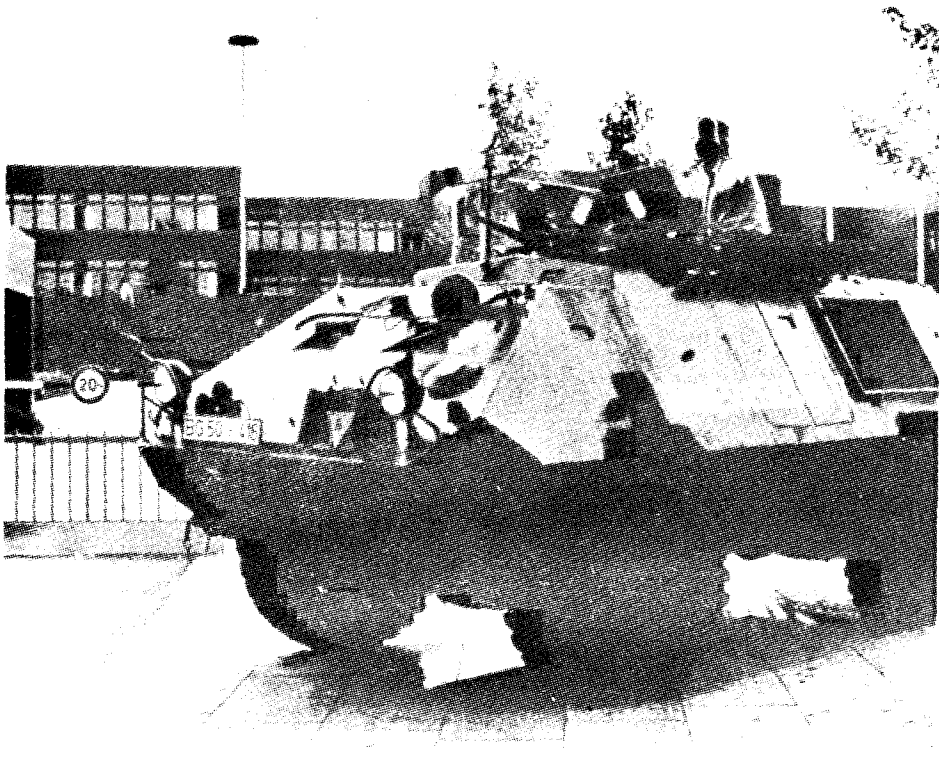


## Terror in the Air, Blood in the Jails

# The German Kill



Armored personnel carrier guarding government building in Bonn after recent kidnapping. Der Spiegel



Hijacked West German jet being refueled at Rome airport. AP

OCTOBER 18—As we go to press, sensational developments surrounding the West German “Red Army Faction” (RAF) terrorists continue to hit the front pages of the mass media. First the raid by West German “federal border police” commandos in Mogadishu, Somalia to reclaim a Lufthansa airliner hijacked last Thursday by four terrorists claiming sympathy with the imprisoned RAF leaders brought a spectacular ending to the ordeal of the aircraft’s 86 passengers. Hard on the heels of the commando raid, the West German authorities announced

the death under incredibly suspicious circumstances of three of the RAF prisoners and the injury of a fourth in the super-maximum-security Stammheim prison in what is described as a “suicide pact.”

News reports on these latest developments are still contradictory, but whatever the ultimate conclusions, the central fact remains the West German bourgeoisie’s vicious witchhunting assault on the elementary democratic rights of leftist and liberal opponents of the government’s reign of terror and intimidation.

The October 13 hijacking, apparently carried out by four persons in some unclear connection with the RAF kidnapping of West German industrialist and former Nazi Hanns Martin Schleyer, was an indefensible act of criminal terrorism against a random group of people who had committed no crime. These people became the helpless pawns of a crazed gang which seized the aircraft in Mallorca and, after various stops and an attempt to land in Dhofar (!), landed in Somalia where they tossed out the body of the plane’s pilot whom they had

killed. Threatening repeatedly to blow up the aircraft, they almost turned the passenger compartment into an inferno after dousing it with gasoline.

The hijacking was, moreover, an act of consummate stupidity in which a handful of terrorists chose to go up against a maximally determined bourgeoisie possessing enormous physical and military resources. This enabled the cynical West German government to mobilize the overwhelming bulk of public opinion against the terrorists—not only the ad-

*continued on page 10*

## Bonn Whips Up Anti-Red Hysteria After Schleyer Kidnapping

# “Anti-Terrorist” Witchhunt in West Germany

Following the assassinations of Federal Republic chief prosecutor Siegfried Buback and Dresdner Bank head Jürgen Ponto, West German ruling circles are using the kidnapping of the president of the manufacturers’ association, former SS officer Hanns Martin Schleyer, as a further pretext for government repression against the left and for measures to “drain the anarchists’ intellectual swamp, the universities.” The government has fostered a civil-war atmosphere—replete with sandbags, barbed-wire barricades and tanks of the border police “guarding” ministries and the homes of prominent politicians—as if it were a last-ditch defense of the Winter Palace, or the Russian storming of Berlin in 1945. Simultaneously an attempt is being made to convince “Mr. Average Citizen” that he could be the next victim of an attack or kidnapping, “just like Schleyer.”

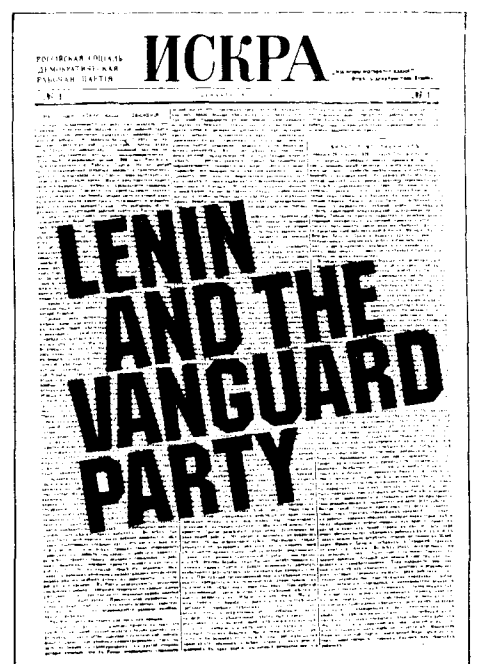
While bourgeois propagandists seek to inundate the country by radio, television and tons of newsprint filled with the garbage of bourgeois moralism, the state is taking action: a partial news blackout—veiled censorship—on the Schleyer abduction is only the beginning. The government is prepared in effect to declare its own laws null and void (as Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt euphemistically put it, “going to the limits of what is permitted and dictated by legal norms”) when it is a question of suppressing left-wing opposition. The governing Social Democratic/Free Democrat (SPD/FDP) coalition is attempting to bolster its popularity ratings by appearing just a hair’s breadth more “respectable” than the most extreme suggestions of the Christian Democratic (CDU/CSU) opposition, which are themselves daily becoming more outrageous. Recently the CDU fraction in the

Bundestag (lower house of parliament) introduced a proposal to outlaw the leading Maoist organizations in West Germany.

Schmidt is visibly enjoying his role as “anti-terrorist” crisis manager (as opposed to his role as *economic* crisis manager). Following the Schleyer kidnapping the state has forbidden any contact between the Red Army Faction (RAF—commonly referred to in the bourgeois press as the “Baader-Meinhof Gang”) prisoners and their lawyers, and intends in the future to put leftists behind bars on the mere suspicion of being terrorists (“preventive custody”). It is now discussing preventive detention even of individuals with only one criminal conviction and is excluding politically committed lawyers from defending left-wing political prisoners. The latest accomplishment of bourgeois class jus-

*continued on page 4*

## PART 4



## Party, Faction and “Freedom of Criticism”

Page 6

# Reformists Push "Affirmative Action" in Anti-Bakke Demos

On October 12 the U.S. Supreme Court began hearing arguments on the "Bakke decision"—the California state supreme court ruling undercutting a "special admissions" program for minority students at the University of California's Davis Medical School. In the days before the first court session on the case, demonstrations were held across the country to demand that this reactionary decision be overturned.

Now that state-enforced school desegregation programs have been scuttled by the liberals, "no reverse discrimination" has replaced "no forced busing" as the war cry of racist, anti-democratic forces. The legal suit by 35-year-old white engineer Allan Bakke is currently a focus for the right-wing mobilization. The plaintiff's lawyer, Reynold Colvin, explained his client's complaint: "Allan Bakke's position is that he has a right... not to be discriminated against by reason of his race." Bakke's concrete grievance is that at the time he was rejected by Davis, 16 out of 100 openings had been specifically reserved for minority applicants.

Bakke's target is the "special admissions" policies that have provided a real—though extremely minimal—gain in educational opportunities for the victims of racial oppression. Bakke is not protesting against the ordinary admissions policies that opened the doors of Davis to the son of a politically influential surgeon, the sons of two state legislators and the daughter-in-law of a former school chancellor—well-connected applicants whose grades were substantially below the standard admissions requirements (*Daily World*, 14 October). The crux of Bakke's legal case was stated by Colvin: "The use of race as a basis for admission to a medical school or the exercise of other rights is an improper measure." The political import of the case is another blow against the oppressed in favor of the presumed "impartiality" of the racist status quo which condemns black youth to semi-literacy and chronic unemployment.

The bourgeois liberal myth that the United States is a color-blind meritocracy in which all have (in Colvin's words) "the right to equal competition" is the time-worn justification for ghettoization, lumpenization and degrading oppression of racial minorities. The flap over "racism in reverse" serves as an ideological bridge between the overt reactionaries and the mainstream liberals who capitulate to them.

Bakke's liberal opponents (and their

leftist camp followers) undercut any possibility of a real fight against racial oppression by peddling the dangerous illusion that the federal government, especially the judiciary, is the ally and partisan of the oppressed. As McGovernite columnist Anthony Lewis noted of the courtroom debate between Bakke's lawyer and liberal idol Archibald Cox, "The whole argument was a testament to that most amazing feature of the American system, the reliance on judges to decide great social issues" (*New York Times*, 13 October). The Carter administration has also intervened (as "friend of the court") with a general argument in favor of the minority admissions plan. But in fact the courts are now in full retreat from any semblance of social reform and have lately issued a virtually unbroken string of reactionary decisions.

The demonstrations called by the National Coalition to Overturn the Bakke Decision (NCOBD) sought to link opposition to this racist move with support for government union-busting "affirmative action" schemes which manipulate blacks' legitimate anger against



WV Photo

Cops defend Nazi counter-demonstrators at anti-Bakke rally in Oakland.



WV Photo

SL/SYL marchers protest the "Bakke decision" at 8 October demonstration in Washington.

racist union bureaucrats into a club against the unions themselves. The NCOBD reformists refuse to fight for a program to provide real educational opportunities for racial minorities and the poor through open admissions with full stipend. They also reject any mobilization for labor action against racial discrimination through a fight within the unions against the pro-capitalist union tops. Rather, they simply maneuver for favor with the liberal Democrats, whose real aim is to increase direct government control over the unions through court-ordered racial-quota hiring and firing plans in industry.

Because their reformist strategy is based on cajoling and pressuring the more "progressive" sectors of the ruling class, NCOBD's backers—such as the Communist Party (CP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP)—see no difference between supportable reforms like university special admissions programs and government-inspired destruction of union seniority rights. Thus the SWP's *Militant* (14 October) says, "The real issue is enforcing the affirmative action programs won by the civil rights and feminist struggles and pressing forward to full equality." And the CP's *Daily World* (9 October) terms Bakke "a case which could decide the fate of affirmative action programs in all aspects of Ameri-

can life." Virtually alone on the left, the Spartacist League/Spartacus Youth League (SL/SYL) demands the overturn of the Bakke decision while opposing government "affirmative action" as an assault on the independence of the unions.

## Demonstrators Oppose Bakke Ruling

Of the demonstrations organized in various cities on October 8, the San Francisco Bay Area march was the largest, drawing about 1,500 people in Oakland. The march was endorsed by a conglomeration of groups and individuals, including the local Democratic Party machine and a number of union locals. Several small American Federation of Teachers (AFT) locals also showed up despite the pro-Bakke position of AFT International president Albert Shanker. The SL/SYL was represented by a contingent of about 50 people, including unionists from ILWU and UAW locals in the area. The SL/SYL banner read: "DOWN WITH THE BAKKE DECISION! For Open Admissions with a State-Paid Stipend! For Union-Run Minority Job Recruitment/Upgrading! Not Government Union-Busting Affirmative Action!"

Before the Oakland march began, the NCOBD marshalls objected to the SL/

SYL's defense of union independence against anti-labor "affirmative action," insisting that the contingent either take down its banner or march at the end of the line. Shortly thereafter, the coalition showed even more graphically how its legalism and reliance on the bourgeois state vitiates its claim to champion minorities' rights. During the rally six Nazis showed up with their "Bakke White Power" signs. When hundreds of demonstrators surged forward to drive the fascists out, CP-led coalition marshalls (assisted by SWP supporters) linked arms and formed a cordon around the Nazis to protect them from attack!

It was pouring rain in Washington, D.C., and the rather desultory demonstration assembled at the White House and marched from there to the Capitol. At the high point, the demonstration numbered about 500 people, most of whom represented left organizations as well as two local AFT and AFSCME locals. Here again the coalition's anti-union thrust emerged, with signs such as the SWP's "Reverse the Bakke Decision, Defend Affirmative Action and Quotas" predominating.

The turnout was even smaller in New York, where about 200 people gathered outside the State Office Building in Harlem. The rally was chaired by Bill Jones, close supporter of the CP; a featured speaker was Moses Harris of the Black Economic Survival group. Harris had been active in the ugly confrontation between union-busting black nationalist groups and racist job-trusting construction-union bureaucrats at New York's City College in 1975. At the rally he carried the NCOBD's anti-labor line to its logical conclusion, virtually calling for war on the trade unions, many of which, he said, had been formed for the explicit purpose of excluding black workers.

The most obvious fact is that these reformists are already defeated, which helps explain the desultory character of the anti-Bakke demonstrations on October 8. "No reverse discrimination" is more than an arrogant racist offensive; it is a doctrine which has triumphed, a bitter reality for millions of blacks whose hopes for a decent life have been trampled underfoot by marauding racists in the streets of Chicago and Boston. Hav-

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## WORKERS VANGUARD

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# ILA-ILWU Tops Banish Pickets to Rowboats

SAN FRANCISCO—The ink had hardly dried on a "mutual aid pact" between Teddy Gleason's International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), currently striking container shipping in East and Gulf Coast ports, and the West Coast International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) when it was tossed into the circular file by ILWU bureaucrats at a meeting of Bay Area longshore Local 10 on October 13.

The announcement, over the protest of numerous militants, brought to a halt ILWU observance of ILA picket lines. The solidarity actions had succeeded in idling 22 container ships on the Pacific Coast—eight of them in the San Francisco Bay Area—but was ruled illegal by coastwide arbitrator Sam Kagel. Kagel's ruling was upheld Friday by U.S. district judge Cecil Poole, who threatened the ILWU with contempt citations and ordered the union to cross the ILA lines.

Faced with this warning from the bourgeois state, the ILWU bureaucracy quickly turned tail. At the Local 10 meeting ILWU International president

that the much-touted agreement would be rendered useless. It was a stage-managed affair from start to finish, designed to shore up the reputations of the ILA and particularly the ILWU bureaucrats, who have consistently excused their own failure to strike against massive job cuts on the West Coast by urging the membership to wait for joint actions with the ILA.

Nonetheless, the solidarity actions sparked a wave of enthusiasm in the ILWU ranks. Despite the actions of the West Coast employers (PMA) in shutting off Pay Guarantee Plan benefits, Herman's retreat was unpopular among a substantial section of the membership. At the Local 10 meeting he was forced to put on a "left" face, reportedly denouncing the effects of containerization in slashing jobs. Herman boasted that "a new day has dawned" in ILA/ILWU relations with the advent of the mutual aid pact.

But any ILWU members who expected their union president to follow that up with a call for spreading the strike were to be disappointed. Herman denounced the call for militant action against federal court injunctions as a "terrible mistake" and then announced his farcical "back-up plan," which was received unenthusiastically. Trying to bluster his way through, he announced, "We are disciplined, we are an army, and we go back in a disciplined fashion."

But Herman's antics did not go unchallenged. Stan Gow, a member of the "Longshore Militant" opposition grouping in the Local, read a motion signed by seven longshoremen calling for continuation of the solidarity action, defiance of court injunctions and a West Coast shutdown as part of a nationwide maritime strike for jobs through a shorter workweek at no cut in pay. When Local 10 president Cleophus Williams ruled the motion out of order, Gow retorted, "I have to agree with Herman on one point—he does have a scheme for us to back up—but we have to move forward!" A vote was taken on Gow's challenge to the chair, which lost despite a sizable minority vote. Gow was followed by another longshoreman who denounced Herman's halfway measures and demanded that the contract be dumped and a strike called.

Predictably the ILWU bureaucracy found ready apologists from the bloc around the Communist Party (CP). The militant longshoremen were followed to the mike by Leo Robinson. Robinson, together with well-known CP supporter Billy Proctor, had issued a leaflet entitled, "At Last a Mutual Aid Agreement." The leaflet announced, "In our estimation, nothing short of an 80 day federal injunction should prevent us from honoring the ILA pickets, and even then the membership should vote on whether or not to honor even that order." Having from the first played up the cynical Gleason-Herman pact as a militant blow and threatened to defend it with strike action, Robinson now beat a speedy retreat, advising ILWU members to give Herman's plan "a chance." Robinson was quickly followed by Local 10 secretary-treasurer George Kay, who warned, "We will not take suicidal actions." And then Williams abruptly adjourned the meeting without a vote!

Earlier in the meeting Local 10



ILA pickets in New Orleans.

Daily World

## ILA Bureaucrats Crack New Orleans General Dock Strike

After almost three weeks of concerted pressure, bureaucrats of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), currently striking container shipping on the East and Gulf Coasts, managed to force militant New Orleans longshoremen to end their general dock strike. The longshoremen, principally members of Locals 1418 and 1419, had at least three times defied ILA officials by voting down implementation of Gleason's weak-kneed tactics of striking automated ships only. Finally, on October 15, Local 1419 president and International vice president Wilfred Daliet called his own press conference, where he unilaterally ordered longshoremen to begin working general cargo, which constitutes 75 percent of the port's commerce, and threatened workers who defied this ultimatum with legal reprisals.

The enormous impact of the New Orleans strikes was demonstrated by figures released by the Maritime Administration last week. Of 90 ships tied up in U.S. ports, 27 were on the Atlantic Coast, 12 were on the Pacific Coast, and 51 were in the Gulf, mainly New Orleans. The actions of the strikers in New Orleans, the second largest port in the U.S., threatened to blow apart Gleason's class-collaborationist strategy. Already, longshoremen in some smaller Gulf ports had followed the lead of New Orleans in striking all cargo. The fear that the New Orleans example would spread nationwide made Gleason and his local lackeys particularly determined to crack this militant strike.

There is generalized bitterness among New Orleans longshoremen at the treacherous acts of their officials. Despite his threat of legal sanctions, Daliet was greeted at the hiring hall by a picket line of several dozen ILA members the morning following his announcement. Rank-and-file militants remain determined to reverse this sellout blow.

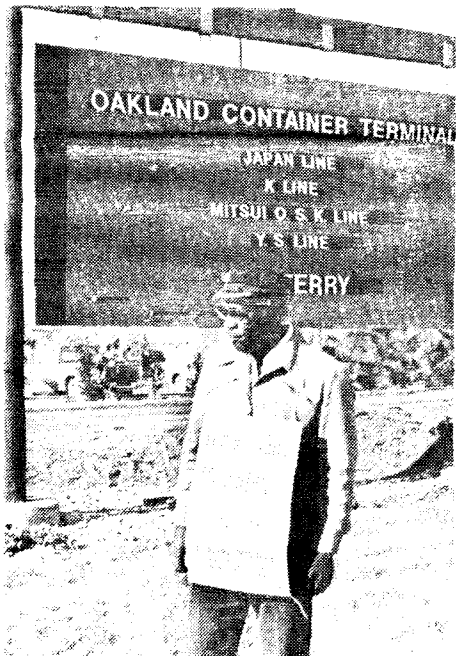
One of the leaders of the New Orleans anti-Gleason revolt told *WV* that he hoped to get a court injunction to force Daliet to hold a vote on whether to reinstitute the general dock strike. But it is the height of folly for longshoremen to place any confidence in the government, whose ruling against ILA jurisdiction over all container handling within 50 miles of the docks was a key factor in provoking the strike and which has ordered the ILA picket lines on the West Coast dismantled. Militants must unconditionally refuse to call the capitalist state into the internal affairs of the union. Gleason/Daliet's treachery can only be smashed by mobilizing the rank and file under the banner of a North American-wide maritime strike fought for jobs for all through a shorter workweek at no cut in pay.

bureaucrats made clear their support for Herman and the International against class-struggle oppositionists. Williams explained why he helped vote down a motion at the September 15 executive board meeting calling for not handling diverted cargo and honoring "any picket lines established by ILA members." This motion had been presented by Gow and Howard Keylor, executive board members and publishers of "Longshore Militant." Williams stated unabashedly that the Gow/Keylor motion, which predated the "mutual aid pact," was voted down because "we thought it was trying to steal the glory from the International mutual aid pact"! The quite inglorious end to the International's pact underscores Wil-

liams' cynicism. He rubbed it in by announcing that business agent Herb Mills—who ran for office on the demagogic threat to "shut down the Coast for jobs"—was now coordinator of the rowboat flotilla.

The bureaucrats are proclaiming that a key demand of the ILA bargaining is for a nine-month contract, to expire jointly with the ILWU contract next June. This demand, reported favorably in the CP's *People's World*, is certainly supportable but is being used to excuse the scuttling of the present ILA West Coast picket lines.

But the antics of the ILWU International, Local 10 bureaucrats and their Stalinist apologists only demonstrate that there are no fundamental differences separating these pro-capitalist hacks. At every decisive test they stand together against the ranks, blocking the path to successful struggle against the maritime bosses. Only the "Longshore Militant" group has consistently fought the sellout policies of all the bureaucratic cliques, putting forward a program for real class-struggle labor unity against capitalism. ■



ILA picket at Oakland Container Terminal.

WV Photo

Jimmy Herman presented his so-called "back-up plan," which would be laughable were it not so criminal: the ILA will move its picket to rowboats sitting off the pier, so that ILWU members will not have to cross the lines in order to work the ships! The plan is pinned on hopes that the ILA-affiliated Masters, Mates and Pilots Union (MMP) will not man the ships.

Only in a union like the ILWU, where respect for picket lines continues strong among the membership, would the bureaucrats resort to such subterfuge to sabotage solidarity actions. The MMP ploy will not have much effect: the union is not represented on foreign container ships being picketed, and the MMP bureaucracy, should it even decide to respect the "floating pickets," is even less likely to stand up to a court injunction than its ILWU counterparts.

This sellout was entirely predictable. As we noted last week, the Gleason-Herman "mutual aid pact" stipulated that only those picket lines which are "not established in violation of a court order or collective bargaining agreement to the contrary" need be observed. This, along with other loopholes, guaranteed

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# Witchhunt in West Germany...

(continued from page 1)

tice is the law preventing left-wing prisoners from having contact with each other and with the outside world (lawyers, relatives) in order to totally isolate them. As *Der Spiegel* headlined, "The state is taking up battle positions."

The "insistence of the citizenry on bodily safety" (as CDU leader Helmut Kohl pontificated in the Bundestag on September 6) is being met by a massive expansion of the government's spy network; by beefing up the weaponry of the police and the omnipresent "Federal Border Guard" (*Bundesgrenzschutz*), which logically ought to be rebaptized "Federal Police," since otherwise all of West Germany has become a "border region"; by the legalization of shooting to kill; by hundreds of *Berufsverbote* (blacklistings of "radicals" from civil service jobs); and by sharp limitations on the rights of the defense lawyers; and by stiffening gun control laws.

The bourgeoisie is organizing its terror with millions of marks and thousands of additional police. For the time being, introduction of the death penalty (demanded by the Christian Democrats) has been rejected by the federal government. Also ruled out was the use of the army against "terrorists," but only because the police and border guards are deemed more than adequate for the witchhunt being mounted against "violent criminals." In any case, the sandbags and barbed wire, machine pistols and tanks are not a sign that Schmidt & Co. are trembling at the thought of a giant assault by the RAF handful. The real purpose behind the ostentatious build-up of the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois state is to intimidate its real adversaries, the proletariat and those who would lead it in struggle against the capitalist system.

So far they have largely succeeded. Unlike 1966, when the left and trade unions took to the streets in opposition to the "emergency laws" (legislation to suspend constitutional rights during a "state of emergency"), no mobilization is taking place today against this arming of the "strong state." Instead, corpulent trade-union bureaucrats zealously assist the repressive measures of "their" government, and the West German left is retreating all along the line. Left opportunists, from the (pro-Moscow) DKP and the Maoist KPD (which condemns the RAF as "gangsters") to the pseudo-Trotskyist GIM ("It's not just the 'misled masses' who no longer understand all this—we don't either") are grovelling before the ravings of their bourgeoisie. They, too, have put their stamp of approval on the witchhunt against the RAF, or at best have refused to defend the victims of reactionary persecution.

## Defend the Left Against Bourgeois Repression!

The Spartacist League does not shrink from its principled position of defending the RAF against the fury of bourgeois repression. While resolutely rejecting individual terror as the political strategy of despair it is, and combating it as one of the many manifestations of petty-bourgeois frustration resulting from the international crisis of leadership of the proletariat, the SL defends the entire left against the attacks of the bourgeois state.

The kidnapping of Schleyer, like the assassinations of Buback and Ponto, cannot be condoned by revolutionary Marxists and class-struggle militants in the trade unions. Such acts of individual terror against individual representatives of the bourgeoisie do not contribute to the overthrow of the capitalist system. On the contrary, they serve as a pretext for the capitalist state to launch attacks on the left, and instead of spurring the proletariat on to militant struggle in

defense of its class interests, the policy of individual terror relegates the masses at best to passive observation from the sidelines.

We state plainly that the RAF does not represent the historic interests of the proletariat; yet we do not deny our feeling of solidarity with their hatred of imperialism which causes them to strike out blindly. Insofar as they believe in lifting the social oppression engendered by capitalism, our aspirations are similar. But the actions of the RAF are not on the road to socialism and stand counterposed to the proletarian socialist road.

In fact, there is more than a little that is sinister in the RAF. While it is a product of the decomposition of the New Left, it is not just a carbon copy of the American Weathermen, whose political ties were to the Cubans and North Vietnamese. The Cuban and North Vietnamese Stalinists do not condone airplane hijackings, for example. But the reported ties of the RAF are to the petty-bourgeois nationalist PFLP and the "Japanese Red Army," whose gruesome methods of settling internal differences (shooting and torturing oppositionists to death) are notorious. If this current were in power we can be sure that they would leave a bloody trail rivalling Idi Amin. And in a healthy, revolutionary proletarian state they would certainly have to be restrained for their criminal indiscriminate terrorism against innocent working people.

Because of the monstrous character of the bourgeois state which is persecuting the RAF, including the hideous treatment of alleged RAF members in jail, we demand their immediate freedom. But under conditions of extreme state terrorization and intimidation of the population, much of the West German left has fallen into the twin traps of either turning their backs on them or solidarizing with them politically. While we cannot embrace the RAF as comrades, we refuse to run from our obligation to defend them against the capitalist state.

It is revolting to observe virtually the entire left abandon any vestige of defense of the RAF over the kidnapping of Schleyer (who wrote in 1938, "I am a long-time National Socialist and SS leader"). This is not a case of blind terror against innocent civilians, as in the "Black September" taking of hostages at the Munich Olympics in 1972 or the latest airplane hijacking by the "Japanese Red Army." The Schleyer abduction—no matter how foolish, politically wrong and counterproductive—was not an act of indiscriminate terrorism against innocent individuals which must be condemned by the entire left and which would call into question the class character of the RAF.

There is no doubt that the actions of the RAF are an expression of opposition to the imperialist system of exploitation, repression and poverty. To conclude that the "new" RAF has nothing to do with the "old" (a formula which the pseudo-Trotskyist GIM is toying with) from the fact that the RAF today barely expresses itself politically is too transparent an alibi to be taken seriously. Answering the assertion that the RAF is no longer part of the left, the conservative *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (18-19 September) points out (naturally with the aim of denouncing the left, but correctly nonetheless): "Aren't they really [part of the left], even in

terms of their origins?... Where was the break?" Indeed, there has been no break, although the RAF lost its political leader, Ulrike Meinhof (who died in prison under suspicious circumstances in the summer of 1976).

The Leninist attitude toward such acts of despair was set forth by the Communist International in 1921 in the case of Max Hölz, who was given a life sentence by the capitalist courts for his role in leading proletarian guerrilla bands in central Germany following the defeat of the ill-fated "March Action":

"The Communist International is an opponent of individual terror and acts of sabotage which do not directly serve battle objectives in a civil war. It opposes irregular warfare conducted by guerrilla bands independently of the political leadership of the revolutionary proletariat. But the Communist International sees in Max Hölz a courageous rebel against capitalist society, where morality is taught in penitentiaries and order is imposed by the raging of the beasts of order. His actions were inappropriate to his goal: white terror can only be broken by the revolt of the masses, which alone can realize the victory of the proletariat. But his acts sprang from love of the proletariat and hate for the bourgeoisie."

## Not Petty-Bourgeois Terrorism But Proletarian Revolution

Although the methods of the RAF are similar to those of classical anarchism, its ideology is fossilized New Leftism—a conglomeration of Bakuninist populist and Maoist conceptions based on lack of faith in the revolutionary capacity of the working class. Its politics are derived from Lin Piao's doctrine of encircling the cities (the imperialist states) by the countryside (the "Third World"). The RAF sees itself as an auxiliary force to one or another sort of Stalinist/nationalist group fighting imperialism in the "Third World"—as "urban guerrillas" and a "partisan unit behind enemy lines" (from an interview with Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof, Gudrun Ensslin and Jan-Carl Raspe in *Der Spiegel*, No. 4 in 1975).

The politics of urban guerrillas, from the Tupamaros to the RAF, are substitutionist to the core. While proclaiming its sympathies for "the wretched of the earth," the RAF sees the working class of the imperialist countries as a bought-off labor aristocracy irremediably sunk in "consumer society." Consequently its own actions are nothing but moralistic gestures (burning of a department store, attack on a U.S. Army officers club, kidnappings/assassinations of notorious bourgeois leaders). For every Buback, Ponto or Schleyer "executed," another will take his place; only the degree of repression will increase. Leninists, in contrast, understand that imperialism can be swept away only by the international working class, led by the revolutionary vanguard party whose action educates and raises the proletariat to its historic task.

The RAF repeats the errors of the populist Narodnaya Volya in tsarist Russia: heroic fighters who sought to overthrow the autocratic terror regime by acts of individual counterterror. But the high point of the Narodniks came a generation prior to the rise of an organized workers movement in Russia, when the forces capable of freeing the country from tsarism were still in swaddling clothes. In contrast, the RAF turn their backs on the powerful German (and international) workers movement because they are too impatient to participate in the struggle to educate the class. Thus they reject the entire history of the Marxist movement, and in particular the October Revolution.

## West German Left Prostrate Before Bourgeois Hysteria

Over the last five years the West German left on numerous occasions demonstrated in solidarity with the RAF against the brutal repression by the state apparatus. Many groups even gave *political* support to the New Left terrorists. As recently as last year thousands marched at a Berlin demonstration on the occa-

sion of Ulrike Meinhof's burial; "liberals" like theologian Helmut Gollwitzer and "socialists" like former New Left honcho Rudi Dutschke gave eulogies. But now that the RAF's last drop of popularity, of "understanding for their motives" by "liberal public opinion," has vanished, nearly the entire left, to quote the malicious *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* once more, lets "the terrorists drop like a hot potato, claiming they do not have nor ever had anything to do with these people." Those who glorify actions like those of the RAF so long as they take place somewhere else—Spain, Argentina, Palestine—when suddenly confronted by their own bourgeoisie loudly proclaim their "respectability."

The Peking-loyal KPD (Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands), with whom in 1974 we, as the only other organization, marched together—naturally under our own banners—to Berlin's Moabit Jail (where Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were imprisoned during World War I), to protest the class terror of the bourgeois state against the RAF prisoners, today competes with the pro-Moscow DKP for the role of the most despicable ideological mudslinger for the bourgeoisie within the workers movement. Comparing the attack in Köln with the actions of Al Capone, the KPD's *Rote Fahne* (7 September) refers to it as "A Gangster War in the Ranks of the Bourgeoisie." With its ear to the ground, the KPD informs us that the "people" regard the Schleyer abduction as "purely an affair of the bourgeoisie." The RAF are "spoiled, bored sons and daughters of the rich."

If such criteria were used in relation to the KPD itself, if one judged on the basis of the class origins of KPD leaders Semler and Horlemann, this would certainly have fatal consequences in the evaluation of the organization. What is decisive in the analysis of an organization is not in the first instance its social composition, but rather its *program* and *politics*. By these criteria the KPD reveals itself to be utterly treacherous: three years ago it at least *minimally* defended the RAF prisoners; today it washes its hands of these victims of bourgeois class justice. It is not the tendency around the RAF which has changed in these last three years, however, but the KPD. To be sure, it has not changed qualitatively, for even then the KPD was an organization of Stalinist misleaders with a Menshevik program. Quantitatively, however, these Maoists' move to the right is impressive. The faithful mouthpiece of the Peking bureaucracy, which rivals CSU revanchist Franz Josef Strauß as a "fatherland defender" against "Soviet imperialism," now adds its voice to the reactionary "anti-terrorist" witchhunt.

It was "with horror" that the left-social-democratic Sozialistisches Büro (SB) "reacted to the cold-blooded murders" of the police guarding Schleyer in a declaration printed on the second page of the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (13 September). Through its permanent "collective murder," says the SB, the "'Red Army Faction' has abandoned its claim to be socialist." "With a few shots," the SB continues, "they [the RAF] have destroyed much for which we have laboriously fought for years." Will the bourgeoisie offer thanks for such effusive and self-aggrandizing apologists for capitalist state terror? Perhaps Chancellor Schmidt and SPD chairman Willy Brandt, those latter-day Noskes and Eberts, will find some bureaucratic advisory posts for these propagandists against "red fascism."

It has to be said for the KPD that there is a certain consistency to its defamations. Its principal Peking-oriented Maoist competitor, the KBW (Kommunistischer Bund Westdeutschlands), can make no such claim. In 1974 the KBW polemicized against the KPD's characterization of the shooting of Berlin judge Drenckmann as "counterrevolutionary." Quotes from Lenin, said the KBW, could show that the Drenckmann assassination was "a totally incorrect action

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Spartacist Forum

### Commemorate Bolshevik Revolution-1917 60th Anniversary

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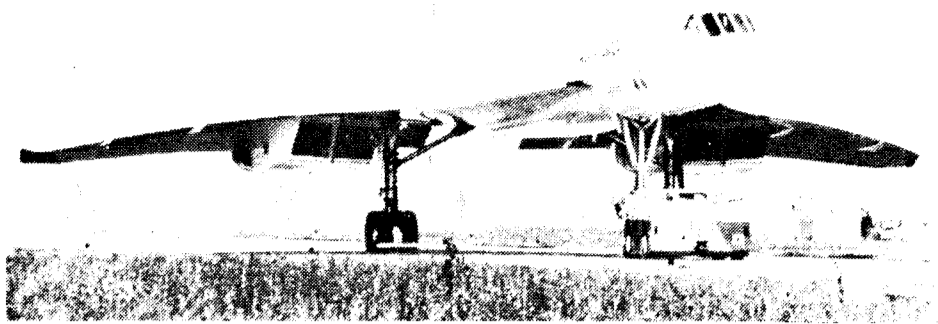
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NEW YORK



Der Spiegel

# Concorde: Let It Land!

After an 18-month ban and nearly two years of legal wrangling, the British/French supersonic transport (SST) Concorde may finally land at Kennedy Airport on October 19. With the Supreme Court's refusal to hear the case Monday the last legal barrier to the Concorde's landing was lifted, and Air France and British Airways announced that test flights will begin immediately at Kennedy, followed by regular passenger flights starting November 22.

As expected, local Queens homeowners were furious at the announcement and immediately began preparing for a massive motorcade to tie up traffic around the airport in protest. A spokesman for the anti-SST Concorde Alert group threatened to "make Kennedy Airport look like New Orleans on Mardi Gras." While both this group and the Emergency Coalition to Stop the SST say the protest will not interfere with the plane, state assemblywoman Gerdi Lipschutz told the *New York Post* (18 October) that some of her constituents might fly kites near the airport to disrupt air traffic! This incredible threat, endangering the lives of hundreds of airline passengers, indicates the lengths to which these enraged petty-bourgeois homeowners will go to protect their property values.

From the beginning the Concorde issue has been directly political rather than an environmental question of noise levels. The door was opened to finally letting it land following the visit of French prime minister René Barre to the White House September 15, when the Carter administration announced its support for lifting the ban. Shortly after, transportation secretary Brock Adams released the government's proposal to grand landing rights for the SST at 13 U.S. cities including the all-important New York. (The Concorde will not be a paying proposition without access to the heavily traveled New York-Paris and New York-London routes.)

Earlier, in mid-August, federal district court judge Milton Pollock had ruled the New York-New Jersey Port Authority's ban on the Concorde "discriminatory, arbitrary and unreasonable." He declared that while the Port Authority's avowed purpose in imposing the ban was to set noise standards for supersonic aircraft, "it did not and has not done so." On September 29 the U.S. appeals court upheld Pollock's ruling, noting that after 16 months of experimental flights at Dulles Airport (outside Washington, D.C.), the Concorde vibrations proved to be "even less noticeable than originally anticipated."

With the Supreme Court's refusal to review the appeals court decision, SST

opponents were thrown into a tizzy. New York governor Carey briefly tried to invoke "states rights," but the next day came out for "the rule of law." The Port Authority tried to make use of a provision in the ruling holding that local authorities can reimpose the ban if they can devise a noise standard which will not single out the Concorde but apply equally to all commercial aircraft. This will be hard to do since nearly three-fourths of all commercial airliners exceed existing noise limits!

The stipulation of "commercial" aircraft points to the utter hypocrisy of the whole hullabaloo over noise pollution, for there are literally thousands of supersonic military airplanes which have been using U.S. airspace for more than two decades, and none of the environmentalist groups have objected to them. Besides, as we pointed out in an earlier article ("You Can't Land the 'A' Train at JFK," *WV* No. 147, 4 March 1977)—a point which was later picked up by Murdoch's *Post*—the SST causes only momentary annoyance to middle-class Queens residents while millions of New York working people are subjected to far more painful noise levels for up to two hours a day and even more on the ear-splitting subways.

We noted also:

"For what it is worth the Concorde is not even necessarily the noisiest commercial plane in the air—both at Dulles and London's Heathrow Airport. Boeing 707's have recently been recorded at higher landing noise levels than the British/French SST. The U.S. bourgeoisie's concern is obviously not noise pollution but the fact that American manufacturers have yet to produce a plane to compete with the Concorde."

That Concorde opponents are more concerned with economic nationalism than noise was again made clear by NYC Mayor Beame in a speech favoring extension of the ban. According to Beame, "The Concorde thus actually represents a giant step backward in aircraft development since it is being introduced at the very time when American aircraft manufacturers are producing quieter, cleaner aircraft" (*New York Times*, 29 June).

Despite such clearly chauvinist rhetoric, virtually the entire U.S. left has nevertheless lined up behind the anti-SST forces. Leading the pack has been the ex-Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party (SWP), which uses its weekly *Intercontinental Press* column, "Capitalism Fouls Things Up," to publicize the latest activities of the Emergency Coalition. With its appetite to tail every budding "mass movement," the SWP has lately been presenting itself as the "best builders" of the environmentalist fad. But while the SWP's earlier favorites—the feminist and antiwar movements—had strong anti-communist currents and included capitalist politicians, this populist movement is even more prone to shading over into openly right-wing causes.

Attracting small property owners, pastors and the like, and given a shot in the arm by Carter's conservation rhetoric, the ecology movement takes as its target modern industrial society. The SWP has already gotten a taste of the reactionary elements in this movement in the form of vicious red-baiting directed against itself in the anti-nuclear Clamshell Alliance. But with the Emergency

*continued on page 11*

## Our Best Ever

# Sub Drive Smashing Success!

It is with pleasure and pride that we announce the results of the recently concluded *Workers Vanguard* subscription drive. The five-week drive reached 3,678 points—or a whopping 147 percent of the quota—and left local organizers shaking their heads in surprised delight as they speculated about explanations for the drive's resounding success. Though all branches surpassed their quotas, top honors went to New York City, which garnered 941 points, or 188 percent.

This year's national quota was set at 2,500. This figure reflected the success of last year's sub drive which, with a quota of 2,120 points, had reached 2,536 points over a five-week period. The 1977 drive was carried out concurrently with a high volume of other work, including public forums across the country to publicize the recent fusion between the SL and the Red Flag Union.

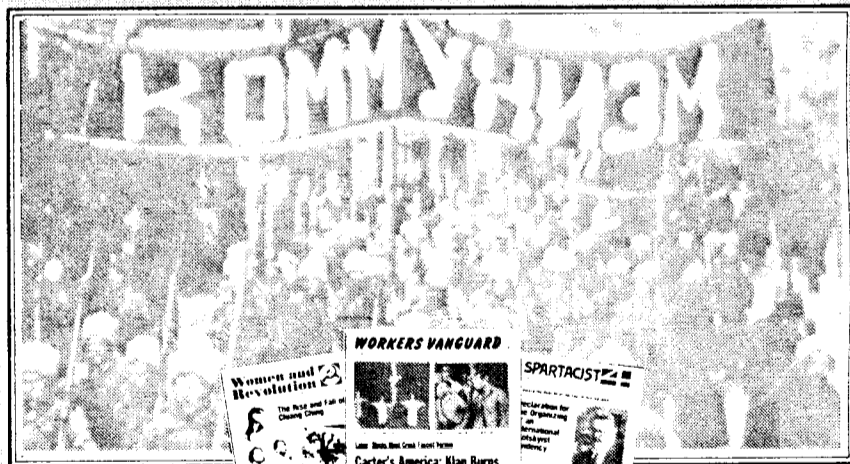
Perhaps most important, 1,061 of the *WV* subscriptions were full-year subs (the balance being two-month trial subs), a big step toward our goal of extending the stable subscription base of our press. The drive also brought in 607 subscriptions to *Women & Revolution* and 573 to *Young Spartacus*, monthly paper of the Spartacus Youth League. The comrades of the Trotskyist League of Canada sold an additional 379 points during their own sub drive, which featured a combined subscription to *WV* and the TLC's monthly paper, *Spartacist Canada*.

The comrades continue to advance explanations for the stunning success of this year's drive. Perhaps there has been some otherwise imperceptible change in the general political climate. Maybe it is that our competitors on the left got off to a slow start in their own sub drives and left the field to *WV* (the SWP's *Militant*, for instance, has announced "catch-up week" for its lagging sub drive). Could it possibly have been the poster for the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution? But whatever other factors may have played their part, it is clear that the remarkable overfulfillment of the quota testifies to painstaking organization by the local leaderships and countless hours of devoted hard work by comrades and supporters of the SL/SYL. The individual leaders of the 1977 sub drive are Dora A. of New York, with 109 points, Robin R. of New York, with 103.5 points, and Kathy K. of Detroit, with 61 points.

The subscription base of *Workers Vanguard* now stands at 2,500 in North America, up 40 percent from last year. We extend our congratulations to all the comrades who participated in the sub drive and a warm welcome to the many new readers of *Workers Vanguard*, the only Marxist weekly in the world.

## WORKERS VANGUARD

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Los Angeles .....	210	320½	153%
New York .....	500	941	188%
San Francisco .....	280	388½	139%
At Large .....	50	83½	167%
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# Party, Faction and "Freedom of Criticism"

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. Part 2 (WV No. 175, 30 September) covered the 1903 Bolshevik-Menshevik split and its aftermath. Part 3 (WV No. 177, 14 October) dealt with the 1905 Revolution.

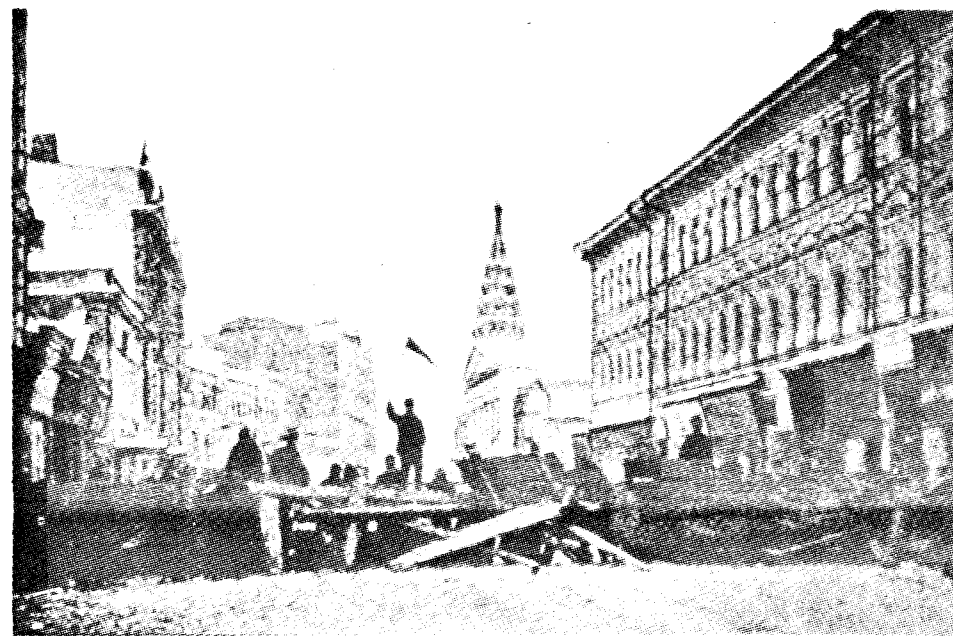
The emergence of differences with the Mensheviks over the role of bourgeois liberalism in the revolution weakened, but did not eliminate, the forces of conciliationism in the Bolshevik camp. At the all-Bolshevik Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party (RSDRP) in April 1905, Lenin found himself in a minority on the question of how to deal with the Mensheviks. He wanted to expel the Mensheviks, who had boycotted the congress, from the RSDRP. The majority of delegates were unwilling to take such an extreme step. The congress adopted a motion that the Mensheviks should be permitted to remain in a unitary RSDRP on condition that they recognize the leadership of the Bolshevik majority and adhere to party discipline. Needless to say, the Mensheviks rejected such unity conditions out of hand.

While the beginning of the 1905 revolution deepened the split between Bolshevism and Menshevism, its further development produced overpowering pressures for the reunification of Russian social democracy. A number of factors, all reinforcing one another, created a tremendous sentiment for unity among members of both tendencies. Common military struggle against the tsarist state produced a strong sense of solidarity among the advanced workers of Russia, the militants and supporters of the social-democratic movement.

By the summer of 1905 a large majority of both tendencies consisted of new, young recruits who had not experienced the struggle of Iskraism against the Economists or the 1903 Bolshevik-Menshevik split and its aftermath. Thus for the majority of Russian social-democratic workers, the organizational division was incomprehensible and appeared to be based on "ancient history." The general belief that the differences within Russian social democracy were not significant was reinforced by the political disarray among the Menshevik leaders. The most prominent Menshevik in 1905 was Trotsky, head of the St. Petersburg Soviet, who was to the left of

Lenin on the goals and prospects of the revolution. Thus the political attitudes of many who joined the Bolshevik and Menshevik organizations in 1905 did not correspond to the programs of their respective leaderships. In his 1940 biography of Stalin, Trotsky noted that in 1905 the Menshevik rank and file stood closer to Lenin's position on the role of social democracy in the revolution than to Plekhanov's.

The sentiment for unity was so strong that several local Bolshevik committees simply fused with their Menshevik counterparts in spite of opposition from their leadership. In his memoirs written



Barricades in Moscow in December, 1905.

in the 1920's, the old Bolshevik Osip Piatnitsky describes the situation in the Odessa social-democratic movement in late 1905:

"It was obvious to the [Bolshevik leading] committee that the proposal of union would be passed by a great majority at the Party meetings of both the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, for wherever the advocates of immediate unity spoke they were supported almost unanimously. Therefore the Bolshevik committee was forced to work out the terms of union which they themselves were against. It was important to do that, for otherwise the union would have occurred without any conditions at all."

— *Memoirs of a Bolshevik* (1973)

In his 1923 history of the Bolsheviks, Gregory Zinoviev sums up the 1906 reunification thus:

"...as a consequence of the revolutionary battles of late 1905 and under the influence of the masses, the staffs of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks were forced to re-unite. In effect the masses forced the Bolsheviks to reconcile themselves to the Mensheviks on several questions."

— *History of the Bolshevik Party—A Popular Outline* (1973)

Zinoviev's statement is perhaps oversimplified. It is unlikely that Lenin simply capitulated to pressure from below. The overwhelming sentiment for unity meant that the organizational divisions no longer corresponded to the political consciousness of the respective memberships. Some of the Bolsheviks' young recruits were actually closer to the left Mensheviks, and vice versa. A period of internal struggle was necessary to separate out the revolutionary elements who

joined the social-democratic movement in 1905 from the opportunistic elements.

## Reunification

In the fall of 1905 the Bolshevik Central Committee and Menshevik Organizing Committee began unity negotiations. The Bolshevik Central Committee in Russia approved of fusions at the local level as the means of reunifying the RSDRP as a whole. Lenin, who was still in exile in Switzerland, strongly intervened to stop this organic unification from below. He insisted that the reunification take place at the top, at a new party congress, with delegates elected on a factional platform. In a letter (3

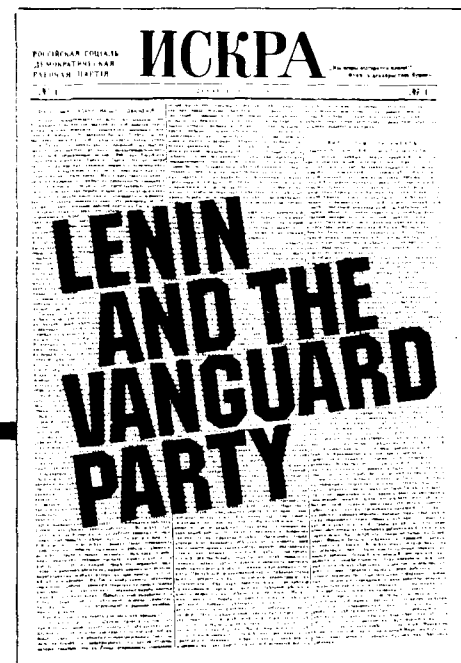
October 1905) to the Central Committee he wrote:

"We should not confuse the policy of uniting the two parts with the *mixing-up* of both parts. We agree to uniting the two parts, but we shall never agree to mixing them up. We must demand of the committees a distinct division, then two congresses and amalgamation." [emphasis in original]

In December 1905 a United Center was formed consisting of an equal number of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. At the same time the central organs of the rival tendencies, the Menshevik *Iskra* and Bolshevik *Proletary*, were discontinued, and superseded by a single publication, *Partinnye Izvestiia* (Party News).

Significantly the Mensheviks agreed to accept Lenin's 1903 definition of membership as requiring formal organizational participation. This was in part a concession to the Leninists, but mainly reflected the fact that in the relatively open conditions of 1905-06, formal organizational participation was not a bar to broad recruitment. The Mensheviks' turnabout completely disproves the widespread notion that Lenin's insistence that members must be subject to organizational discipline was a peculiarity of the underground. On the contrary, it was the Mensheviks who considered that illegality required a looser definition of membership so as to attract social-democratic workers and intellectuals unwilling to face the rigors and dangers of clandestinity.

The Fourth (or "Reunification") Congress, held in Stockholm in April 1906, was divided between 62 Mensheviks and 46 Bolsheviks. Also represented were the Jewish Bund, the Lettish



## PART 4

social democrats and the Polish social democrats led by Luxemburg and Jogiches. No one has contested that the factions' representation at the Fourth Congress corresponded to their respective strength at the base, among the social-democratic workers in Russia. (In early 1906 the Mensheviks had about 18,000 members, the Bolsheviks about 12,000.)

What accounted for the Menshevik majority among Russian social democrats in early 1906? First, the Bolshevik committeemen's conservative attitude toward recruitment in early 1905 also manifested itself in a sectarian attitude toward the new mass organizations thrown up by the revolution—the trade unions and, above all, the soviets. Thus the Mensheviks were able to get a head start in vying for the leadership of the broad working-class organizations. Although Trotsky was not a Menshevik factionalist, his role as head of the St. Petersburg Soviet strengthened the authority of the anti-Leninist wing of Russian social democracy. Secondly, the Mensheviks' advocacy of immediate, organic fusion enabled them to appeal to the young recruits' political naiveté and desire for unity.

With the defeat of the Bolshevik-led Moscow insurrection in December 1905, the tide turned in favor of tsarist reaction. While the Bolsheviks considered the tsarist victories a temporary setback during a continuing revolutionary situation, the Mensheviks concluded that the revolution was over. The Menshevik position corresponded to the increasingly defeatist mood of the masses in the early months of 1906.

Throughout the period of the Fourth Congress Lenin several times affirmed his loyalty to a unitary RSDRP. For example, in a brief factional statement at the conclusion of the congress, he wrote:

"We must and shall fight ideologically against those decisions of the Congress which we regard as erroneous. But at the same time we declare to the whole Party that we are opposed to a split of any kind. We stand for submission to the decisions of the Congress.... We are profoundly convinced that the workers' Social-Democratic organizations must be united, but in these united organizations there must be a wide and free criticism of Party questions, free comradesly criticism and assessment of events in Party life."

"An Appeal to the Party by Delegates to the Unity Congress Who Belonged to the Former 'Bolshevik' Group" (April 1906)

For Lenin, the reunification represented *both* a continuing adherence to the Kautskyan doctrine of "the party of the whole class" and a tactical maneuver to win over the mass of raw, young workers who had joined the social-democratic movement during the

1905 revolution. We have no way of assessing the different weighting Lenin gave to these two very different considerations. Nor do we know how in 1906 Lenin envisaged the future course of Bolshevik-Menshevik relations.

It is unlikely that Lenin looked forward to or projected a definitive split and the creation of a Bolshevik party. Among other factors Lenin knew that the Bolsheviks would not be recognized as the sole representative of Russian social democracy by the Second International. And when in 1912 the Bolsheviks did split completely from the Mensheviks and claimed to be *the* RSDRP, the leadership of the International did not recognize that claim.

Lenin probably would have liked to reduce the Mensheviks to an impotent minority subject to the discipline of a revolutionary (i.e., Bolshevik) leadership of the RSDRP. This is how he viewed the relationship of the Bernsteinian revisionists to the Bebel/Kautsky leadership of the SPD. However, he knew that the Menshevik cadre were unwilling to act and perhaps incapable of acting as a disciplined minority in a revolutionary party. He further recognized that he did not have the authority of a Bebel to make an opportunist tendency submit to his organizational leadership.

In striving for leadership of the Russian workers movement, Lenin did not limit himself to winning over the Menshevik rank and file, to purely internal RSDRP factional struggle. He sought to recruit *non-party* workers and radical petty bourgeois *directly* to the Bolshevik tendency. To this end the Bolshevik "faction" of the RSDRP acted much like an independent party with its own press, leadership and disciplinary structure, finances, public activities and local committees. That in the 1906-12 period the Bolsheviks, while formally a faction in a unitary RSDRP, had most of the characteristics of an independent party was the later judgment of such diverse political figures as Trotsky, Zinoviev and the Menshevik leader Theodore Dan.



Meeting of the First Duma.

In the course of a 1940 polemic against the American Shachtman faction, Trotsky characterized the Bolsheviks in this period as a "faction" which "bore all the traits of a party" (*In Defense of Marxism* [1940]).

Zinoviev's *History of the Bolshevik Party* describes the situation following the Fourth Congress:

"... the Bolsheviks had set up during the Congress their own internal and, for the party, *illegal*. Central Committee. This period of our party's history when we were in the minority on both the Central Committee and the St. Petersburg Committee and had to conceal our *separate revolutionary activity*, was very arduous and unpleasant for us.... It was a situation where two parties were seemingly operating within the structure of one." [our emphasis]

Theodore Dan's 1945 work, *The Origins of Bolshevism* (1970) presents a similar analysis of Bolshevik-Menshevik relations:

"It was not an organizational but a political divergence that very quickly split the Russian Social-Democracy into two factions, which sometimes drew close and then clashed with each other, but basically remained independent parties that kept fighting with each other even at a time when they were

nominally within the framework of a unitary party."

### Democratic Centralism and "Freedom of Criticism"

From the Fourth Congress in April 1906 until the Fifth Congress in May 1907, the Bolsheviks were a minority faction in the RSDRP. In striving for the party leadership, the Bolsheviks did not primarily orient toward winning over a section of the Menshevik cadre. With a few individual exceptions, Lenin regarded the seasoned Menshevik cadre as hardened opportunists, at least in the immediate period. Paradoxically, the reunification demonstrated the hardness of the line separating the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks; few veterans of either group changed sides.

One of Lenin's motives in agreeing to unity was that the continuing split repelled many social-democratic workers from joining either group. Since recruiting non-party elements was key to struggle against the Menshevik leadership of the RSDRP, Lenin naturally wanted to be able to publicly attack that leadership. It was in that historic context that Lenin defined democratic-centralism as "freedom of criticism, unity in action." In the 1906-07 period, Lenin on numerous occasions advocated the right of minorities to publicly oppose the positions, though not the actions, of the party leadership.

Predictably, various rightist revisionists have "rediscovered" Lenin's 1906 advocacy of "freedom of criticism"—the product of a continuing adherence to a classic social-democratic concept of the party and a tactical maneuver against the Mensheviks—and proclaimed it the true form of Leninist democratic centralism. Certain left centrist groupings, which broke out of the fake-Trotskyist United Secretariat in the early 1970's, made "freedom of criticism" a key part of their program. The most significant of these groups was the West German Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands, of which but feeble remnants exist today. The Leninist Faction (LF) in the American Socialist

Workers Party, which gave rise to the short-lived Class Struggle League (CSL), likewise championed "freedom of criticism." A central leader of the LF CSL, Barbara G., wrote a lengthy document entitled "Democratic Centralism" (August 1972) on the subject. The central conclusion is:

"Lenin felt that discussion of political differences in the party press was important because the party and press were those of the working class. If the workers were to see the party as *their* party, they must see party questions as *their* questions, party struggles as *their* struggles. The worker coming around the party must understand that he has the possibility of helping to build the party, not only through repeating the majority line, but through (under party guidelines) advancing his criticisms and ideas." [emphasis in original]

Barbara G. quotes approvingly from Lenin's May 1906 article, "Freedom to Criticize and Unity of Action":

"Criticism within the limits of the principles of the Party Program must be quite free... not only at Party meetings, but also at public meetings. Such criticism, or such 'agitation' (for criticism is inseparable from agitation) cannot be prohibited."

The "Party" that Lenin is referring to

*continued on page 8*

## Speech to 1973 Spartacus-BL Conference

# In Defense of Democratic Centralism

*We publish below excerpts from a speech by Comrade James Robertson of the Spartacist League/U.S. Central Committee to a national conference of the West German Spartacus (Bolschewiki-Leninisten) in February 1973. Spartacus-BL subsequently underwent organizational hemorrhaging through a series of clique splits among its central leadership. The remnants fused in early 1974 with the equally debilitated Internationale Kommunisten Deutschlands (IKD), with which Spartacus-BL had split in December 1972, to form the Spartacusbund (SpB). Continuing in the same vein of trying to form an eclectic amalgam of Trotskyism and Menshevism, the centrist Spartacusbund was unable to politically answer authentically Leninist oppositionists and, racked by recurrent cliquish infighting, resorted to repeated bureaucratic expulsions which have left the fused organization a fraction of its original size. The core of the Trozktistische Liga Deutschlands (TLD—German section of the international Spartacist tendency) was constituted by fusions and recruitment of left oppositionists from both wings of the original IKD. The full text of the speech is available in the German edition of Spartacist, No. 1 (Spring 1974).*

We see two parallel problems internationally among those who profess to be Trotskyist. One is not yours. That is the formal Bolshevism with all of the formal lessons properly assimilated, represented by such formations as the Spanish POUM, the French OCI, the Bolivian POR. The problem, and it is not a definitively closed question, is that while these comrades have mastered quite fully in a way that you have not the forms of a Bolshevik organization, they have minimized the content. They do not see the united front and all of its related phenomena—that is, entrisms into other reformist workers formations, regroupment processes and the like—as the way in which, to quote Trotsky, "the proletarian base should be set against the bourgeois top." Rather, they came to separate the united front from the party, expecting, for example in France, that the Socialist and Communist parties would somehow, by coming together organizationally, achieve revolutionary proletarian pacts. They cancel out the role of the Bolsheviks.

We see a somewhat different problem with your organization in particular, and that is a tendency to go back in form and political outlook to the Russian social democracy as it was around about 1903. To the extent that some of you do this in ignorance, it can be overcome through struggle. But those of you who deliberately ignore the experience of the October Revolution, the founding of the Communist International and all that came after—the first four congresses of the Comintern, the struggle of the Trotskyist Left Opposition—those of you who would turn your backs on this are already, in the egg, opportunist little Kautskys.

Any variant of the Kautskyist conception of the "party of the whole class" is a wilfully non-revolutionary and ultimately counterrevolutionary position. The latest and fullest representative of this species of revisionists is Max Shachtman. The last major article that he ever wrote was entitled, "American Communism: A Reexamination of the Past." He finds the original sin of communism

in the splits to the left from the social democracy that took place during and after World War I, creating a division in the political expression of the proletariat. He finds the cause of these splits in a change in the understanding of the role of reformism, of opportunism, on the part of revolutionary socialists within the working-class movement.

Shachtman quotes Lenin very favorably through the period of about 1908. In particular, he observes that if the revolutionaries had only followed the rule of "freedom of criticism, unity in action," the unity of the proletarian party could have been preserved. He argues that at that time Lenin had an understanding of opportunism as a transient, ephemeral, secondary aspect of the workers movement. In particular, he praises Lenin for advocating that in those local areas where the Bolsheviks were in the minority they should subordinate themselves to the Mensheviks and vote for the Kadet [Constitutional Democrats] party. (Where the Bolsheviks had the majority, Lenin held, they should either vote for social-democratic candidates or, if given no other choice, abstain.) Shachtman, because he had become a social democrat, does not go into the reason for the evolution in the views of the Bolshevik faction. He merely describes the change in the Leninist position as a kind of original sin.

What we are dealing with in the period from the founding of *Iskra* to the founding of the Bolshevik Party in 1912 is the transformation of the Bolshevik faction from a revolutionary social-democratic into an embryonic communist organization. The model for the Russian revolutionary social democrats in the early period was the German social democracy. In the determination of the Bolshevik wing to pursue a revolution against tsarism, their political practice ran ahead of their theoretical model. And, of course, their organizational practice lagged even further behind and was highly empirical under the clandestine conditions.

It was possible for Lenin during the period of the reunification of the Russian social democracy, 1905-1907, to draw conclusions about the discipline of a party of reformists and revolutionaries which would be rejected out of hand by any Leninist today. That does not make us smarter than Marx or Lenin, it merely means that we are able to face current political questions in the light of their experience. The truth is historically conditioned; that is, the outlook of the Communist movement of the first four congresses of the Communist International rested upon a historic and successful upheaval of the revolutionary proletariat.

A comparable theoretical breakthrough and generalization accompanied this massive revolutionary achievement. It is as though the theoretical outlook of the proletarian vanguard in the period 1919-23 in the International stood atop a mountain. But since that time, from the period of the Trotskyist Left Opposition until his death and afterwards, the proletariat has mainly witnessed defeats and the revolutionary vanguard has either been shrunken or its continuity in many countries broken. One cannot separate the ability to know the world from the ability to change it, and our capacity to change the world is on a very small scale compared

*continued on page 11*

# Party, Faction and "Freedom of Criticism" ...

(continued from page 7)

here is *not* the Bolshevik Party which led the October Revolution. It is the inclusive party of all Russian social democrats led by the Menshevik faction, i.e., by demonstrated opportunists. To equate the RSDRP of 1906 with a revolutionary vanguard is to obliterate the distinction between Bolshevism and Menshevism.

Short of an open split, Lenin did everything possible to prevent the RSDRP's Menshevik leadership from hindering the Bolsheviks' revolutionary agitation and actions. We have already quoted Zinoviev to the effect that the Bolsheviks established a formal leadership structure in violation of party rules. They also had independent finances. By August 1906, the Bolsheviks had reestablished a factional organ, *Proletary*, under the auspices of the St. Petersburg committee where they had just won a majority.

That the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks could not coexist in a unitary party according to the formula "freedom of criticism, unity in action" was demonstrated by the St. Petersburg election campaign in early 1907. During this period the principal conflict between the groups focused on electoral support to the liberal monarchist Cadet Party. At a party conference in November 1906, the Menshevik majority adopted a compromise whereby the local committees determined their own electoral policy. In order to undermine the Bolshevik stronghold of St. Petersburg, the Central Committee then ordered that committee split in two. Correctly denouncing this as a purely factional maneuver, the Bolsheviks refused to split the committee. At a St. Petersburg conference to decide on electoral policy, the Mensheviks split, claiming the conference was illegitimate. They then supported the Cadets against the Bolshevik RSDRP campaign.

When Lenin denounced this act of class treason in a pamphlet, *The St. Petersburg Elections and the Hypocrisy of the Thirty-One Mensheviks*, the Central Committee brought him up on charges of making statements "impermissible for a Party member." The Central Committee's juridical actions against Lenin were postponed until the Fifth Congress, where they were rendered moot by the Bolsheviks gaining a majority.

The spirit in which Lenin advocated "freedom of criticism" can be seen in his "defense" against the Menshevik accusation that he "cast suspicion upon the political integrity of Party members":

"By sharp and discourteous attacks on the Mensheviks on the eve of the St. Petersburg elections, I actually succeeded in causing that section of the proletariat which trusts and follows the Mensheviks to waver. That was my aim. That was my duty as a member of the St. Petersburg Social-Democratic organization which was conducting a campaign for a Left bloc; because, after the split, it was necessary... to rout the Mensheviks who were leading the proletariat in the footsteps of the Cadets; it was necessary to carry confusion into their ranks; it was necessary to arouse among the masses hatred, aversion and contempt for those people who had ceased to be members of a united party, had become political enemies.... Against such political enemies I then conducted—and in the event of a repetition or development of a split shall always conduct—a struggle of extermination." [emphasis in original]

"Report to the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. on the St. Petersburg Split..." (April 1907)

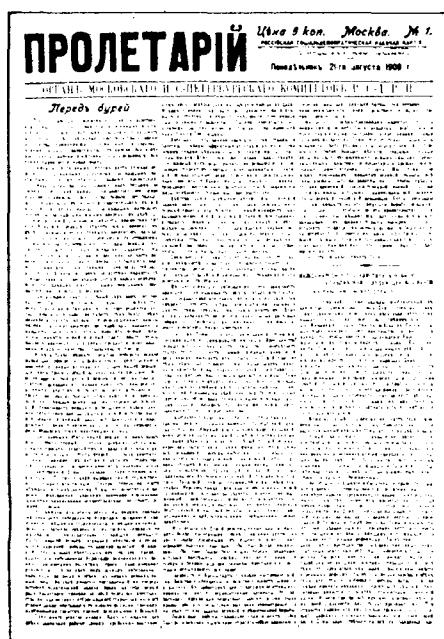
Lenin's advocacy of "freedom of criticism" in the Menshevik-led RSDRP of 1906 was analogous to the Trotskyists' position on democratic centralism when they did an entry into the social-democratic parties in the mid-1930's. The Trotskyists opposed democratic centralism for those parties in order to



V.I. Lenin



Leon Trotsky



First issue of *Proletary* published 21 August 1906 in Moscow by the Bolsheviks.

maximize their impact both among the social-democratic membership, and outside the parties as well. Conversely, elements of the social-democratic leadership then came out for democratic-centralist norms in order to suppress the Trotskyists. Referring to the Trotskyists' experience in the American Socialist Party of Norman Thomas, James P. Cannon expresses very well the unique applicability of democratic centralism to the revolutionary vanguard:

"Democratic-centralism has no special virtue per se. It is the specific principle of a combat party, united by a single program, which aims to lead a revolution. Social Democrats have no need of such a system of organization for the simple reason that they have no intention of organizing a revolution. Their democracy and centralism are not united by a hyphen but kept in separate compartments for separate purposes. The democracy is for the social patriots and the centralism is for the revolutionists. The attempt of the Zam-Tyler 'Clarityite' faction in the Socialist Party in introducing a rigid 'democratic-centralist' system of organization in the heterogeneous Socialist Party (1936-37) was a howling caricature; more properly, an abortion. The only thing those people needed centralization and discipline for was to suppress the rights of the left wing and then to expel it."

Letter to Duncan Conway (3 April 1953), in *Speeches to the Party* (1973)

Following the definitive split with the Mensheviks and creation of the Bolshevik party in 1912, Lenin abandoned his 1906 position on "freedom of criticism." In July 1914 the International Socialist Bureau arranged a conference to reunite the Russian social democrats. Among Lenin's numerous conditions for unity is

a clear rejection of "freedom of criticism":

"The existence of two rival newspapers in the same town or locality shall be absolutely forbidden. The minority shall have the right to discuss before the whole Party, disagreements on program, tactics and organization in a discussion journal specially published for the purpose, but shall not have the right to publish in a rival newspaper, pronouncements disruptive of the actions and decisions of the majority." [our emphasis]

— "Report of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. to the Brussels Conference" (June 1914)

Lenin further stipulated that public agitation against the underground party or for "cultural-national autonomy" was absolutely forbidden.

Barbara G., in her paper on "Democratic Centralism," recognizes that by 1914 Lenin had changed his position:

"By 1914, then, Lenin had definitely changed his thinking on the following question: Where he used to think it permissible to have faction newspapers within the RSDLP, he now thought it impermissible because it confused and divided the working class."

Barbara G. minimizes Lenin's rejection of "freedom of criticism." He not only rejected rival public factional organs, but the right of minorities to publicly criticize the majority position in any form. He further specified that on two key differences—the underground and "cultural-national autonomy"—the minority position could not be advocated publicly at all. It is characteristic of centrists, like Barbara G., to prefer the Lenin of 1906, who accepted unity with the Mensheviks and still adhered to classic social-democratic concepts of the party, to the Lenin of 1914, who had definitively broken with the Mensheviks and thereby challenged the Kautskyan doctrine that revolutionaries and labor reformists should coexist in a unitary party.

The membership and particularly the leading cadre of a revolutionary vanguard have a qualitatively higher level of political-class consciousness than all non-party elements. A revolutionary leadership can make errors, even serious ones, on issues where the masses of workers are correct. Such occurrences will be very rare. If they are not rare, then it is the revolutionary character of the organization which is called into question, not the norms of democratic centralism.

A minority within a revolutionary organization seeks to win over its leading cadre, not to appeal to more backward elements against that cadre. The resolution of differences within the vanguard

should be as free as possible from the intervention of backward elements, a prime source of bourgeois ideological pressure. "Freedom of criticism" maximizes the influence of backward workers, not to speak of conscious political enemies, on the revolutionary vanguard. Thus "freedom of criticism" does grave damage to the internal cohesion and external authority of the proletarian vanguard.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

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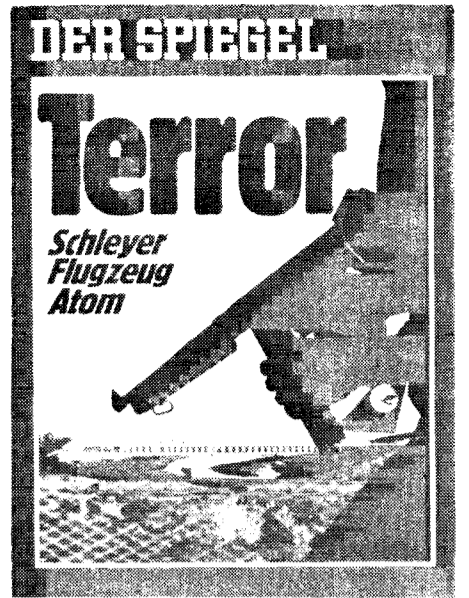
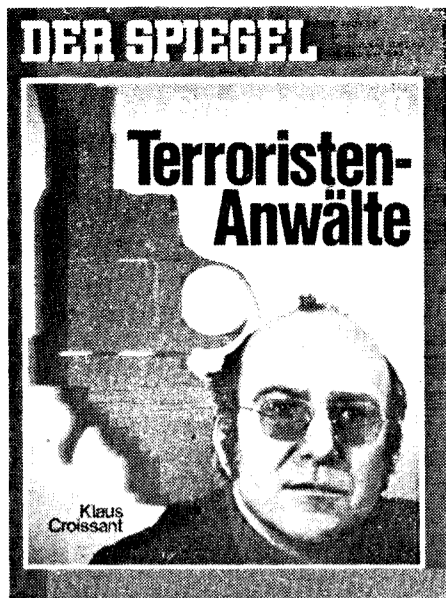
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## Witchhunt in West Germany...

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resting on a false strategy and tactics"—but not "counterrevolutionary" (*Kommunistische Volkszeitung*, 5 December 1974). Today the KBW parrots the same "gangland war" nonsense as the KPD.

Last spring the *Kommunistische Volkszeitung* (5 May 1977) went on in the most revolting fashion about the "high living of RAF members" (perhaps they mean Holger Meins and Ulrike Meinhof, who died in prison?). The KBW pontificated: "The RAF never engaged in terrorism in pursuit of a goal. The RAF executed bombings in order to get attention. It was as if one part of the bourgeoisie wanted to make the other aware that something had to be done" (our emphasis)! Remarkably, however, the capitalist class has failed to recognize the RAF, which specializes in kidnapping and assassinating prominent representatives of the bourgeoisie, as one of its own. For some "inexplicable reason" the West German government persists in trying to wipe out this organization and its "sympathizers," and to use the RAF's spectacular actions as an excuse for a crackdown on all self-proclaimed communists (the so-called "K-groups").

The SB, DKP, KPD and KBW simply read the Red Army Faction out of the left in order to escape the obligation of calling for its defense against the murderous repression of the West German state. In contrast, the critical Maoist *Kommunistischer Bund* (KB) announces in the first paragraph of a front-page statement that it will not take part in the "frenzy within the left to distance themselves [from the RAF] on orders from Strauß, Schmidt & Co." It "regrets the stance of various left-wing personalities and organizations which seek to worm their way into the columns of the pro-government press with vile disavowals" (*Arbeiterkampf*, 3 October).

But already the concealed opportunism of the KB shows its face. Although it terms the RAF "comrades," it does not demand freedom for the RAF prisoners. Nor does the KB explain why it no longer raises this demand. (Earlier it called for their freedom, albeit under the completely false liberal slogan of "freedom for all political prisoners," which would also include right-wing prisoners such as Rudolf Hess.) The only explanation offered by the KB for this cowardly omission is that the left cannot "at this time" make any "suggestion for the 'freeing' of the political prisoners that is even moderately credible and has a chance of success." This sublimely objectivist excuse (Kautsky and Bauer would heartily approve) is presented as an "expression of the relation of class forces" in West Germany.

On the other hand the KB is concerned about the "increase in desperate individual 'armed attacks' by comrades who, lacking faith in the historic power of the workers movement, no longer see any 'way out.'" This is because "the relative



Special intervention commandos of the West German police.

Stern

weakness of the West German left makes the situation worse, because in the short run it cannot offer a credible alternative to the future 'terrorists.'" But such an alternative, whether in the short or long run, can only be provided by a political perspective, a political program. And the KB shrinks from program almost as much as the devil from holy water. "It is in fact a tradition with us that we deal very little with so-called 'programmatic questions,'" they say smugly, "but concentrate instead primarily on concrete, practical questions of political struggle" (*Arbeiterkampf*, 5 September). Thus the KB demonstrates that it will never provide this alternative, either for despairing individuals or for the working class as a whole.

The demand for freeing the victims of the bourgeoisie's reactionary terror is only one point of our revolutionary program, although an indispensable one. To raise it only when success appears possible is simply to capitulate before the pressure of "public opinion." In particular, proletarian comrades in the factories, who are subjected to tremendous pressures to capitulate in periods of political hysteria, will be able to resist only if their organization displays the greatest clarity and hardness. Those who do not accept the cynical ploy of reading the RAF out of the left cannot simply "forget" the demand for their freedom because it is unpopular. It must be raised loudly and unceasingly.

### Object Capitulation of the GIM

It is not surprising to see the aspiring social-democratic bureaucrats and Maoist fatherland defenders solidarizing with bourgeois state repression against the "terrorist threat." But, although even for these shameless reformists their grovelling over the Schleyer affair represents a new low, the most revolting capitulation of all comes from the supposed Trotskyists of the Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (GIM, German section of Ernest Mandel's "United Secretariat" [USeC]). These opportunists, who once beat the drums for a

"guerrilla strategy" in Latin America, venerated Che Guevara and supported "without reservation" the "unstoppable ascension" of Spanish premier Carrero Blanco (as a result of a Basque nationalist bomb attack), now crawl under their beds when the same terrorist tactics are used at home and the bourgeoisie puts the heat on.

Beginning with the repulsive banner headline "Individual Terror Only Aids the Right!" the 15 September issue of the GIM's *Was Tun* (No. 175) is filled from cover to cover with legalistic double-talk, veiled slanders against victims of reactionary repression and grovelling apologies to the bourgeois state. To top off this nauseating collection of social-democratic evasions, the GIM presents its own anti-terrorist program! "Our 'program against terror' is a program of mass actions against unemployment and atomic pollution, for the common defense of democratic rights."

What an abomination of Marxism! Not only does the GIM refuse to defend the RAF against the witchhunt of the West German state; not only do these phony Trotskyists fall into line with the government's "anti-terrorist" hysteria; not only do they fail to make the elementary class distinction between the terror of the capitalist state and that of the RAF; but these panicky opportunists in full flight to the right claim (just as Schmidt says to Strauß) that they have a better program to fight left-wing terror. For shame! Has the GIM "forgotten" the principle of class solidarity against bourgeois repression? Has it "forgotten" about the class character of the state?

Apparently they have, for the infamous *Was Tun* No. 175 states:

"The Schleyer kidnapers, who provide the excuse [for state repression against the left], thereby prove their unpolitical attitude: they are simply following the 'military' logic of a private war which is completely lacking in justification. Their demands for freeing prisoners are only aimed at [increasing] their own capacity for action. Their methods include the death of Schleyer's escorts."

After this "indictment" of the RAF, which could have appeared in any SPD

newspaper and is worthy of the SB, the GIM concludes:

"In the case of contemporary groups which follow a policy of individual terror, whether they belong to the workers movement is extremely questionable. . . . We are presently discussing within our organization the more far-reaching political conclusions to be drawn from the recent upsurge of individual terrorism."

It is a telling indictment of the Pabloists, who change their positions with every shift in the winds of petty-bourgeois opinion, that the people who at the height of the Guevarist rage called for a strategy of "protracted guerrilla war" in Latin America now want to read any group which uses terrorist methods out of the left.

In fact, not so long ago the centrist USeC majority excused incidents of indiscriminate terror by nationalist groups whose victims were not representatives of the bourgeoisie but random individuals. The criminal slaughter of Puerto Rican Baptist tourists at Lod Airport in Israel by the "Japanese Red Army" in league with the Palestinian PFLP was called merely a "great mistake" in *Was Tun* No. 6. And don't forget the Munich massacre. When Israeli athletes were killed as a result of their senseless kidnapping by the Palestinian nationalist Black September group, the political bureau of the USeC's French section wrote that "the action of Black September must be unconditionally supported" (*Rouge*, 30 September 1972). But let some home-grown terrorists—not exotic "Third World" heroes who can be romanticized and vicariously cheered on—kidnap a top industrialist and former Nazi, and the fickle GIM suddenly questions whether the RAF is part of the left.

The shamelessness of the Pabloists does not even stop here. The GIM's first reaction to the Köln attack was one of sympathy for the dead cops! "We feel no joy over the kidnapping of Schleyer. Not only because of the death of four policemen, who are of course not uninvolved, but at least are not personally guilty. . . ." (*Was Tun*, 8 September). Are the police not the professional gunmen, the mailed fist of the bourgeois state? Yet this infamy should not be surprising coming from supporters of an "International" whose Spanish section calls on the Francoist state to dissolve fascist bands, whose American "fraternal" supporters call on the U.S. imperialist army to protect black people in Boston, and whose French section supports unionization of the cops. Perhaps, in the tradition of the American SWP, which sent a telegram of condolences to the widow Kennedy in 1963, the GIM will soon issue public statements of its sympathy for the next of kin of the Bubacks, Pontos, Schleyers and their "escorts."

### Down with the "Anti-Terrorist" Witchhunt!

The GIM tries to buttress its capitulation with a quote from Trotsky, writing in 1911 in *Kampf*, the newspaper of Austrian social democracy. *Was Tun* No. 175 prints a passage in which Trotsky shows how terrorists with their "heroic actions" push the masses aside, driving them into political passivity. But

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# Witchhunt in West Germany...

(continued from page 9)

these cowering renegades from Trotskyism neglect to print the end of the article which breathes a revolutionary fire far too hot for the pages of their economist sheet:

"No matter what the eunuchs and pharisees of morality say, the desire for vengeance has its legitimate rights. It attests to the highest moral honor of the working class that is incapable of simply observing with bored indifference what goes on in this best of all worlds. The task of social democracy is not to extinguish the proletariat's thirst for vengeance but, on the contrary, to always fan its flames, to feed it, in order to deepen it and direct it against the true causes of all injustice and human depravity.

"If we nevertheless reject terrorist acts, it is not because we do not recognize the right to revenge, but instead because individual revenge is insufficient. The bill we have to settle with the capitalist world order is too large to present to a vulgar government official with the title of minister. To understand all the crimes against mankind and all the disgraces to human dignity as the products of a social system, in order to bring together all our force in collective struggle against this system—that is the path whereby the most flaming desire for revenge can find its highest moral satisfaction."

Unlike the USec, the Spartacist League has always politically opposed guerrillism (whether urban or rural) and terrorism as deadend strategies of petty-bourgeois adventurism, substitutionism and despair which can never lead to the revolutionary workers state based on soviet democracy which is our goal. Moreover, we have consistently distinguished the false and dangerous policy of individual terror from the criminal practice of indiscriminate terrorism. When the French section of the USec called the Black September action at Munich "an act of legitimate violence of a people to whom international reaction and the treason of the Arab bourgeoisies have left no choice," the Spartacist tendency wrote:

"The indefensible petty-bourgeois terrorist frenzy manifested at Munich grows out of the evident Israeli consolidation

of the victories carved out of the living body of the Arab peoples. ... the bourgeois outcry passes lightly over the vastly bloodier retaliation by the Israeli state. ... But while one can understand how the plight of the Palestinian people drives groups like the PFLP and Black September to desperate and frenzied acts, nonetheless indiscriminate mass terror such as Munich or Lydda is completely indefensible."

—Workers Vanguard No. 13, November 1972

In the same article, while condemning the criminal attack at Munich, we made clear our consistent defense of the entire left against the terror of the capitalist state:

"Individual terror directed against the class enemy, no matter how inevitably counterproductive and substitutionist, is still an act of class hatred against oppression, and its perpetrators must be defended against bourgeois repression."

Unlike the sometime vicarious guerrillists of the USec, who now seek cowardly excuses to avoid defending the RAF prisoners, the international Spartacist tendency does not apologize for its unblemished record of defense of the workers movement.

Freedom for the RAF prisoners! Freedom for all left prisoners! Down with the "anti-terrorist" witchhunt! For proletarian unity of action against the threatened ban against "communist organizations"!

Down with all emergency laws! Down with the "contact ban" law! For the dissolution of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* and the mobile intervention commandos!

Smash the *Berufsverbot*—No blacklisting in the trade unions!

For the proletarian class justice of a workers government! ■

# The German Kill...

(continued from page 1)

venturist and criminal terrorists, whose pointless hijacking was doomed to failure, but also against the helpless leftists imprisoned in West Germany.

The hijacking was a godsend for the West German ruling class. Instead of the unsavory Schleyer, the former SS man and right-wing capitalist, attention could now be focused on the plight of innocent men, women and children. Even Pope Paul VI managed to get into the act, pompously pontificating, "If it were useful we would offer even our person for the liberation of those hostages" (*New York Times*, 18 October).

The antics of the Lufthansa hijackers stand counterposed not only to the aims but even to the tactics of the proletarian vanguard, which seeks to assert its revolutionary mission when the bourgeoisie is divided, capitalist society is in manifest disarray and the vast majority of the working population has been won to support of the revolutionary cause. The blood-drenched bourgeoisie can now congratulate itself for being the "liberators" of innocent people from the "leftist" forces of chaos.

The alleged suicide of the RAF prisoners is even a more spectacular story. The version given out by the West German authorities would seem incredible on the face of it: that four RAF prisoners—who have been held in isolation from each other in a special prison-fortress built for them, under conditions of imprisonment which have given a new meaning to the phrase "maximum security," not permitted visits even from their lawyers—managed to acquire deadly weapons (including 7.65mm and 9mm military pistols) and seek to kill themselves (by shooting, stabbing and hanging) in their cells. According to the minister of justice of Baden-Württemberg, Traugott Bender, the cells of the RAF prisoners were searched daily.

The tale is hideously reminiscent of the alleged suicide in May 1976 of Ulrike Meinhof, co-leader of the RAF with Andreas Baader (one of the new "sui-

cides"). According to preliminary news reports, some elements of the Bonn government expressed "shock" at the news of the supposed suicides, while nevertheless insisting that there appeared to be no lengths to which the "Baader-Meinhof Gang" would not go in their terroristic assault on the West German state—including "self-destruction"!

## Shades of Count Otto Skorzeny!

The well-executed Mogadishu raid by the increasingly aggressive "federal border police" is being compared in the bourgeois press to last year's Israeli raid on a hijacked aircraft at Entebbe, Uganda. It is the first such action by German forces since an SS Kommando led by Count Otto Skorzeny in 1943 rescued the imprisoned fascist dictator Mussolini from an Italian mountaintop fortress. Skorzeny, a lifelong Nazi who finally died in exile in Madrid, would have totally approved of the Mogadishu raid. But, in fact, the GSC-9 commando responsible for the Mogadishu raid and the deaths of three of the four hijackers is the offspring of the governments of Social Democratic chancellors Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt.

The increasingly authoritarian West German state now presided over by Schmidt & Co. is a product of the American bourgeoisie. The "father" of the Federal Republic of Germany—"Der Alte," Konrad Adenauer—stepped into his job as the administrator of a state "Made in the U.S.A." It was U.S. imperialism that set up the state which allows the SS to hold legal reunions and gives its members government pensions. It was U.S. imperialism which created a state that absorbed the bureaucracy of the Third Reich more or less intact.

As for the West German social democracy, it got its start during and after the war in the service of the American CIA, and was originally assigned (with pay) to placate and deflect the struggles of the powerful working class of western Germany. As late as a couple of years ago, Social Democratic Party leader and then chancellor Brandt was a conduit for massive funds to Portuguese social democrat Mário Soares.

The courageous but misguided attempts of the RAF to struggle against imperialism and oppression in an individualistic petty-bourgeois fashion have failed miserably. The West German bourgeoisie is firmly in the saddle and making ready use of every action of the decomposed New Leftist RAF to strengthen its repressive apparatus which is aimed, in the final analysis, at the proletariat. Only by rejecting the road of petty-bourgeois despair, and by turning to and organizing the proletariat under the leadership of a Trotskyist vanguard party, can the imperialist order be toppled and replaced with the soviet dictatorship of the working class. ■

# Anti-Bakke Demos...

(continued from page 2)

ing organized a strategy of defeats, the reformists try to deny reality by proclaiming phony victories. The anti-Bakke rallies are hailed as the beginning of a new "upsurge" in the "mass movement." Worst of all, the reformists' eagerness to counterpose the call for blacks' rights to the union movement has assisted in a particularly dangerous racial polarization of the working class when the need for a strategy to undercut this deadly antagonism is more urgent than ever.

The NCOBD reformists will only impede the struggle against Bakke by teach-



Liberal Newsweek legitimizes the racist codeword "reverse discrimination."

ing black students and workers to bloc with the Democratic Party—black people's worst enemy—against the labor movement. Unlike state-enforced school busing, affirmative action retains a certain political usefulness for "ethnic purity" Carter as a legal basis for attacks on the unions.

The reformists' idea of a "victory" for blacks is for Carter to persuade the Supreme Court to defer any definitive decision on affirmative action, quota hiring and special admissions programs. There can be no victory for blacks so long as the black masses remain tied to the Democratic Party and isolated from the labor movement! What is required is a class-struggle leadership to mobilize the entire working class in defense of the rights and aspirations of specially oppressed strata of the working people, centering on the struggle within the unions to unlock the social power of the organized proletariat from the death-grip of the reactionary labor bureaucracy. The liberal/reformist misleaders who see the bourgeois state as the agent of progressive social change have brought the black masses nothing but defeats. Only an integrated working-class leadership can point the way to revolutionary victory. ■

# Stearns...

(continued from page 12)

The leaders of the UMWA, however, have not matched the courage and stamina of the Stearns miners who fought the cops yesterday in opposition to local union organizers. "We advised them not to break the restraining order," Wright told *WV*, "but they just felt like they had to make a stand and they did."

The UMWA International has provided a team of organizers and \$100 per week in benefits for each striker. A hundred and fifty militants cannot be expected by themselves, however, to defeat the combined resources of Bonnyman and his allies, the Storm gun thugs and the Kentucky cops and courts.

Faced with this iron front of the miners' class enemies, the beleaguered strikers need immediate demonstrations of working-class support in Stearns. Militants throughout the coalfields must be organized for massive rallies and picketing to demand that the court charges be dropped and to defeat the imminent assaults by scabs and cops.

A five-day national coal workstoppage belatedly called by Miller in August, 1974 was required to force the Duke Power Company to recognize the union after the 13-month Brookside strike at Harlan. The same tactic will work today. An industry-wide strike bringing the weight of the entire union to bear in solidarity with the Stearns miners is crucial and would quickly win a contract from Blue Diamond.

**Drop the Charges! Bring out the UMW! Victory to the Stearns Strike! ■**

## Building the Leninist Vanguard—

# From the Gay Left to Trotskyism

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# Concorde: Let It Land!...

(continued from page 5)

Coalition to Stop the SST they have embraced something far more sinister. In an intensely racist country, which is more over in the midst of a rightward drift, it is not surprising that the membership of the Emergency Coalition, based on Queens homeowners, overlaps with the local chapter of ROAR, the group which led the reactionary anti-busing mobilizations in Boston and has since branched out to other East Coast cities.

In coming out for landing rights for the SST, transportation secretary Adams conceded that the approaching French elections were a prime consideration for the U.S. government. It is estimated that Air France loses \$4 million a month by not being able to land at JFK, and the U.S. is concerned to protect the Giscard/Barre government from the threat of Union of the Left electoral gains amid mounting anti-Americanism linked to the Concorde ban.

In the past few months the French Communist Party (PCF) has mounted a rabidly protectionist campaign for Concorde landing rights in New York. The PCF has plastered the walls of Paris with "Concorde à New-York" posters, and to dramatize the issue, on July 21 some 50 Communist militants from Aerospatiale (the French company manufacturing the planes in partnership with Britain) invaded a TV station to demand that the news broadcaster read their manifesto on the SST. The communiqué read in part:

"The landing of the Concorde in New York is not an affair of noise or pollution since the nuisances are equivalent to those of American Boeings. Instead of talking about national independence, a government that cared about the interests of our people would act. At stake is the sacrifice of the most developed branch of French industry on the altar of American profit."

What is really involved here is the PCF's electoral strategy of proving itself as the best defender of French capitalism. Ever since the days of the World War II resistance, when the bulk of the French bourgeoisie collaborated with the Vichy government and the Nazi occupiers, the Stalinists have posed as the strongest defenders of the bourgeois "fatherland," often in conjunction with the Gaullists. (Thus one aspect of the PCF's pro-Concorde propaganda is its current effort to attract dissident Gaullists as the fourth element of the popular front.)

The international Spartacist tendency holds, along with the Communist Manifesto, that "the workers have no country" this side of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We alone of the left groups in the United States have criticized the chauvinist outcry over the Concorde and demanded that it be allowed to land. This gives added authority to the critique of the PCF's social-patriotism and economic chauvinism by our French sympathizing section, the Ligue Trotskyste de France. No other left group in France can make this claim, including the PCF. (The U.S. Communist Party maintains a stony silence on the Concorde.)

In addition to our struggle against insidious nationalism which poisons relations between the national components of the international working class, we favor development of the SST as an important technological advance. Marxists are not Luddites, and even though the Concorde will primarily benefit businessmen and the rich, it will also have its fallout for what the ultrarightists slanderously call the "international communist conspiracy." In future history books it will certainly be recorded that jet airplanes played a vital role in re forging the Fourth International, along with those two other marvelous technological advances, the long-distance telephone and the xerox machine. ■

# In Defense of Democratic Centralism...

(continued from page 7)

to the heroic days of the Communist International.

One of the great achievements of the Bolsheviks was to recognize that a political split in the working class is the precondition for proletarian revolution. The Bolsheviks had achieved this by 4 August 1914, but they had not generalized it either theoretically or internationally. The German revolutionary left of the time paid with the loss of its leaders, Luxemburg and Liebknecht, and a lost revolution for its failure to have assimilated this lesson.

## Workerism and "Freedom of Criticism"

We presented to you, comrades, in our written greetings to your conference, a certain definition of our understanding of the Leninist form of organization: "We state that the fundamental principle for communists is that one struggles among one's comrades to gain a majority for one's program, and that anyone who seeks to mobilize backward forces and alien class elements from outside a revolutionary Marxist organization in order to struggle for ascendancy inside that organization is no communist." To depart from this conception would immediately lead to the organization of the backward sections of the class against the party, especially its majority. I'm speaking in connection with the slogan "freedom of criticism, unity of action" employed in the united Menshevik-Bolshevik party of 1906. In the long run it necessarily leads to dissolving the party back into the class as a whole.

In the United States, I am acquainted with a particular species of workerism, the semi-syndicalists such as the Ellens group (related to Lutte Ouvrière) and the Leninist Faction (LF) majority, who have a conception that the working class in its natural condition has a pure proletarian essence. Now there's a very good book called *The Making of the British Working Class* by E.P. Thompson, and in the opening paragraphs he makes the observation that the working class cannot be described as a class detached from capitalist society. It can only be seen in the context, not only of the economics, but of the social relations of society as a whole. There are backward sections of the working class. The workers who support the social democracy in most countries are relatively advanced, as is the case with the workers who support the Stalinist parties where they are mass parties.

In a working class such as that in the United States, large sections of the workers are very backward indeed. But they are backward from the standpoint of the historic interests represented by the proletarian vanguard. They are forward in terms of bourgeois ideas. Religion, alcoholism, male chauvinism and the most virulent forms of racism are predominant manifestations in the absence of class struggle and without the presence of a proletarian vanguard. The workerists refuse to see all this and instead see a pure, uncontaminated, isolated proletariat. At the same time they see the vanguard party as a mixture of radical workers and radical intellectuals who may not be so declassed.

The principal party internationally of the International Socialists (IS), the British organization of Tony Cliff, has lately become workerist. The IS, as a collection of the world's most perfect centrists, avidly follow political fads. Until a few years ago they were very pro-Labour Party and called their newspaper *The Labour Worker*. Today they are very much opposed to the British Labour Party, denying that it has any working-class character, and now call their paper the *Socialist Worker*. This by way of a

preliminary to a current view of Tony Cliff.

Wanting to unite with the soul of the workers (as against the ugly Labour Party, which he once worshipped), he has written an essay called "Trotsky on Substitutionism" [in the I.S. pamphlet *Party and Class*], from which I'd like to read you a quote:

"Since the revolutionary party cannot have interests apart from the class, all the party's issues of policy are those of the class and they should therefore be thrashed out in the open in its presence. The freedom of discussion which exists in a factory meeting, which aims at unity of action after decisions are taken, should apply to the revolutionary party. This means that all discussions on basic issues of policy should be discussed in the light of day, in the open press. Let the mass of the workers take part in the discussion. Put pressure on the party, its apparatus, its leadership."

It's a little awkward to know what to say about that. The idea that the whole class, in all its sectional, racial, national backwardness, is to be the jury to decide questions of revolutionary strategy is appalling. In a trade union, which is a kind of economic united front, or in a political united front it is of course necessary for all of the participants who act to offer freely their criticism. But the idea that workers who follow priests, workers who are Stalinists, workers who belong to social-democratic parties should put pressure on in order to determine the policy of the revolutionary Marxists is an idea that will maintain the power of the bourgeoisie until a thermonuclear bomb eliminates the question.

## "Exceptions" to Democratic Centralism

In our greetings to your conference, we spoke of certain exceptional circumstances in connection with the application of democratic centralism among revolutionaries. Among the exceptional circumstances are when the party form does not centrally correspond with the revolutionary Marxist program. In the period at the end of and just after World War I, several large parties of the Socialist International broke apart with big sections, often majorities, going over to the Third International. France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy and the United States come to mind. We also grabbed the left wing of the Polish PPS. In the period of this transition, there was just such a separation of party and program.

Another comparable circumstance would be where the revolutionists have entered in a reformist or centrist political formation. There, too, we would struggle for the maximum freedom of public discussion and the minimum unity in action. Still another exceptional circumstance would be when the division between the internal and external has become diffuse, as in truly mass parties, especially those in power. The third case comes under a document that I was just handed entitled "On the Principle of Democratic Centralism: Freedom of Criticism, Unity of Action." Trotsky is quoted as writing, "The entire history of Bolshevism is one of the free struggle of tendencies and factions." This is a perfectly true quotation, but it is misleading because everywhere in that period (as even Barbara Gregorich of the LF, who did research on it, admits) Trotsky spoke of *internal* freedom of discussion.

Here's a quotation which makes that clear. In the Trotsky *Writings 1932-1933*, speaking of the Russian Oppositionists, he says: "They were subjected to persecution only for having criticised the policy of the leading faction within the limits of internal criticism that had constituted the vital element of Bolshevik Party democracy." Also in the paper that I was handed there's another quotation taken from the Transitional Program. It says, "Ohne innere Demokratie gibt es keine revolutionäre Erziehung." Now "ohne innere Demokratie" sounds to me like "without inner democracy."

But the list of exceptional circumstances has not been exhausted. There

was the projected split of Shachtman and Burnham from the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in 1940. It cut the SWP in half on the eve of World War II. Many of the youth that followed Shachtman and Burnham believed that they were involved in no revisionism, but were only going to build a bigger, better, faster revolutionary party. Trotsky and Cannon, in an effort to secure a little time in the framework of formal unification, made very substantial concessions in an attempt to retain the minority. There was, of course, no stopping of the minority, but Trotsky's majority made it very clear that these were episodic, special concessions in an attempt to give some of those in the minority a chance under easy organizational conditions to reconsider. Just as you might have wanted to make special concessions to the IKD when they walked out as a large minority. But even a special internal bulletin, much less the public presentation of differences, is not a stable or healthy condition of inner-party life.

I was in an organization which had such organizational guarantees as a permanent fixture. It was the Young Socialist League, the Shachtmanite youth group in 1954-57. The Shachtmanites had put many very democratic statements about "freedom of criticism" in their organizational rules in order to appeal to liberals who were afraid of totalitarian Bolshevism. Nobody ever used these rules until a left wing formed three years later. We then began to publish the left-wing bulletin—not only internal, but a public bulletin of our own. It could have had no other meaning, and was intended as a split bulletin. When the fight came to a showdown, they had to pass 22 amendments to their constitution. But of course these new restrictions were only for the troublesome Trotskyists. The right-wing social-democratic elements could continue to practice freedom of criticism.

This gets to the core of the question. Why, why, why do you want to take your differences outside your organization, to rally its enemies against your organization? Shachtman wanted to. The American radical liberals had turned very sharply against Russia after the Hitler-Stalin pact. That section of the SWP that was sensitive to this petty-bourgeois public opinion wanted to prove that they weren't as bad as the other Trotskyists. And in ordinary times that is always the way it is with those who want to take their troubles outside a revolutionary party.

In times of great revolutionary turmoil the mass of the working class may run ahead of a somewhat sluggish revolutionary party. Lenin faced this situation a couple of times between the February and the October revolutions. When he was faced with conservative obstruction on the Central Committee, he threatened to take his case to the workers. This was not freedom of criticism within the party: it meant *split* and the creation of a second party, and Lenin knew it. To split is no crime, providing that there is sufficient political clarity and necessity to make a split. It is part of the living political process. ■

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# WORKERS VANGUARD

## 80 Jailed as Scabherding Cops Assault Coal Strikers

# Stearns Explodes

### Bring Out the UMW— Remember Harlan!

OCTOBER 18—The coal miners of Stearns, Kentucky stood toe-to-toe with club-swinging, helmeted state cops yesterday afternoon at the entrance to the struck Justus mine in the Cumberland Mountains. The cops were determined to break the miners' resistance to the Blue Diamond Coal Company's first attempt to bring scabs into the pit. The strikers were equally determined that the scabs would not pass.

The mine has been closed for 15 months in a struggle to win a United

The Stearns, Kentucky coal miners are in desperate need of financial assistance. The company and its cops continue to try to break their strike, their spirit and their pocket-books. On October 26 the 80 jailed miners will come to court to face heavy legal charges and expenses, as well as the wrath of a capitalist court hell-bent on stopping their drive for union organization. On behalf of the embattled miners, UMW field organizer Freddy Wright appealed to *Workers Vanguard* for contributions to the Stearns Miners Relief Fund. *WV* urges its readers to send the urgently needed funds immediately. Checks should be made payable to: Stearns Miners Relief Fund, c/o Freddy Wright, 303 Yoakum Circle, La Follette, Tennessee.

Mine Workers of America (UMWA) contract. The strike has been marked by months of gunfire from Blue Diamond's hired Storm Security Service gun thugs and the workers' grim resolve to answer every attack.

When nearly every one of the 153 strikers gathered Monday at the miners' picket site and refused police orders to disperse, the cops called for reinforcements. After more than 100 of the uniformed riot-equipped strikebreakers had assembled, they waded into the workers' ranks, freely swinging their clubs. The miners battled back with clubs of their own in a ten-minute melee which left more than a dozen injured, including five cops. One worker received a fractured skull and his eardrum was burst. Mahan Vanover, the local president, had a broken arm when the cops were finished. Eighty strikers were arrested.

Eventually the miners were defeated and the cops continued to beat their



Above, state police stand guard over handcuffed Stearns miners, many of whom were beaten to the ground, below.

prisoners as they lay face down with their hands cuffed behind their backs.

At almost the same time, the police—with drawn guns—were arresting 20 women for being supporters of the union. They were gathered in the yard of a 67-year-old woman who was dragged from her front porch and thrown into a squad car. When her 14-year-old son protested, he too was hauled off. Obviously innocent of any offense, the women were subsequently released.

The miners spent the night in jail and were arraigned today. The last were released this afternoon on their own recognizance after sitting for hours in police cars outside the courthouse. They will be tried October 26, and face severe penalties. It is urgent that the workers movement come to their defense.

The strikers' rage has risen steadily during the last week. Limited by court order to six pickets on the UMWA property which the strikers purchased near the mine entrance, a seventh worker was arrested October 12 as he delivered food to his comrades on picket duty. The same day, the first three scabs were brought into the mine. Sixteen strikers were arrested for protesting these provocations. The next day four scabs appeared and the following day, five. Miners reported rumors that 20 more were hired last weekend.

Needless to say, the cops, scabs and Blue Diamond's Gordon Bonnyman are working hand-in-hand. Union organizer



Freddy Wright told *WV* that the police knew of company plans to scab the mine two weeks ago. Wright himself watched the police as they displayed their weapons to the scabs, shaking hands and patting them on the back. Robert Storm has boasted of close working relations between the cops and his private police force which gets 90 percent of its contracts in labor disputes.

Months of semi-automatic rifle and shotgun fire from the Storm thugs have

not broken the strike (seven guards and one miner have been shot). An "organizing campaign" by the boss-controlled Southern Labor "Union" also failed to gain enough support for an NLRB certification vote, so Bonnyman is hoping that full-fledged scabbing backed up with state force will do the job. Although no scabs showed up yesterday or today, 160 cops are standing by, UMW organizer Lee Potter told *WV*.

*continued on page 10*